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Abraham Rejoiced to See Christ's Day

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad"—John 8: 56.

THERE is much sadness as we realise that the Jews and Arabs, both descendants of faithful father Abraham, are again at war, in a most destructive encounter in which thousands of human lives will be lost in a fruitless quarrel over so many square miles of territory in the Middle East. At the moment an uneasy cessation of hostilities has been brought about by the intervention of the two great nations of the world, U.S.A., and Russia, through the United Nations.

In our text in John 8: — "Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad" —we note that Jesus acknowledged that the Jews to whom He spoke had Abraham as their father. But reviewing the context in this chapter 8 of John, we see our Lord did not consider a great number of them as being really children of Abraham, as indicated in verse 39—"If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." We notice that they were a divided class of Jews to whom Jesus spoke, in their outlook towards our Lord. Some, indeed, did believe in Him and wished to be made free, while others were in opposition, even extremely so, seeking to kill Jesus, as shown in verse 40. However, we are mainly interested in Jesus' appreciation of Abraham.

What did Jesus mean by saying Abraham rejoiced to see His day? Turning to God's unconditional promise to Abraham in Gen. 22: 15-18, we read a most remarkable prophecy—please read. Because Abraham obeyed God's voice in being willing to sacrifice Isaac, his son of promise, knowing in his heart, by faith, that Isaac would be raised from the dead, God gave the unconditional promise that "all the nations of the earth would be blessed" through the seed of Abraham. We notice that God's promise to Abraham was based upon the words of verse 16—"For because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son."

Abraham had been used to offering sacrifices of animals to God, and when the Lord provided a ram in the place of Isaac, no doubt Abraham, by faith, grasped to some extent the value of the sacrifice for sin which Jesus was accomplishing at His first advent when He declared—"Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and was glad." It will be seen that it was on the basis of Abraham not withholding his son, Isaac, from sacrifice, that the promises of verses 17 and 18 of Gen. 22 were proclaimed by **God's** angel from heaven. In other words, the antitype of Isaac, even Christ, being sacrificed at Jesus first advent provided the means whereby all the families of the earth would be blessed, in due time, through Abraham's seed. The Apostle Paul's record of Abraham's faith in Heb. 11: 17-19 is a further wonderful testimony respecting this patriarch Abraham.

Reviewing Gen. 22: 17, we see that Abraham's seed was to be composed of two classes or sections—"as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore." When Abraham heard this reference to his seed, it must have seemed strange to him, but he would realise that much more was implied in this description than could be fulfilled in Isaac. We are able to understand more today than did Abraham, but the important lesson we learn from Abraham was his great faith that God would fulfil His promise to bless all nations through his seed, pictured by the stars of heaven and the sand upon the sea shore.

Let us examine the "stars of heaven" feature of Abraham's seed first. When the Apostle Paul sought to impress upon the Galatians that faith in Christ was an all-important requirement for progress as God's children, he used Abraham as an example to follow in gaining God's blessing of spiritual truth, as outlined in Gal. 3: 5-9. Here we see that God "preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." And for the

encouragement of Christians, the Apostle adds—”So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.” No doubt this presentation by Paul has been a wonderful help to the Lord’s people throughout the Gospel Age.

Further, in Gal. 3: 16 we read—”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.” Here we find the Apostle Paul enlightening Christians in respect of one part of Abraham’s seed, Christ, the great Head of the “stars of heaven” seed. Paul was commissioned and inspired to elaborate the truths that Abraham saw afar off, by faith. Abraham did not know the details, but trusted God that whatever He provided would bring about the blessing of all the families of the earth. Here we see that God had Christ in mind when He said the “stars of heaven” would be one part of the seed of Abraham that would fulfil the promise to Abraham.

The Apostle Paul enlightens us further concerning Abraham’s “stars of heaven” seed when he declares that truly consecrated followers of Christ are, as well as Christ Himself, members of the seed of Abraham. This is revealed in Gal. 3: 26-29—”Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” The Apostle does not say, As many of you as have been baptized in water have put on Christ, but as many as have been baptized into Christ—immersed into Christ’s death. There is no reference to water here at all; water is merely the symbol of death baptism. “And if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” What a wonderful truth Paul brings out here! Christ the Head is the Abrahamic seed, and those truly baptized into Christ are also part of the seed of Abraham. They are the “stars of heaven” seed of Abraham, Christ and His Church, being the principal means of blessing all the families of the earth. Abraham saw this, saw Christ’s day, saw the day when Christ would pay the sacrifice for mankind, just as Abraham himself was willing to sacrifice Isaac. He also saw the day when Christ would have associates, although he could not understand the details—”If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” This is surely wonderful, and we feel the day in which this spiritual seed, Christ and His Church, is developed, partly fulfils the words of Jesus—”Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.” We say “partly” because this is the provision or development of the heavenly part of Abraham’s seed. Abraham had faith in God’s promises that his seed, as the “stars of heaven” would constitute the means of bringing blessings to all the nations of the earth, together with the “sand by the sea shore” seed.

As the Head of the spiritual seed of Abraham, our Lord had cause to rebuke the Pharisees of His day when they asked for a sign from Him. See Matt. 12: 38-42. In this passage the Lord gives two illustrations of Israel lacking appreciation of their Messiah, who came unto His own, and His own received Him not, as a people—”Behold, a greater than Jonasis here”, and “Behold, a greater than Solomon is here.” This, Abraham saw by faith. He saw the first advent of Christ; he rejoiced to see Christ’s day and was glad, this being the antitype of the sacrifice of his son, Isaac. This, then, is the first fulfilment of Christ’s day in which Abraham rejoiced by faith, and in which we also rejoice, because Christ’s Church as members of Abraham’s spiritual seed are also part of the “stars of heaven” class. They also fit into the first part of Christ’s day during this Gospel Age, as they make their calling and election sure.

Another reference to the first part of the day of Christ in which Abraham rejoiced is revealed to us in Isa. 51: 16—”And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.” The planting of the heavens, the making up of the “stars of heaven” class, was what Abraham saw by faith, this being part of Christ’s day, with the preparation of this Seed. It has been going on since Christ’s first advent. God desires to take “many sons to glory”, to be associated in the great work of dispensing the blessings of salvation to all humanity.

With the completion of the “stars of heaven” seed, the final planting of the heavens, the laying the foundations of the earth will go forward. This will mean a wider and complete fulfilment of the Day of Christ in which Abraham rejoiced by faith also. In this connection the prophecy of Gen. 13: 14-17 is most applicable—”And 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 the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.” Also in Gen. 15: 18 we read—”In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.” That is a tremendous tract of country yet to be given to the seed of Abraham, the “sand by the sea shore” seed. This does not imply that Abraham’s decendants are to obtain this land by their own war efforts, but they will receive it in due time from God’s hand. God has promised this land to Abraham, from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates, a great tract of country which is to come into the possession of Abraham’s “sand by the sea shore” seed.

In connection with the promises in Genesis which God made to Abraham respecting the extent of the land for a

possession by Abraham's seed, we have an interesting presentation of this matter in Acts 7: 2-5, given by Stephen before the Jewish Council. Speaking of Abraham and the land of Israel which God promised to Abraham, Stephen declared in verse 5—"And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." The reason Abraham did not receive the land for a lasting possession is because Abraham passed away, Isaac and Jacob and all the earthly seed passed away. But God is still going to fulfil that promise; nothing will hinder it in due time. We see what has happened in the Middle East over the last few decades, with Israel gaining a foothold and establishing itself as a nation, and all the nations around wanting to destroy them. But Israel, as well as the other nations, has to learn a hard lesson, that they are not going to receive the inheritance of the land by their own efforts. God will give it to them in His due time. In the meantime, Israel must learn the lesson of humility and dependence upon God, and not upon their own arm of strength, to gain that which God has promised. When God does fulfil this promise to Abraham and his seed, with Abraham and other fathers of Israel restored to life in the resurrection day, this will be in complete fulfilment of Jesus' words—"Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." Christ will then be reigning, with the "stars of heaven" seed complete, and also the "sand by the sea shore" seed in control of the land promised by God. However, just how God will fulfil His promise, and the seed of Abraham possess the great expanse of territory stated in Genesis, may not be clear to us at the present time.

In the prophecy of Jeremiah 30, following on the early verses where it is stated respecting "Jacob's trouble" that "he shall be saved out of it", we read in verses 18-20 a most important message. "Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap. . . . and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them." All that oppress Israel will be punished in God's due time. How will God do this? In Zech. 12: 2, 3, we have a very clear prophecy showing that ultimately the Lord intends to protect Israel. "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day 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 against it." In God's appropriate time He will perform some immense miracles in the Middle East, because Israel is going to be an exhibition to the whole world of nations. When God shows His hand on behalf of Israel, all the nations of the world will sit up and take notice. In the meantime, God has some important purpose in allowing Israel to be stricken and smitten and encircled in an outstanding and terrifying way.

Returning to Jeremiah 30, we read in verses 10 and 11—"Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid ... though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." The Lord will not leave Israel unpunished. Israel has to learn that dependence upon the Lord only is going to fulfil the desires of their heart. God will never allow Israel to be exterminated. Just how He brings about their great deliverance and punishes the nations coming against Jerusalem is a matter of prophecy, and we have faith to know it will be accomplished in accord with God's timetable, the best time, not only on behalf of Israel but also for those warring against Israel. All the other nations must learn their lesson too, that God will be obeyed if they are to benefit from the blessings to flow out from Abraham's seed, from the "stars of heaven" class and the "sand by the sea shore" class.

From Jeremiah 31: 7 onwards we read—"Thus saith the Lord; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the north country"—apparently referring to Russia. "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them.... Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob.... Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion ... and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all." Here we have revealed the time when all is at peace and rest, when God has delivered Israel from their enemies, and the blessings of the Lord are due to come upon Israel and ultimately upon all nations, when they learn to obey the instructions of the "lord. Then "they shall not sorrow any more at all."

Turning to Zech. 12: 6-10, we read again of the Lord's deliverance of Israel. "... And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son. . . . " Here we have

revealed the time when Israel will recognise the fact that they crucified the Lord of glory. They will look upon Him, not literally, but their minds will go back to the time when Christ was crucified. The Lord will never again be manifested as a human being, for He is in the “express image of the Father’s person”, having “all power in heaven and in earth”, and will administer the kingdom blessings from above. This will be “Christ’s day” in which “Abraham rejoiced, and was glad.”

In Isa. 51: 2, 3 we read—”Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you”, and we realise this is pictorial language—Abraham representing God, and Sarah picturing the Abrahamic covenant. “For the Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places: and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord.” It is lovely to read in the prophecies that Garden of Eden conditions will be abroad in the earth again. Verse 1 1—”Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return (from the death condition), and come with singing unto Zion; . . . they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.” What lovely Scriptures we have to tell us about the great “times of restitution of all things”—Christ’s day, in which Abraham rejoiced, by faith.

Turning to Isa. 29: 18, we have a prophecy with reference to all mankind ultimately. “In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.” These are not of necessity literally deaf or blind, but in “Christ’s day” they shall hear and perceive the truths required for salvation. Then verse 19—”The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel”, which is surely lovely to contemplate. Verse 22 follows—”Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.” That means Jacob will come back in the resurrection day, and will not grow old; he will live forever, as will everyone else who obeys the laws of “Christ’s day”, Christ’s Kingdom, in which Abraham rejoiced, by faith.

From the Psalmist (Psa. 22: 27, 28) we also read—”All the ends of the world”—that is, every nation under the sun—”shall remember and turn to the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord’s: and he is the governor among the nations.” And what a Governor! Christ and His Church, as the “stars of heaven” seed, will administer from above through the “sand by the sea shore” seed, for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

In the prophecy of Zechariah 8: 23 it states—”Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations (representing all nations of the world), even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.” What a change that will be to present-day conditions in the world! Then will be fulfilled the words of Micah 4: 2, 3—”And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we shall walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion (the “stars of heaven” seed of Abraham), and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (the “sand by the sea shore” seed of Abraham). And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” Praise God! Abraham truly “rejoiced to see Christ’s day, and he saw it, and was glad.”

If you were arrested for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you.

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 scoffs 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.

Giving Thanks

(Contributed Address.)

THE thought behind the few remarks put together is one with a very simple idea—giving thanks. This is a very comely trait in any person, whether a Christian or otherwise; in fact it would be a sign of human nobility, the appropriate giving of thanks, and giving it in the right way; not a flowery praise or thanks, but a sincere and genuine thanks.

On receiving my lunch at work wrapped up in a table napkin, it had four words written on it—”In Everything Give Thanks.” This, of course, is a wonderful injunction and something we do remember at mealtimes in particular. It is a proper course for us to follow.

Reading in Psa. 116, the Psalmist seems to speak to believers, and gives the sentiments of everyone who has been blessed in this Gospel Age. From verse 12, we read—”What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.” (Verses 12-14, 17.)

We find also in our Lord’s ministry quite an emphasis on thankfulness, particularly in our Lord’s prayers. A lovely prayer is that recorded in Matt. 11: 25, and it means so much to us. “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” This was only one of the Lord’s prayers, but it is interesting He begins with the thought of thankfulness. We should be thankful that the Lord has revealed these things unto babes. We would not like to qualify ourselves amongst the wise and prudent, humanly speaking, but God has seen fit to bless us in this way.

In John 11: 41 also we see Jesus again thanks His heavenly Father. This is in the incident of the raising of Lazarus. “And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.” Even though the Lord was the Son of God Himself, yet He gave thanks for these various opportunities and privileges granted to Him. We see Him also setting us a wonderful example in the giving of thanks before the breaking of bread. This is a good exercise for us also, and it does remind us daily by the small things of how great God’s gifts are to us.

When G. K. Chesterton was asked at the end of his career what was the most important lesson he had learned from life, he is said to have stated that it was to find out whether we take things for granted or take them with gratitude. How wonderful this trait of gratitude is! Not only for the Christian, but also for every human being this

is so, but particularly those who have so much for which to be thankful.

The story of the ten lepers emphasizes how scarce this trait may be. There were ten cleansed, and only one returned to give thanks. The other nine completely forgot about their gratitude when they had the gift. They got what they were after. No doubt they were pleased, perhaps even grateful, but it did not move them to any act of thanksgiving. Only one returned to give glory to God.

How appropriate it is, then, for those who are disciples of the Greater David, our Lord Jesus, the perfect, noble Man, that we should have not only a thankful spirit but also a thankful manner of life altogether. So the Apostle Paul gives us this injunction in 1 Thes. 5: 18. This comes in a section where there--Lagny taief iniuncticas—to believers, but this verse says, “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” Other versions of this verse express it differently. Phillips says, “Be thankful whatever the circumstances.” Moffatt says, “Thank God for everything.” The New English says, “Give thanks whatever happens.” Good News for Modern Man says, “Be thankful in all circumstances.” What a wideness there is in this thought of giving thanks in everything! In all things, in all circumstances, in all times and seasons and places, give thanks.

There is a very close link between thanksgiving and prayer. This is not surprising. *We* find Paul writing to the Philippians in regard to this thought that prayer should be with supplication and thanksgiving. “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” A somewhat similar thought is in Col. 4: 2—“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”

Someone was once asked for a technique for prayer. The inquirer said prayer came with difficulty to him. The advice given was always to start with thanksgiving. This is undoubtedly very good advice. When we begin to recall what God has done for us and all for which we owe Him thanks, the other things fall into perspective.

To whom should we be thankful? *We* should be thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, as the Apostle James tells us. These come from the Father of Lights, and His most unspeakable gift is the (gift of His dear Son: for God so loved that He gave. There can be no greater gift and no greater cause for gratitude than this. The Apostle Paul in Rom. 8: 32 reminds us that “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” With the wonderful gift of the Saviour, God freely is able to give us all things. These all things include not only life and salvation but also glorious hope now and for the future.

“Not alone hath grace redeemed me,
Bought me with Christ’s precious blood,
Sought me out when a stranger,
Wandered from the fold of God;
But beyond this great salvation
God hath shown me wondrous grace
Call’d me with a heav’nly calling,
Ever to behold His face.”

Believers have so much cause for thankfulness, for the privileges they enjoy and for what are ahead of them.

But do we always give thanks in every season for all things? We could well take to heart the prayer—“We beseech Thee, give us that due sense of all Thy mercies that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we show forth Thy praise not only with our lips but in our lives.” This is the lesson of counting our blessings. If we are doing that there can be only one result, a great sense of thankfulness to our loving Father. These “all things” for which we are to give thanks would certainly include God’s wonderful blessings. Ephesians 2 tells us that God has blessed us “with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus.”—For the rich blessings He has given us it should not be hard to be thankful. There is always a danger of taking these blessings for granted, and we must remember we have nothing we have not received of God, and be thankful at all times.

Further, the “all things” may include God’s chastenings. In Heb. 12 we have the explanatory verses on God’s dealings with us, and it is likened to the correction a human father applies to his children. In verses 6 and 11 we read—“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” So we can put things into their right perspective. This is also a

cause for thankfulness on the part of the believer, for these are signs of sonship and that God is dealing with us.

These “all things” may include times of hardship, want and sickness. We have no greater example than the Apostle Paul himself, and his testimony in Phil. 4 is very eloquent, and sets a standard which makes us feel very insignificant and unequal except it were by God’s grace. See Phil. 4: 12, 13, 18.

Shortly after the Lord’s ascension the eleven apostles were suffering persecution, and it is recorded in Acts that they praised God they were worthy to suffer shame for His name. These people were thankful for the times of adversity and hardship. Could we live up to that standard?

Of course, there are other blessings we have received apart from the gifts in particular already mentioned. *We* have been especially blessed with the knowledge of God’s will; this was not made known in other ages. But perhaps this knowledge could become commonplace. There is always a cause for the giving of thanks, and our desire is that we might continue thankfully to know more of God’s good will and purpose.

Another great blessing for which we should be thankful is the love of the brethren. It is interesting to note how many times Paul says, “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.” He thanks God for the faith of the Romans. We need to have this love for one another. We can all help one another, and this is appreciated by God. Sometimes, like children, we become appreciative of a thing only when it ceases to be there. Let us give thanks and praise now for these wonderful blessings we have.

These “all things” will include opportunities of service for God. Are we always thankful for these? Do we find, sometimes, these are inconvenient and we do not want to do them at all? These opportunities really are causes for giving of thanks if we are ready to be responsive to God’s call. “Opportunities”, says one writer, “come to all. Thank God continually in all the common days and for the simplest common things.” The trouble with many of us is that we do not improve our opportunities, grasp them, seize them as they pass and make use of them. But when we are able to do so, this is surely something for which to thank God. We should learn the lesson of “being thankful for all things.” Be thankful for all God’s gifts, all His leadings, all the painful and pleasant experiences of life. Are we thankful for every opportunity of service, for the brethren, to others, for the times when we cannot serve but only stand and wait? Have we learned the lesson of being thankful in all seasons, in joy and sorrow, in plenty and in want?

The spirit of thankfulness will surely show we have lived in this right perspective and we are seeking to see things as it were from God’s viewpoint. The key surely to this understanding of God’s will for us is found in that familiar verse of Rom. 8: 28—“All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” When we can not only read that but put it firmly in our hearts and recognise its truth in all the affairs of life, we will see all causes for thankfulness. Real thankfulness is not a matter of lip service but enters into every aspect of life. How fitting are the words of Samuel in 1 Sam. 12: 24—“Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.” How great things, indeed, has God done for us! How can we, in recognition of these marvellous gifts of His grace and mercy, be other than a praising and thankful people, in word and in deed. In every season, in every place, in every circumstance let us heed the Apostle’s challenge—“In everything give thanks.”

Frank and Ernest Broadcast **God’s Covenants (Part 1)**

FRANK: In taking up our subject, Ernest, on “God’s Covenants” I’d like to read two or three verses from the Apostle Paul in 2 Cor. 11; commencing at verse 1. The Apostle says—“Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me. For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” Another translation quotes the latter part of the verse—“That simplicity and that pureness which is in the Anointed”, and I think that is a lovely expression.

ERNEST: I think so too, Frank, I believe the whole plan of God is one of simplicity and pureness and can be understood by all who are sufficiently sincere and desirous of knowing God and His great provision for the salvation of the human family. I call to mind the words of Jesus in Matt. 11: 25, 26, which agree with what you’ve just said. The verses read—“Jesus said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.”

FRANK: Those verses are well chosen, Ernest, for they show that God's truths are not intricate; they are not surrounded by mystery and unexplainable logic. One does not need the mind of a lawyer, or to obtain degrees at any college of worldly learning to grasp and appreciate "the simplicity and pureness which is in Christ", and which is revealed in God's plan. In 1 Cor. 1: 18, 19 we have another helpful Scripture, which reads—"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but to us who are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." From this standpoint, Ernest, we approach the study of the covenants, repeating the point, that no one need feel incapable of understanding the various covenants or contracts revealed to us in God's Word.

ERNEST: Yes, Frank, and as we shall refer to the Epistle to the Galatians quite often in connection with our subject, I'd like to quote a few verses in chapter 3, from verse 1—"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? . . . He therefore that ministereth to you the spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." These verses indicate that the Apostle was rebuking the Galatians for their lack of appreciation of the spirit of sonship since they had come into Christ, for they were returning to dependence upon the works of the Law Covenant.

FRANK: That's right, Ernest, and the next two verses in Gal. 3—verses 8 and 9 read—"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Those are wonderful verses, revealing the gospel in a nutshell, so to speak, and those who will be privileged to administer the gospel—"those of faith being blessed with faithful Abraham."

ERNEST: As you've quoted respecting Abraham, Frank, I'd like to read of the time when God called this faithful patriarch, and gave him the wonderful promise you read about in Galatians. It's in Genesis 12: 1-3, and reads—"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." When Abram obeyed that call of God it was the beginning of a wonderful life of faithfulness which is a lasting example even to Christians today.

-FRANK: And when God further tested Abraham, in requesting him to offer up Isaac, his son of promise, in death, that proved beyond all doubt that he was worthy to receive God's unconditional covenant of promise as stated in Gen. 22: 15-18—"And the angel of God called unto Abraham out of heaven, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." There's one part of that record of the covenant God made with Abraham, Ernest, that appeals to me very much, and that is the words—"By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord", which brings to mind the words of Heb. 6: 13—"For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself." Also Heb. 11: 17-19 is a helpful reference to Abraham's wonderful faith.

ERNEST: I'd like to read those verses, Frank, as follows—"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." That's very helpful, showing that God accepted Abraham's willingness to offer up Isaac, as though he had been actually sacrificed, and that offering of Isaac also pictured the sacrifice of Christ.

FRANK: That's right, Ernest, and the Apostle Paul speaks concerning that covenant God made with Abraham in Gal. 3: 15—"Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto." We note Paul's intention here is to stress the importance and certainty of God's covenant made with Abraham. Even men when they make a covenant or contract and confirm it, do not disannul or add anything to it—it stands firm for fulfilment. If men are faithful in carrying out a covenant, then says the apostle, surely God will do so, for He has sworn by Himself, seeing there was no one greater with whom to register such a covenant.

ERNEST: I like the way the apostle states that matter, Frank, as you've just indicated. Then the next verse, verse 16 in this 3rd chapter of Galatians, seems most interesting. It reads—"Now to Abraham and his seed were

the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” What do you think is the meaning of this verse, Frank?

FRANK: Well, Ernest, the Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Lord’s spirit, shows that when God made His covenant with Abraham He had Christ in mind, as being the true Seed which would fulfil this wonderful promise to Abraham. Then in verse 29 of the same 3rd chapter of Galatians, Paul _further enlightens us by saying to the true followers of Christ—”And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” This is a wonderful thought, that Christ and His Church are the spiritual seed of Abraham through whom all the families of the earth will be blessed in the Kingdom Age.

(To be continued)

DAWN RECORDED LECTURES

The brethren of the “Dawn” gladly provide recorded lectures for general use amongst the interested, and in view of the appreciation of these in Australia, brethren in Western Australia would be pleased to assist others who have tape recorders and would like to participate in this service. For further information write to Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Price, 66 Lyndhurst Rd., Kalamunda, Western Australia, 6067.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 22nd, 23rd, 25th and 26th, in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. Further information from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy St., South Oakleigh, Victoria, 3167.

Pilgrim Way Ended

As the last issue of “Peoples Paper” was on the press, word was received of the passing of elderly Brother Hand of Springwood, N.S. Wales. One who knew him well writes, “Brother Hand had been a Bible student for at least 60 years, and was secretary of the Sydney Class at the time the Photo Drama was in Australia. He was a very able Bible student and loved the Lord and the truth dearly.” We trust for our dear Brother an abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom, by the Lord’s grace. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.”

“Songs in the Night”

This cloth bound book has an appropriate text and comment for every day of the year, and is really a companion book to the “Daily Heavenly Manna”, being helpful for evening use. One of our friends has kindly compiled an Index for this book, making it more useful; these have been duplicated, and are supplied free with all copies of “Songs in the Night” which is priced at \$1.00, plus 24c postage.

Little Foxes and Little Lambs, a humorous, yet thought-provoking, illustrated book of clever poetry. The first poems call attention to the “little foxes” in people’s lives—common faults and failures such as lying, evil-speaking, pride, laziness, anger. Next, attention is given to the “little lambs”, such as truth, humility, patience, courtesy. Children will enjoy coloring the pictures that go with the poems. Paperback, 63 pages, price 70c post paid.

OUR BIBLE TRANSLATED

A *new* print has been made recently of the very interesting and informative booklet, “Our Bible Translated”, compiled some *time* ago by the brethren of “The Dawn”. To cover cost of materials this booklet is supplied at 10c per copy, post paid

Poems of Dawn, 320 pages of original poems with additional choice Christian poems are now in stock. Excellent as gifts. Black simulated leather, handy size, price \$2.20, plus postage 25c.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at \$10.50.

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Why Jesus came down from Heaven

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world".—John 6: 51.

IN considering this important subject, it should be helpful to examine some texts of Scripture which show that Jesus really had a prehuman existence in heaven with God, His Heavenly Father, before He came down to earth. When our risen Lord gave the wonderful revelation to the Apostle John, He was depicted as the one "in the midst of the seven candlesticks", and these seven candlesticks represented the seven churches. When He gave the message to the Laodicean Church in Rev. 3: 14 He clearly described Himself in the words—"These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." This is the risen Lord Himself speaking to the churches through John, telling them He was the faithful and true witness, and He says He was the beginning of the creation of the Almighty Father in heaven. Can we grasp what this really means? Jesus, before He came to earth, was the beginning of God's creation, away back there in the far reaches of eternity!

We are helped to understand what this means from Prov. 8: 22, where we read as though Jesus is speaking prophetically through the writer of Proverbs—"The LORD (Jehovah) possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." The meaning of the word "possessed" in the Hebrew is "to create." So Jehovah, the Almighty God, created Jesus in His prehuman existence, before His works of old.

Yes, before His works of old, this wonderful Son was created. He was the Father's Logos or great agent who created everything that was created after He was brought into existence. How do we know? Both the Apostles John and Paul were inspired to give us the answer. In John 1: 1-3 we read—"In the beginning was the Word (Logos), and the Word was with God, and the Word was a God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." This refers to the beginning, away back when the Logos was created. Not the beginning when our planet was formed; this was long before that, a time of which we are not informed.

Then in Col. 1 the Apostle Paul supports what John recorded. In verses 15-17 Paul says, speaking of our Lord—"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Christ was at the Father's right hand at the time Paul wrote, but the apostle says He was the firstborn of every creature, away back in the far regions of eternity.

Can we visualise the greatness of our Lord Jesus as the Logos, the Lord of Creation, as the Father's honoured agent away back in the distant ages of the past, before the planets were created, before our world was formed? Proverbs 8: 30 is helpful in this connection. This describes the relationship between the Logos and His Father, in beautifully intimate language—quoting from the R.S. Version—"I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always." Master workman He really was, bringing into being the mighty planets of our Universe, which our astronomers tell us we cannot even number. But one of the most revealing things we find in this connection is, that away back there the planning of God's Universe was discussed with Jehovah's only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus, as the Logos. How do we know? The Father must have revealed His plan of creation and found complete agreement in the mind of His free-willed Son, for we read in Rev. 13: 8, quoting from the R.S.V., that Jesus was "the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world" in this plan of

God. How could this be? What does this imply? It implies the complete revealing of the Father's plans to His only begotten Son—the creation of the various planets, including our earth, the creation of the intelligent creatures of various orders in the spirit world, and then man, in the perfect conditions in the Garden of Eden. All these intelligent creatures would be perfect, in the image of God, each in their own sphere.

It was foreknown to God that His human creature would fall. He had determined his sentence would be death, and He also planned in advance the redemption of father Adam and all mankind condemned in Adam. Apparently the Father desired that His only begotten Son should, of His own free will, become the Redeemer of mankind, and by so great a sacrifice as this implied, manifest His loyalty to the Father and His faith in Him. The response of Jesus to this proposition of His Heavenly Father is well expressed in the prophetic language of Psalms 40: 6-8—"Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."-I delight to do Thy will, O my God." What a loving and glad submission to the will of the Father is here expressed; namely, to delight to do the Father's will to redeem the human family from death by paying their penalty in death. Here we see, first and foremost, why Jesus came down from heaven—to do the Father's will, to redeem mankind from death. "Mine ears hast thou opened"—to know God's will in the matter of the salvation of mankind.

When the Apostle Paul quoted the same words from the Psalmist in Hebrews 10, he added a further thought in verse 5—"Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." Here we see the reference is to our Lord's human body. This was surely one of the miracles associated with the Logos being made flesh, taking human form so that He might pay the sacrifice for father Adam and all mankind condemned in Adam. In verse 6 we read—"In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure." God had no real pleasure in the sacrifice of animals, which were merely typical of Christ's great sacrifice. See verse 4. From verse 9 we read—"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." The "first" would be the typical sacrifices of the animals, in which God had no real pleasure. They were taken away, rendered obsolete by the sacrifice of Christ.

We remember what happened when the Lord was crucified and death came to Him. The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. Israel's temple services with the animal sacrifices would be no more accepted by the Heavenly Father. Now the real sacrifice had come—"He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."

Returning to the phrase, "a body hast thou prepared me", we have a similar thought in John 1: 14—"And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Can we realise the condescension of this great Logos, in coming down to man's estate, to have His spiritual life transferred to the Babe of Bethlehem, to perfect human life, "a little lower than the angels" to taste death for every man? This great love of Jesus in so doing, was no doubt continually prompted by the thought "I delight to do thy will, O God." We remember, too, that in being willing to be made flesh He sacrificed over 30 years of spiritual fellowship with His Heavenly Father, to whom He was daily the Father's delight, rejoicing before Him always.

From Heb. 12: 2 we have a compensating thought, so to speak, respecting our Lord's supreme sacrifice. "Who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." What was the joy set before our Lord in His endurance of the cross? **Firstly**, the joy, the pleasure, of loving to do the Father's will. **Secondly**, there was the joy that if faithful unto death He would be raised to the Father's right hand. In explanation we have the words of John 10: 17-18---"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might receive it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to receive it again. This commandment (assurance) have I received of my Father."

Further, the joy of returning to the Father is revealed in John 14: 28, in Jesus' words to His little band of followers just previous to His sacrifice on the cross. Our Lord speaking—"Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I." "If ye loved me." Of course they loved the Lord in their own way, and loving Him they wished to keep Him. But there was a higher love implied here. "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I go to the Father", to the glory He had with the Father before the world was. He was going back to the Father from whom He came, the Father to whom He was daily a delight. We remember this was Jesus' request in His prayer to the Father in John 17: 5—"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

We know that the Father not only honoured Jesus with His former glory as the Logos, but honoured Him

further, exalting Him to His own, Divine nature. How beautifully this is expressed by the apostle in Phil. 2 from verse 6—"Who being in the form of God thought not by robbery to be equal with God." We notice the King James Version gives quite a wrong thought. He did not meditate to be on an equality with God at all. That was Satan's ambition, not that of our Lord Jesus. Verse 7—"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant,

" This is the risen Christ, the right-hand servant of God, the very One who created all things, the very One who came down to the earth, the very One who rose to the Father's right hand. "And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." See also Isa. 25: 6-9.

Applying our subject in a personal manner, Jesus came down from heaven to give His life for each one of us individually, that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. Surely the words of 2 Cor. 5: 14, 15 are so very applicable. Paul says there—"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 which died for them, and rose again." What a lovely text to keep in mind each day of our Christian course—"the love of Christ constraineth us" in the privilege of service, that we may be able to say that for the joy set before us we may be able to endure something of the hardness of the Christian way in the steps of the Master who has done so much for us. No wonder that in the dispensation of the fulness of times the Hallelujah Chorus of Rev. 5: 11-13 will be proclaimed by all intelligent creatures, to God's praise, throughout the entire Universe. "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne . . . Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

Jesus came down from heaven, delighting to do the Father's will, and be raised to the Father's right hand. He came down from heaven, delighting to have a band of followers who would walk in His steps of sacrifice, and be raised to reign with Him in His Kingdom. He endured the cross for these. Also he endured the cross for the whole human family, that they may be brought back to God, as many as would be obedient, and live in Garden of Eden conditions throughout the wide world.

We rejoice, then, and praise God that Christ came, humbled Himself, being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, paying the ransom sacrifice on behalf of us all, for everyone in Melbourne, for everyone in Australia and in every country of the world-not only for those who are now living, but for all who have lived from the days of father Adam and since. Praise God for this glorious plan of redemption.

"He Shall Cover Thee with His Feathers"

Some years ago a helpful incident was expressed during a study of Psa. 91 at a Convention in Melbourne, revealing the wonderful protection and care which our Heavenly Father exercises over His own people who dwell in the secret place of the Most High.

It was stated that after a bush fire had swept through a property where poultry was kept, what seemed like a black stump of a tree near the ground was in reality a charred hen. On disturbing the remains of the bird a number of chickens ran out unharmed-the mother bird had protected her little ones so well with the strong feathers in her wings, but had lost her own life in so doing.

Thus the Psalmist declared of all who abide under the shadow of the Almighty-"He shall cover thee with his feathers (pinions, strong wing feathers), and under his wings shalt thou trust"Psa. 91: 4. Our Lord's words at the close of His ministry, as He wept over Jerusalem at the time of Israel's rejection of Him, Matt. 23: 37, also illustrate this important and comforting lesson of God's loving and powerful protection over all those who truly say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in Him will I trust."

A Rendezvous with God

(Convention Address)

"And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee, from above the mercy seat". —Exod. 25: 22.

A RENDEZVOUS with God! A trysting-place where He will condescend to come near to His servant Moses in intimate communion, and there unfold His will. A meeting-ground provided by God Himself where He, the high and lofty One inhabiting eternity, will hold special converse with a mortal man. Wonderful indeed was such

a mercy-seat, center of close communion and unique revelation, that holy place where Moses, “faithful in all his house as a servant”, might be alone with God. How exceptional were his privileges, and how extraordinary the revelations he received in this rendezvous with God. See Num. 7: 89; 8; 9; 10; etc.

And yet this was only a typical approach into God’s presence. Wonderful though it was, yet it was but a shadow cast before, giving promise of better and greater things to come. In a time, then distant, with a glory far excelling, a great “Mercy-seat” would be provided by God in His progressive purposes; then again with still more sublime meaning He would speak to recipients of His grace, saying, “And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the Mercy-seat.” In due time “Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house are we,” would be the center of a greater intimacy with God, a great unfolding of His grace, and a richer inheritance, “eternal in the heavens.” Truly, “if what faded had its glory, then what lasts will be invested with far greater glory”; and now through the spirit, and by a nearer approach to God, “we all mirror the glory of the Lord with face unveiled, and so we are being transformed into the same likeness as himself, passing from one glory to another”²-2 Cor. 3: 11, 18, Moffatt translation.

Well indeed should we call to mind that holy men of old “searched diligently concerning the grace that should be the happy estate of some favoured ones in a coming day”—our day. We should never forget that righteous men of other ages could not see or hear things now unfolded to us and placed within our reach, “which things’ even “the angels desire to look into.” Never should we forget that

“Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.”

But now, since God has in Christ reconciled us unto Himself, “from above the Mercy-seat” He sends the word of His grace to us through His ministering apostle; “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from ‘a consciousness of evil’ (Diag.) and our bodies washed with pure water”—Heb. 10: 19-22.

God was indeed in Christ reconciling us unto Himself. He was in Christ in such intimate union, in such sympathetic tenderness, and in such immeasurable sacrifice that His redemptive love remains too profound for us to fathom, and costly beyond our comprehending. How dear to the heart of God are His blood-bought children. What insight into the depths of that love comes to those grateful receptive hearts who keep constant tryst with God close by His own lovingly provided Mercy-seat. What words from above that great propitiatory are heard there, and how much those words are constantly needed by even the most faithful saints. Dark stains from the pit from whence we were digged can flash across the mind. Recollections can come which send a dart of pain through the now cleansed conscience; and moments, acts, and memories we fain would forget forever, can come trooping back like a cloud over the spirit within. How all this painful recollection will be shut out from our unsullied and unbroken communion in heaven, we know not; but while we are yet tabernacling in flesh wherein is no perfect righteousness, it is well that we do visualise at times the “horrible pit” and the “miry clay” out of which redeeming love has lifted us. Praise be to Him by whose kind favour we have been washed, cleansed, and sanctified, and there is therefore now “no condemnation.”

Oh, the peace the Saviour gives. Truly, “He is our peace.” The past, with all its stains and shadows, its foolishness and indiscretions, is under the blood—that efficacious, full-atoning blood which “cleanseth us from all sin.” The voice which speaks from “above the Mercy-seat” speaks peace, the perfect peace of which the Psalmist wrote, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered”—Psa. 32: 1. A blessed state surely is this when concerning it an apostle challenges—“Who will bring accusation against God’s chosen ones? Will that God who justifies? Who is he who condemns? Will that anointed one who died? and, still more, who also is at the right hand of God, and who intercedes on our behalf? Who shall separate us from that love of God, which is in the Anointed Jesus?” —Rom. 8: 33-35, Diaglott.

“We have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have been introduced into this favour in which we stand; and we boast in hope of the glory of God”—Rom. 5: 1, 2, Diaglott. “This favour in which we stand”—what a heritage it is. Here “the God of peace” shall be with us, “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the holy spirit” stabilize us; and here we may be filled “with all joy and peace in believing, that ye

may abound in hope, through the power of the holy spirit”—Phil. 4: 9; Rom. 14: 17; 15: 13. How complete is our peace **with** God, and how marvellous the peace **of** God into which it leads us. Does life have its disturbing incidents, and problems their disquieting distractions? Are there burdens of our own to bear, and loads borne by others we must share in fulfilling the law of Christ? None are immune from such personal burdens, nor exempt from such load sharing, if so be they are true to God and His children. But has God not said, “I will commune with thee from above the Mercy-seat”? And there He speaks, “Be not anxious about anything; but in everything let your petitions be made known to God; by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving; and that peace of God which surpasses all conception, shall guard your hearts and your minds by Christ Jesus”—Phil. 4: 6, 7, Diaglott. What a “Mercy-seat” is ours! Blessed rendezvous with God, where weary spirits often find relief, oft escape the snare of the tempter, and find at times a ladder such as Jacob saw, and exclaim with him, “This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!”—Gen. 28: 17.

Wonderful words came from the lips of Jesus, words of life and beauty indeed. Words illuminating prophetic pages, words establishing new standards of life and conduct, and words so laden with endearment that we are left in speechless **wonderment**. To those with whom God can commune “from above the Mercy-seat” the word is, “The Father **Himself** loveth you.” Loves us! Yes! but with what an astounding depth and measure! Jesus gave us its dimensions. . . . “And that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, **as thou hast loved me**”—John 16: 27; 17: 23. Could there be, therefore, any surer test of our nearness to God through Christ than in finding our hearts responding with an inexpressible gladness to such declarations of so unique a place in the love of God? If, as we are told, “the goodness of God leadeth to repentance”, it must surely follow that when repentance has prepared the way for this further revelation of divine love, a greatly increased inflow of love to God will lift one up where communion above the Mercy-seat will be habitually sought after, blessedly real, and give to the whole perspective a maturity embracing greater nearness to God, greater light on His inspired Word, and richer foretastes of heavenly fellowship.

Do we ask if God really craves this close, intimate, reciprocal love from us, or wonder if He finds in our ardent affections toward Him an odour of sweet incense? Can it be that His emotional depths are stirred in a special way by the warmth of our responsive love, when, as we know, He has the sublime, unceasing, outpouring adoration of heaven’s higher creatures? His Word reveals that it is even so. Is He not asking for this love in His appeal, “My son, give me thine heart?” Is it not the same appeal in this other word to us, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.” Herein we perceive the divine delight in our love. He does rejoice in its overflowing purity and permanence. He is love, and it is the very character of true love to crave reciprocation. He who bestowed mother love upon woman-kind, bestowed it out of the fathomless depths of His own great parental affection. Our power to love with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind was given us to this great end. We turn the pages of the written Word, and we gaze upon the reflection of infinite love revealed in the Living Word, and love begets love, reciprocal affection becomes a consuming joy within, and from our inner being we say

“Take my love, my God; I pour

At Thy feet its treasure store;

Take myself — I wish to be

Ever, only, all for Thee.”

But if we would know God’s love thus drawing powerfully on our heart’s love, how much we need to remember that it is found only around His own appointed trysting place, “the blood-bought Mercy-seat.” This is where the Apostle brings us, saying, “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins”—1 John 4: 10. It is therefore clear that only when we keep habitual rendezvous with God at the Mercy-seat, only then will our love for Him rise up as a sweet incense, rejoicing His heart. Then too, since love is the fulfilling of the law, where, if not in this same hallowed place where God communes with us from above the Mercy-seat, will His love become shed abroad in the heart, broadening and deepening until God and neighbour are loved according to the command in which Jesus epitomized the whole law? Truly, it is through abiding in this sacred spot where God meets with man that we find joy and rest in His love, there receive and reflect His love, and there commune with joy unspeakable and full of glory. There indeed “Heaven comes down our souls to greet, While glory crowns the Mercy-seat.”

Blessed rendezvous with God!

Words of assured forgiveness have come from Him who promised to meet us at our Mercy-seat. Wonderful words of love have also been spoken there to our cleansed and dedicated hearts. The past has been put under the

blood, and the present made a blessed walk of close communion with God. But still there is more to follow. How like the Lord to speak again and say to us now as He said to brethren long ago—”**These things** have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full”—John 15: 11. And that our joy may now be complete He has spoken words calculated to give us the assurance that all we have committed to Him for the future is safely placed in His keeping. By virtue of our being His purchased possession, bought by the blood of His own dear Son, can we not by faith believe that He who began His good work in us will surely complete it? He who is able to make all grace abound toward us and whose spirit bears witness with ours, does indeed speak to us “from above the Mercy-seat”, enabling us to rejoice in a hope both sure and steadfast. “He shall give his angels charge over thee” is a blessed promise. Another is equally assuring: “The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand”—Psa. 121: 5. Again, “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty”—Psa. 91: 1. Such comfort coming from a Keeper who never slumbers nor sleeps, must, if we be true-hearted, give us faith to say, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day”—2 Tim. 1: 12. We read this inspiring message—”Now to him who is able to keep you from slipping and to make you stand unblemished and exultant before his glory—to the only God, our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and for all time”—Jude 24,25, Moffatt translation.

Here, surely, is a message “from above the Mercy-seat” peculiarly comforting and assuring at this particular time. To such as are now waiting in hope “for the grace that is to be brought unto you **at the revelation of Jesus Christ**”, what rest of heart there is in knowing that our trust is in One able to keep us from slipping and to make us stand exultant and unblemished before His glory. “He is **able to keep you** from falling.” He who knows us, each one, with all our weakness, He who knows our “unprofitable” service and all about our mistakes and failings, yet “He is able to keep us, each one.” Faith believes He can and will, for

“His love in times past forbids me to think
He’ll leave me at last in trouble to sink;
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review
Confirms His good pleasure to keep me quite through.”

All along the way there has never been wanting “from above the Mercy-seat” the word in season for present needs. God has never failed to speak to us through the medium of His all-embracing Word. Comfort, warning, great and precious promise, reproof, everything necessary to our fellowship with Him, He has spoken. And now, even this wonderful **now** in which we live, there comes the message by which we are in a special way privileged to keep a rendezvous with God. On the border-line we stand, our salvation so much nearer than when we first believed. All along we have been privileged to know “a place than all beside more sweet”, a trusting place of prayer and communion where “the oil of gladness on our heads” has been no figment of our imagination, but a true witness of God’s spirit bearing witness with our own. He who had spoken forgiveness full and abiding, and sent into our life the needed heart-strengthening words of endearment, has spoken in just as faithful a manner to loyal hearts those words whereby such may rejoice in hope of a final attainment of the glory to which they have been elected in the love and foreknowledge of God. Thus, among the incidents and diversified experiences of life we treasure recollections that memory preserves for us as hallowed resting-places and to which our hearts turn for fresh encouragement when faith needs reminders of God’s never-failing love and care. And He who has spoken the word of good cheer to our hearts along the way over which we have thus far come, will not be silent to us now in times like these in which we live. As before, so He will continue to speak to us “from above the Mercy-seat”, giving strength for daily needs and assuring us that soon, perhaps very soon, He will have us with Him yonder in His immediate presence. Then face-to-face, and in a glory excelling all our previous conceptions, ours will be an eternal rendezvous with God.

Thanks be unto Him for all past and present joys of communion through Christ our Mercy-seat. Praise His Name that even here in the house of our pilgrimage He has walked with us and communed with us in such price-less fellowship. In love and joy we now long for the hour when no more with veil between, we shall see Him in all His glory and know the rapture of a perfect communion with our Father, and with a Bridegroom whom our soul loves supremely. How transporting the prospect — this eternal rendezvous in glory.

O sacred union with the Perfect Mind!
Transcendent bliss, which Thou alone canst give,
How blest are they this Pearl of price who find,
And, dead to earth, have learned in Thee to live!

And thus, while dead to human hopes I lie,
Lost, and forever lost, to all but Thee,
My happy soul, since it has learned to die,
Has found new life in Thine infinity.

With joy we learn this lesson of the cross,
And tread the toilsome way which Jesus trod;
And counting present life and all things loss,
We find in death to self the life of God.

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.—
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What is That in Thine Hand?

(Contributed Address)

THAT is a question that comes into our minds; what can we do to serve the Lord? We have different backgrounds and different talents. Opportunities come and go, and how can we best use them? Our lesson just now is to discuss some of the opportunities that may come and how we can use them, and how the Lord can bless them, because most of us are limited to just little opportunities, and sometimes it is easy to forget the little opportunities.

We are going to consider some illustrations in the distant past, and near past and maybe the present, to show how God, if there is a willing mind and heart, can bless in most wondrous ways the desire to serve Him.

We will read first Exodus 3: 1-6. "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover, he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."

To really appreciate this we have to go back a distance in Moses' life and remember how he was put into the little ark by his mother, a Hebrew lady, for she was afraid he might be slain because he was a Hebrew child. Pharaoh's daughter found him and saw him with compassion, and took him into her home to raise him as her own son. Moses was educated in all the history and knowledge of the Egyptians. He was a very commanding and pleasant man. But the time came when he saw an Egyptian persecuting a Hebrew, and he took action because even though he was brought up in Pharaoh's home, his mother was his tutor in his formative years and he still considered himself an Israelite. The next day he began to separate some Israelites who were fighting. Pharaoh heard of it and became incensed, and Moses was driven out of Egypt. He came to the well in Midian, where the daughters of Jethro were trying to water their sheep and some rough men interfered, and Moses interceded on their behalf and watered the animals. They were pleased because a handsome young man came to the rescue. They went back home to their father and told him, and he said, Why didn't you invite him to the home? So they did, and finally Moses married one of the girls. He kept the flocks of his father in law for 40 years.

Then comes this scene we read about. I can imagine Moses on that particular day. He must have been caring for the sheep himself. He was on the mountain-side, and hardly slept that night. He got out of his little makeshift tent, put on his garments, home made—quite a contrast to the ones worn back in the palace of Pharaoh. He put on his sandals, quite worn by the rough terrain, and watched his sheep, the flock of his father in law. He took up his stick to direct the sheep, turn over stones, kill snakes. He probably had it a long time. It was just another day when he got up. Moses little realised that that day he had a rendezvous with history. He was walking right out into the pages of history, to remain there forever.

One time, too, we were just starting our day when something happened. One sister told me that once she got up and turned on the radio, which she was not used to doing, and heard Frank and Ernest, and it rang a bell in her

mind. This sister told me in her conversation that ordinary day became a special day, because she realised later that God had directed that message to her, and turning on the radio was not by chance.

The experience of Moses in the desert on that day was so personal from God's standpoint, and it pictures our contact with God. The Truth is brought to us as definitely and personally by God as God spoke to Moses that day. No one gets the Truth and responds to it unless God Himself has done it. That is an ennobling thought, to realise God spoke to us, one day a long or short time ago as He spoke to Moses at the burning bush.

God said, Moses, it is time to go back and deliver your people. He said, Me go back, Lord? and began remonstrating. He said, Look at me, if I walk in the palace of Pharaoh like this—look at my clothing, made by my wife, it is not like they wear in the palace of Pharaoh. If I walked into the palace dressed like this he would not pay attention to me. He would not even listen to me. Besides, I have an impediment in my speech. The Lord began to talk to him. The Lord said, I want you to go. Moses said, Even the Israelites would not pay any attention to me. They would say, Who do you think you are? Moses said, You cannot mean me!

When the Truth came to us we responded, but when it came to the point of consecration many of us began to shy away and could hardly accept the fact that God wanted us to be a part of the Bride of Christ. That bothered me. I said, God would not want me, I am a sinner.

God talked to Moses and said, Moses, what is that in your hand? He said, What do you mean? Then we read in Exod. 4: 2—"The Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, a rod." He probably looked at it before he answered and said, I took that out of a tree maybe ten years ago. It is a stick or rod. God said, Moses, put it on the ground. On the ground it became a snake. He said, Pick it up. If he said that to me, I would be afraid to pick it up. But Moses picked it up and it became a rod again. God said, Moses, you go down to Egypt. That is all you have got, but it is all you need. I am with you..

There is a lesson in that. All the Lord wants is a willing heart, a willing mind, and faith and zeal to serve Him. And Moses went down in history with just a stick in his hand, but faith in his heart that God would use him in the way God said he would use him.

In the same chapter we read that Moses got ready to go to Egypt. He laid the rod very carefully on the beast of burden. And you know, that rod changed ownership, because we read in verse 20—"And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt; and Moses took the rod of God in his hand." It was not his rod any more, it was God's. And there is a lesson in that for us; for when we consecrate we must mean what we say when we give our time, our talent, our money, our thoughts, our feet, our hands, our lips, everything to the Lord. If we mean it, we try to use everything for God. We must look for opportunities, for God cansay to us, What is that in thine hand ? today or tomorrow.

For a few minutes we are going to talk about how God has blessed some simple things in the past, that somebody had in their hands and were willing to use in God's service. As we notice some of these things in the past, we are going to see God can do miracles with simple little things in the hands of a true servant.

Away back in the days of Israel, at night-time we see the Israelites clustering in little groups in the hills. They had been driven out by a band of ruffians in the valleys because of their superior numbers. Then they began to fade away. A man was looking very intently into the valley and one said, What are you going to do? He said, We are going to fight. There are not many of us, but God is with us. How can you few fight those thousands down there? But he walked away, and he was talking to about a hundred people. They got up close to him. They said, What is that you have in your hand? He said, That is an earthenware pitcher. What is that in the pitcher? It is a light. And he has a trumpet. How can you fight the army down there with that? He said, God will be with us. That was Gideon, with his small band of 300. They had an earthen vessel and a light and a trumpet. Circling the hills of that valley, at a signal they broke the pitchers and called, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon! and the hosts of Midian began to fight one another. God defeated the Midianites with 300 Israelites. All they had in their hands was that simple pitcher and light and trumpet, but they were willing to be used of God in His service.

Moses had a stick, Gideon had a pitcher. If you have in your heart a desire to serve God, He will bless you in some way with an opportunity.

Then we think of something else. We are a long way back in the history of Israel, standing on a hill by the army of Israel. They are in battle array. Before them is a deep valley, and across the valley another army. The Israelites are afraid. We wonder why. Over there the army is very defiant, and there is a man shouting all sorts of unlovely things about them and their God. Why don't they do something about it? We are just going to walk up to them when here comes a young man, and we say, Where are you going? He says, Down there. We say, What have you

in your hand? He says, Some pebbles. What are you doing with pebbles? I am going to fight that giant, because he is defying the God of Israel. It is David. And David, with pebbles in his hand and a sling, but faith in his heart, went down into the valley and met Goliath, that ugly, evil giant. That is all he had, but he felled the giant. That is what he had been fighting animals with, just as Moses had been using the stick. But God could use it. Because he had faith, he was willing to be used.

So what we have got in our hands that we can use? There must be something there!

Then we go to another instance. Let us suppose we are closer to home in time, in the time of our Lord. Let us imagine we are at Bethany. We sometimes have moments of reverie, thinking of those far-away days of our Lord and trying to visualize some of these scenes in the Bible. I would like to visit the home at Bethany and look into the rooms where Jesus and the Apostles were, and see the soft glow of the oil lamp, and stand in the doorway and say, That is John, and that is Peter, and there is Andrew, and there is Jesus. In my mind I have done that. But suppose we are there one time and see a young woman stand in the doorway. We go close to her and see her with something in her hand. She breaks the alabaster box of ointment on the Saviour's head. Some say she should not have done it. Jesus says, Wait a minute. That perfume filled the whole room. Jesus said it was an anointing for His burial. The perfume is not only all over Bethany, it is all over Jerusalem, and you can smell it in the hall here tonight. And why? Because Jesus said wherever the Gospel is preached this will be told as a memorial of her. She had done what she could. It was all she had, but she wanted to serve.

What can we do to serve who are here tonight? What do we have? Let us suppose we are back in the days of the Lord and the Apostles and we watch a man sewing, He is sewing sails for a boat. What is your name? Paul. What are you doing? I sew and make sails to earn a living so I can preach the gospel of Christ. His job was making money to serve the Truth and the Lord. And brethren, that is all he had, really. But he had in his heart faith in God and a desire to serve Him, and God blessed him in a most remarkable way.

I can think of something else in this connection. I can see somebody, away back in the time of the Apostles. Two people have their heads together. I said, What are you talking about? We have a little time on our hands, and are going to take a walk down the road. What do you mean, a walk down the road? We want to go to meet somebody. And they went down this road to the seacoast to meet somebody, and looked at a boat coming in. There are a lot of people, but there is one man near the railing looking unhappy. He was discouraged. Then the boat nudges in and someone says, There he is! They say, Go get Paul and bring him down. But the reason this is important is that God allowed them to do that—they had the time, and Paul needed encouragement. When Paul saw them, the record, in Acts 28: 15, says he “took courage.” But God blessed them, didn't He? God knew Paul needed someone to say, Be courageous, we love you, you are our brother. There may be someone in Melbourne discouraged, lonely, who needs some comfort. It will take some time and some prayer. What have we got in our hands?

Let us come down here to our time. Let us suppose we see a young man in his twenties, 5'11" and nicely built. We say, What have you got in your hand? A lot of money—about 250,000 dollars. What are you going to do with that? Serve God. God has shown me His truth. I have seen the Truth of His Word that embraces God's mystery from before anything was created, and reaches down to the time when His kingdom is completely established in the earth. I said, What is your name? Charles Taze Russell. When he saw the presence of the Lord, he put all his business affairs in order and devoted all his time to the Lord. The next time you see the hand it is cold, lifeless. There is nothing in it, of money. He spent all his money to preach the gospel.

What have we, anything at all? How can we use it? We have all got something in our hands, but we need to have God's blessing and say, Help me, Lord, to see how I can use this to preach the Truth. He can make a miracle from a stick or a pebble or a box of perfume.

What else might we think of? I think of a brother, a man about 40 years old. He cannot see very well. I say, What are you doing? He says, I am writing a card to a sister. Yes, she needs it. I could not read the card, but I met the sister he wrote it to, years ago in 1937 on a pilgrim trip. I was at the home of two maiden sisters who had been school teachers all their lives in that community. They were in their seventies. I said, Sister, how did you get the Truth? She said, My sister in the other room got it first. She said, I was sick and had a long period of convalescence. I read the First Volume and got the Truth of God. I knew I had to live the Truth. I was a pillar in the Church; I was a teacher and in charge of all the Sunday School work. I knew when I said I would leave the Church I would be ostracized. When that meeting came it would be terrible for me. She said, This brother came out to see her, and she told him she was worried. He said, Why? She said, I must say publicly at the meeting why I cannot be any longer a member of the Church. She gave him the date. She said, Seven days before the meeting I got a card, and it said, Sister, I have not forgotten you. At the time you are in the meeting I will be on my knees praying for you. She said, That did help—even though it was only a card, written in pencil.

What have we in our hands? What can we do? Perhaps you think, I have nothing. But you have something; a stick or a stone, or a few dollars or a pencil and paper—we all have something. It does not have to be something big and great and wonderful, but we must have a heart loving God and His people and His Truth and looking for ways to serve and please Him.

Years ago when I was first at the Dawn, I used to be there when an old coloured brother came in from the West Indies, Brother Brown. He was old, and his hair looked like it was frosted. He walked with a slow shuffle. He had been a pilgrim, but was now too old. He lived in New York State, which is piled with people. Every week or two he would come in to the Dawn humming a song, and he had a deep, melodious voice. That dear brother, every day, put out tracts from door to door. That was all he could do, but he did it, and I am sure the Lord blessed him.

What do we have in our hands? Do we have anything at all ?

I remember the first time we went to England, a brother gave us some money and said, Give this to some of the friends who need it. In one little town in Hampshire, lived a brother who got £1 a week pension. Since 1914 he had meetings in his home. They lived very frugally. We talked about it and I said, How about taking this \$10 brother back home wants to give it to someone, and you can use it. So we gave the name of the brother, which he had said not to do. When we got home, he had received a letter from the sister. She knew certain ones she thought had needs—clothing and so on. She had taken the \$10 given to her and used it for somebody else. They had thanked her, and she had sent the thanks to the brother back home. She had something in her hand, and served God with it.

What can you do here to serve God? I am sure there is something.

A brother we saw had a tract. We met a brother who had come into the Truth, and we said, How did you get the Truth? He said, I was going to a town in the Mid-west, and walked into a railway waiting room and there was a tract on the counter. Some man ran off the train and put it on the counter and ran back. This was a Do-You-Know? tract, and I began to read it. God used that man to show me the Truth. That is all he had in his hand.

What do we have in our hands today, tomorrow? It may be all we can do is pray; or put out a tract; or write a letter to someone who needs it; or just smile at somebody. Maybe someone needs an arm around their shoulder; maybe someone can use some help in the work of preaching the Truth. The important thing is that if we are consecrated, we have something in our hands. Use it! If you do, how blessed you will be. And the blessing may be something that reaches to all eternity.

So what can we do? We can say this

“Take my life and may it be,
Lord, acceptable to Thee;
Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.
“Take my feet and let them be Swift on errands,
Lord for Thee; Take my voice and let it bring
Honour always to my King.
“Take my lips and let them be Moved
with messages from Thee;
Take my silver and my gold;
Nothing, Lord, would I withhold.
“Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in constant praise;
Take my intellect and use
Every pow’r as Thou shalt choose.
“Take my will and make it Thine;
It shall be no longer mine;

Take myself—I wish to be
Thus in me Thyself enthroned.
“Take my love, my God;
I pour At Thy feet its treasure store;
Take my heart, it is Thine own;
Ever, only, all for Thee.”

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM *Australia, 3101.*

Love not the World

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him”—1 John 2: 15.

THERE never has been a time during this Gospel Age when the Apostle's advice in this text was easy to carry out to the satisfaction of the new mind of the Lord's people. The same is very true today as we approach the end of this age. The Christian's pilgrimage was never intended to be an easy one, for the testing and proving of character is essential in the present life of each member of God's prospective sons for the heavenly inheritance.

It was our Lord Jesus who declared—“Because strait (difficult) is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life (immortality), and few there be that find it”—Matt. 7: 14. This being so, we can the better understand our Lord's prayer to the Father on behalf of His followers on the last night of His earthly ministry—“I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world”—John 17: 15, 16. In accord with these words of our Lord's prayer, is the expression often made with reference to His followers—they are in the world but not of the world. What does this imply? How different are the Lord's people to be from the world at large, to be not of the world?

The following few lines from “The New Creation” should be helpful—“The world and its spirit of pride, selfishness, etc., must be recognised as one of the chief foes of the Lord's people. The whole world of mankind, operating under this general ‘spirit of the world’, is moving in one general direction, as a great river, in some parts of which there is greater swiftness, and in other parts greater sluggishness, but all, nevertheless, following in the same general selfish direction. The Lord's follower, by his consecration, by the spirit of his new mind, is obligated to an adverse course, and is, therefore, opposed by all the current of popular sentiment, theory, tradition, etc., and marked as peculiar. He has friction to contend with. He necessarily is in antagonism to those who are going in the opposite direction, and who come in touch with him. This collision cannot be avoided. It means not outward peace but outward conflict; this outward conflict, however, may signify inward peace and joy because divine approval is realised.”

The followers of the Master realise that all their talents are fully committed to the Lord's service. This means that much carefulness should be exercised in the expenditure of time and means which may be available from actual labors required to earn a living in the world. Even in our homes the purchase of new furnishings, etc., from time to time may seem desirable, but may not be really essential. The words of Jesus may be helpful here—“Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth”—Luke 12: 15. We have known some of the Lord's people, for instance, to have furnished their homes not with expensive wall to wall carpets, but with cheaper floor coverings and rugs, and were perfectly happy in foregoing those things which the world may feel are essential.

In comparatively recent times extremes in apparel have been introduced into the markets of the world. In the business world there is much competition as to which fashion house can produce the most attractive and appealing female apparel in particular. Often in the struggle for the greatest profits, extremes in the clothing trade are produced to appeal especially to the teenage groups with mini skirts becoming more and more daring. This is a cause for much concern with parents of teenage children. Good advice is no doubt best encouraged by example, and the Christian parent will do well to resist the extreme worldly trend in accord with the apostle's exhortation in our text.

More recently there has appeared in the fashion shops clothing for women more or less resembling male attire known for a great many years as trousers. These new styles were first of all mainly for younger women and used on hiking trips, etc. With increased competition more and more varieties of these garments are produced with the

title of slack suits, and have become more and more popular with women of the world of all ages. Just why some women wish to appear attired in garments similar to men is not easy to understand. In the early stages of this trend that which was new and novel probably was the reason. Some people are attracted to anything new and different, however unreasonable it may seem at the time.

In the Lord's family there would seem nothing to commend this worldly style of dress for the sisters. It is clear that the Lord and the apostles desire different service from the sisters to that of the brothers, and that each should be proud of their sex and leave no doubt in their appearance as to what service they should undertake for Him. The sisters have important service to perform for the Lord which, if carried out faithfully, is just as acceptable to the Lord as the more public service of the brothers. That this new trend is of the world and is promoted for business reasons there can be no doubt. One of the exhortations from the Apostle James is that the Lord's people "keep themselves unspotted from the world." Even if the majority of the women of the world adopt this mode of dress, the Christian women would stand out even more as a witness for the Lord. This then would be something commendable.

The fact that the Lord gave strict instructions to His typical people, Israel, respecting the appearance of garments worn by each sex should also not be overlooked, as found in Deut. 22: 5—"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God." There may be differences of opinion as to how this text should apply to the Lord's people today, but we feel sure those Christians who adhere to the apostle's injunction to "love not the world" and give evidence of this in a practical manner will have the Lord's approval and blessing.

Moses .. Put off thy shoes Holy Ground

(Convention Address)

THE Bible is a wonderful book, and it is important that we continue to look into it. At this time I draw your attention to Exod. 3: 4, 5. We have here a very nice thought. Everybody knows that passage very well, but we must refresh our minds often. We do not hear at the Convention things we have never heard before. The things we speak about here are old things; we have heard them many times.

This story is very nice. Moses was a great and wonderful man. Please read Exod. 3: 1-5. Everybody knows this story very well, but when we read the Bible we know the Apostle Paul says, It is written for our admonition, not only for the people of Moses' time. We read the Bible, and there is something more than the straight story. We would like to turn our minds to this account.

There are four points in the story. The first thing, the voice of God was speaking to Moses from the middle of the bush. The second point, the burning bush. The third thing is the holy ground. The fourth thing is Moses was to remove his shoes from off his feet.

Firstly, I would like to speak about what God says—"Moses, Moses, take your shoes off from your feet." There is a meaning here for us, because Moses was a man of God. God spoke to many people in the Bible, not only to Moses. We know very well God spoke to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, to Samuel, to many men, and to Moses also God spoke many times. But only once God said. Take off your shoes, because the place where you stand is holy ground. Only this time. The shoes mean something for us. Moses no doubt had rather uncomfortable shoes, like the shepherds wore. They were strong enough to walk behind the sheep, and maybe Moses made the shoes himself. But Moses was not only a shepherd, he was looking to the country he came from. He had been 40 years in the wilderness. Maybe he even asked God about something, and God showed him something when He said, Take your shoes off your feet. Moses took his shoes off his feet, and walked on the ground.

Many times when we go inside the house, we clean our shoes, but if we look at them, they are not really clean. When we use our shoes they are often very dirty. There is something meant here in the story of Moses. When we are coming close to God's people, to God's congregation, God is speaking to us on holy ground. What would the shoes mean? I think the shoes can mean, for us, something like earthly things. When we come together to praise God, He likes us to take our shoes off; to leave the shoes behind, do not bring them inside here, when we come together to study the Bible. That is an important matter for us, when God speaks to us as He did to Moses. We would think Moses was very happy about the things of which God spoke to him.

Very nicely the Apostle Paul in Heb. 1: 1 says—"God, who in sundry times and in divers manners spake." Here Paul says God spoke many times to people, at different times. To Moses God spoke the longest time. "And the Lord spoke to Moses face to face." Only once in the Bible this happened. God spoke to him face to face from the middle of the bush.

Now, we know that in the Golden Age God will speak to mankind only from the bush. The burning bush, I think, means the Church, the people of God. Now, we are in the Narrow Way; we can hear God's voice only from the bush. Rev. 1: 13, 15 very nicely explains that God chose this way; from the middle of the bush God speaks to us. See also Isa. 52: 7. Everyone who hears our Lord's voice, men and women and children, are greatly blessed. One of our brothers spoke to us about the blessedness of the man who can see with his eyes. Now we have an additional thought—Blessed is the man who can hear the Lord's voice. See Luke 11: 28; and John 10: 3, 4.

In Psalm 23: 1 we are told the Lord is our Shepherd. The sheep hear His voice. The Apostle John wrote in chapter 10 that everyone who knows the truth and comes to the truth should know the Lord's voice. When the Apostle Paul was going to Damascus he fell down on the ground because of the Lord's glory. The Lord spoke to him, but all the people who were there did not hear the voice at all. The same thing can happen now. The Lord can speak to us, but nobody else can hear the voice. Sometimes the husband hears the voice and the wife does not hear. Sometimes the Lord speaks to the wife and the husband does not hear. We must know about this.

In Isa. 30: 21 we read—”And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it.” Sometimes the voice is behind us, very quiet, nobody else can hear it. We should very often apply our ear and heart to what the Lord wants to say to us; then we can get the blessing.

Then talking about the shoes, I think the Apostle Paul has a thought for us in Phil. 3: 18, 19 respecting those who “mind earthly things.” think the shoes are earthly things. Sometimes they are large things, sometimes only small things. Also in Col. 2: 11, and chapter 3: 7, 10, the Apostle speaks of “putting off” the former things before we knew the Lord. When we come to the Lord and give Him our hearts we give Him everything and should forget about the things we did before. We should know from the time we consecrate to the Lord we should be a new man in Christ.

We read the story concerning Martha and Mary in Luke 10: 38-42. Martha and Mary were good sisters. They loved Jesus Christ, and were lovely women. In this incident, maybe the last time Jesus went to the house, Martha was in the kitchen doing something while Mary listened to Jesus' words. Martha came to Jesus and said, Lord, I do everything in the kitchen and Mary does not give me a hand. What do you think about it? And the Lord said, “Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” So the shoes can sometimes mean small things, very little things. When we come together at Convention time or at the meetings, we should leave the shoes at home. When we come here, we should not be thinking about the things we left at home. So we realise this is holy ground. Around the bush was holy ground. When the bush is a meeting, around the bush or around the meeting is holy ground. “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God”—Eccles. 5: 1.

Then we have the exhortation in Luke 21: 34. We should remember about our heart. In many things they are overcharged, especially in this time when conditions are rather hard. Our minds and hearts should be ready to hear something from the Bible. When we go home we should ask ourselves, What did I get from the meeting? What can I bring home? Many things I bring home, and that is very nice.

In Psalm 122: 1 we read—”I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.” David was very happy when he went to the house of the Lord. Are we happy as he was? I think we are. I think our Convention should be holy ground. The holy ground was around the burning bush. I remember the Catholics think Rome is holy ground. I come from a Catholic country, and many people there believe in holy ground, and holy water too. The Jews believe the wailing wall is holy ground. They go and pray and kiss the stone; that is holy ground to them. We are Bible students, and we believe the holy ground is around the Church.

The Apostle Peter says in 1 Pet. 2: 9—”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.” I believe the holy ground is the Ecclesia, the congregation, the Church of Christ. Where two or three gather together in His name, He is in that place. This is holy ground. The holy ground is around the Church; and not only around the Church, but around the family. God gives many blessings in the Christian family.

The Lord is my shepherd

The Prophet David wrote the 23rd Psalm concerning himself; but in his words there is still deeper signification, namely, that Jehovah is the Shepherd of the anti-typical David—The Christ, of which Jesus is the Head and the Church His Body.

In proportion as any are in an attitude of mind in harmony with the Lord they are out of harmony with their present environment, in which the great Adversary is seeking their destruction, under conditions unfavourable for

their spiritual development as the Lord's "sheep." Foxes, wolves, lions and even cattle have means of defense and offense; but the sheep has practically none. It seems to have no judgment; therefore, the sheep is dependent on the shepherd. In other words, it is out of its environment if away from the shepherd. God provided for man's protection, but by reason of sin the race got into the wilds and became exposed to various difficulties which otherwise would not have been man's lot.

Those who are the "sheep" will come back into harmony with the Lord. As represented in our text, the Church class comes back in the present time. We all recognise, as the days go by, how necessary is the Divine care. As we come to see the Divine Plan, we see that "all who are of this fold," all those who will come into harmony with God, will have this care; and that eventually there shall be one Shepherd and one flock.

Our Lord Jesus is the representative of the Father. Humanity, as the Lord's sheep, went astray. All of Adam's posterity are now astray. The Great Shepherd sent His Son for the lost sheep. He is seeking them and will ultimately find all who belong to this true flock. He is, therefore, in the highest sense of the word, the Bishop, or Shepherd of our souls, the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep.

OUR BIBLE TRANSLATED

A new print has been made recently of the very interesting and informative booklet, "Our Bible Translated", compiled **some** time ago by the brethren of "The Dawn". To cover cost of materials this booklet is supplied at 10c per copy, post paid.

The Calf's Path

One day, through the primeval wood,
A calf walked home as good calves should:
But made a trail all bent askew,
A crooked trail as all calves do.

Since then three hundred years have fled,
And I infer the calf is dead:
But still he left behind his trail
And thereby hangs my moral tale.

The trail was taken up next day,
By a lone dog that passed that way;
And then a wise bell-wether sheep
Pursued the trail o'er vale and steep,
And drew the flock behind him too,
As good bell-wethers always do.

And as they tramped that day o'er hill and glade,
Through those old woods a path was made:
And many men wound in and out,
And dodged and turned and bent about,
Because 'twas such a crooked path,
But still they followed—do not laugh—
The first migration of that calf.

Now that forest path became a lane,
That bent and turned and turned again.
The crooked lane became a road,
Where many a poor horse with its load
Toiled on, beneath the burning sun,
And travelled some three miles in one;
And thus a century and a half
They trod the footsteps of a calf.

The years passed on in swiftness fleet,
The road became a village street,
And this, before men were aware—

A city's crowded thoroughfare,
And soon the central street was this
Of a renowned metropolis:
And men two centuries and a half,
Trode in the footsteps of a calf.

Each day a hundred thousand rout
Followed the zig-zag calf about;
And o'er the crooked journey went
The traffic of a continent,
A hundred thousand men were led
By one calf now three centuries dead,
They follow still his crooked way,
And lose one hundred years a day—
For thus such reverence is lent
To well established precedent.

Now as we ponder o'er this tale
We can perceive another trail
How men are prone to follow blind
Along the calf-paths of the mind,
And work away from sun to sun,
To do what other men have done,
They follow in the beaten track
And out and in and forth and back
And still their devious course pursue
To keep the paths that others do—
But soon they'll learn a wiser way
For lo There dawns the perfect day.

Isaiah 59: 8; 26: 9; 11: 1-9.

Little Foxes and Little Lambs, a humorous, yet thought-provoking, illustrated book of clever poetry. The first poems call attention to the "little foxes" in people's lives—common faults and failures such as lying, evil-speaking, pride, laziness, anger. Next, attention is given to the "little lambs", such as truth, humility, patience, courtesy. Children will enjoy coloring the pictures that go with the poems. Paperback, 63 pages, price 70¢ post paid.

Pilgrim Way Ended

Word has been received of the passing of our dear Sister Crouch of Toowoomba, Queensland, on 25th June last. After a long illness our elderly Sister passed away quietly and without pain for which those attending were very thankful to our Heavenly Father.

Years ago Sister Crouch, with Brother Crouch, had been associated with the W.T. Society, but becoming dissatisfied, had been isolated as Christians until they heard the broadcasts of Frank and Ernest on Brisbane radio 22 years ago. Since that time they have been in constant touch with us in the fellowship of the truth, and serving as they were able by advertising literature and showing films of the truth message from time to time.

Sincere and loving sympathy is extended to our Brother Crouch in the great loss he has sustained, but he gives thanks that Sister Crouch ever sought to follow her Master, and by His grace shall have entered into the joys of her Lord. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

Books Available

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

"God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (postage from 45¢ to \$1.00 according to distance).

"The Divine Plan of the Ages", Cloth-75¢ (postage 30¢. Paper bound-50¢ postage 30¢).

"The Creator's Grand Design"—\$1.00 (postage 30¢).

"The Book of Books"—\$1.00 (postage 30¢).

"Daily Heavenly Manna"—\$1.00 (postage 30¢).

"Songs in the Night"—\$1.00 (postage 20¢).

“Poems of Dawn”—\$2.20 (postage 20c).
“**Emphatic Diaglott**”, N. Testament—\$2.00 (postage 30c). “Tabernacle Shadows”—50c (postage 20c).
“**God and Reason**—10c (postage 7c).
“God’s Plan”—10c (postage 7c).
“**Hope Beyond the Grave**”—10c (postage 7c).
“**Israel in History and Prophecy**”—10c (postage 7c.)
“**Our Lord’s Great Prophecy**”—10c (postage 7c).
“**Manner of Christ’s Return**—10c (postage 7c).
“**Christ’s Return**—10c (postage 7c).
“**Some of the Parables**”—10c (postage 7c).
“Where Are the Dead”—10c (postage 7c).
“**Lights and Shadows in Christian Experience**”—10c (postage 7c). “**Our Bible Translated**”—10c (postage 7c).
Numerous other smaller booklets.

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 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.

“Songs in the Night”

This cloth bound book has an appropriate text and comment for every day of the year, and is really a companion book to the “Daily Heavenly Manna”, being helpful for evening use. One of our friends has kindly compiled an Index for this book, making it more useful; these have been duplicated, and are supplied free with all copies of “Songs in the Night” which is priced at \$1.00, plus 24c postage.



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Walk Worthily

(Convention Address)

THE subject we have chosen is from Ephesians, and is the Diaglott rendering of chapter 4: 1 “I exhort you, therefore, I, the prisoner for the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called.” For a few moments we will enlarge on one word of our text, or rather use that one word as a door to open two other thoughts. Paul was a very logical man; he did not use words unwisely, but with much benefit.

So Paul says—“Therefore, I exhort you.” Previous to this statement Paul had told the reason why we should walk worthily. If we could see what Paul saw, have the same vision and clarity in depth and see the same joy he saw, it would help us to walk worthily of the vocation wherewith we have been called. So we will go back to a few portions of Ephesians and review some of the high points which Paul makes concerning why he could say, Because of these things walk worthily of the vocation wherewith ye have been called. Remember how Paul did walk worthily under the most adverse circumstances. I think particularly of the time when he was in Philippi and he and Silas were preaching the gospel in that city, and they had evil men turn against them and incite a mob, and Paul and Silas were stripped of their clothing and publicly beaten, and then taken to the inner dungeon, or the lower dungeon, and their feet put in stocks. Yet Paul and Silas in that horrible condition, after having been bruised and beaten, could by midnight that night begin to sing psalms and make melody in their hearts, and after that God released them from their torturous condition. Paul saw something. He saw a wonderful vision of truth that caused him to say, Because of these things let us walk worthily. What are these things that Paul referred to in the first three chapters of Ephesians?

I am going to review just the high spots of what Paul might have seen that could give him such strength and courage and joy in adversity, which we must have; such zeal to perform as God told him he should perform in carrying out the Father’s will.

In the first chapter of Ephesians, verse 8, Paul writes—“Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.” And in the third chapter Paul speaks of this mystery or secret of God that He purposed in Himself.

To understand our call it is vital that we understand what is this mystery—this mystery of God that He purposed in Himself; this mystery which was in His mind before He created Jesus as the Logos. Back before there was a star in the night, God had this plan in His mind, this great mystery. Now, this mystery He had in His mind would, when it was accomplished, show the diversified wisdom of God, as it says in the Diaglott, or as the King James version says, the manifold wisdom of God. It would show God’s power and wisdom along many lines. What was in God’s mind before Jesus as the Logos was created? I know you all know. You are saying it to yourselves now. I won’t ask you to say it aloud. His mystery, the desire of His heart, was to have a family. God wanted a family on His plane of existence, Divine beings who could have fellowship with Him as mature Divine beings, so to speak. We know that once God was alone. Then He created the Logos, and we believe Satan and other beings, but even with the Logos God could not have that fellowship that He could have with a family who were Divine beings as He is. Long ago God desired this family. That is His eternal purpose.

This is brought to us in Psa. 132 in a most unique way. The Psalmist is writing how much he wants to build a temple for God, a house for God, and he meant the little temple that Solomon eventually built. He said he wanted to find a place, because the Ark of the Covenant was in the fields. But notice God speaks to David. In verses 13 and 14 He states—“For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.” Think of that! God had desired something in the far reaches of eternity,

and that was a Divine

family. This has been His eternal purpose. The permission of evil was allowed by God to provide the proving-ground for this family for their development, as well as demonstrating to all beings to all eternity the exceeding sinfulness of sin as they contrasted that with the majesty and grandeur and perfection of God's righteous laws in the Kingdom. But God's eternal purpose was His family. It is overpowering for us to think that this great Creator has looked down to this little earth, such a small object in space, a million of them could be put in the sun, even our own small sun. And from the teeming billions of earth He has called one here, one there, to come to Him, to Jesus by God's direction, to become part of God's own family. It is overpowering. And if we did not have the many assurances in His Word that this is true, we could not believe it. But God has kept this a secret from all except those with whom He has been dealing, and they are the prospective members of this marvellous New Creation of God, who will be made like He is and like Jesus is.

Paul saw that. He saw it with clarity. This became a motivating force in Paul's life, the fact that in God's due time Paul and others could awaken on the spirit plane and be a part of God's own Divine family. Who is worthy? He has made it clear in our text that those whom God has called in the main have been the little people among the children of earth like ourselves, that when it is all over no flesh may glory in God's sight. We will be to all eternity an exhibit of God's matchless grace. So as He has revealed Himself to us through His Word, and we see the depth of His plan, it means God is directing our lives for one objective, and that is to become Christlike in this life, crystallised in righteousness, so that by God's design we may have a part with Him on the Divine plane. And God has desired this, He says. It gives a dignity, a grandeur to the Truth that you cannot get any other way, to realise that the eternal purpose of God was His family.

Getting back to Ephesians, Paul says from verse 16, that because of this—"I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory (the Diaglott says 'the glorious Father') may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." Paul had emotion when he thought of God. What is it like to be a Divine being? No one knows. We cannot even imagine. But there is one part about the hope of our calling that we can touch and see and understand, and it is real. I thought of that in India. I saw people so poor that though they worked every day, they lived on the sidewalks and slept there every night. The mother with her children lived on the sidewalks, seeking what shade she could get. You would not believe it unless you were there. I saw the poor people with no one to care for them, lepers sticking their stubs of fingers in my face to say, Help me. I saw people with all sorts of deformities and sickness begging me for a coin.

What about our hope? Paul says, I pray God may make you realise what hope we have. Paul thought of this when he walked through the lands of his day and he saw the poverty of those times. We, by God's grace, will be hands of mercy to reach down and bless and help the whole world of mankind that is now crying for something to help them. This truth we have is something real, not a fanciful dream. If we are faithful and become part of the Bride of Christ, part of God's own Divine family, to us will be given the matchless privilege of having part in bringing lasting blessings to all the world of mankind. We will see they are not hungry, that they are not wandering hopelessly. We will see the dead come back. These are things that are vital and real to us. That is why Paul says, "I pray that the Father of glory may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your heart being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling." Paul thought of that, as he walked around the Mediterranean. Some day, by God's grace, he would be able to help those who needed to come back into their proper stature as glorious sons of God in the kingdom God had planned for them.

Paul prayed for something else. He said—"I pray you may know what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe." Paul prayed that they might realise the power God was exerting on their behalf every day. Then he gave an illustration. He said — "Which power he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." That was the greatest demonstration of power God ever gave, bringing Jesus to that Divine plane of existence—it was greater than the power displayed in creating the Universe. Paul says that power is being exerted on your behalf. That is why he said in another place—"We know that all things work together for good to them who love God, the called according to his purpose." If God is going to make us like Christ is now in disposition and character, He must suit every experience that we have, and if we believe that God is bringing them to us we will not murmur or complain, but accept those experiences cheerfully, just like Jesus when He said—"The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

I am going down to the second chapter. In Eph. 2: 4 Paul says—"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." Why Paul? Notice what he says—"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness

toward us through Christ Jesus.” The Diaglott rendering on that verse reads —”In order that he might exhibit, in those ages which are approaching, the surpassing wealth of his favor, by kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.” How will God do that in the ages which are coming? The exceeding riches of His grace. Let us imagine we are in the kingdom, and there are other beings being brought into existence in the ages beyond. And imagine that these beings being brought into existence are being tutored, as it were, at the beginning as angels must be when they are created. They might be told, That glorious Being is the Almighty Father. He has always been. He has existed from eternity to eternity. And that other glorious Being is His Son, the first being God ever created. And they might say, Who are the 144,000? Were they created next? And their tutor will say, No they were not. Look and see that little ball, it is called the Sun. And that small little thing beside it is called the little planet Earth. You can hardly see it. But these 144,000 used to be down there on that little thing called Earth. How did they get where they are now? That is quite a story. That will show the surpassing greatness of God’s kindness to us in Christ Jesus. They will learn that we were nothing by this world’s standards, but because of the little faith we exercised as God began to draw us, and had faith in God as He revealed things to us by His spirit and began to give us experiences that would develop us as New Creatures if we met them properly, that because we did this, this glorious Father raised from this little planet Earth 144,000 and placed them on His own plane of existence as Divine beings, because He desired to have that family.

So we can see what Paul means when he says that in those ages approaching God would show the surpassing wealth of His favor by His kindness towards us who are in Christ Jesus. And dear brethren, we have been the recipients of that greatest blessing that God gave to any being on the earth or anywhere in creation. God has drawn us to Himself by Christ, by His power, has revealed the secret of His will to us, and the Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, has been dealing with you and with me as His children. May we realise how wonderful is our glorious Father, and may we be faithful in serving Him acceptably until He says, Enough, my child; come up higher.

Convention News

THE Easter Convention at Adelaide, S.A., was a season of helpful spiritual fellowship. Our hearts are stirred to thankfulness and praise to our gracious and loving Heavenly Father, for the many blessings bestowed upon us during the four days of happy fellowship.

It was a pleasure to welcome a number of brethren from the Melbourne and Geelong Classes, and we were favoured by having in our midst five dear brethren from the U.S.A., and two from Canada. These visiting brethren helped us much with their constructive talks and wholesome fellowship, by the Lord’s grace.

We enjoyed the teaching of two Bible Studies in Eph. 1: 3-10; and Col. 1: 16-23. We thank God for the helpful instructions of His Word, and we ask for His grace to assist us to put into our hearts and lives the wholesome truths revealed so that we may be built up in Christian knowledge and grace.—2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.

The addresses given by the brethren were as follows—”Walk Worthily”; “In the Name of”; “A Rendezvous with God”; “Renewal of the Mind”; “A Covenant of Promise”; “Our Faithful Counsel”; “Mirrors of God’s Glory”; “Watch Israel—It is Fulfilling Prophecy”; “The Commandment of God”; “God’s Work to Usward”; “Teach Us to Pray”; “The Strong Sceptre”; “If Christ be not Risen”; “Christian Apprenticeship”; and “Eternal Life and Immortality.”

Many messages of Christian love and greetings were received from several Bible Classes and individual brethren throughout Australia, and also from brethren in U.S.A., England and India. These messages of Christian love and assurances of the prayers of the brethren were much appreciated. The Christian love and greetings from the Convention were sent to all brethren who kindly remembered us, and to all brethren everywhere, together with the Scripture found in 1 John 4: 12-16.

The “Hymns we Love and Why” session was much appreciated, and so also were the Praise and Testimony sessions. The Lord’s spirit of loving, humble service was much in evidence, being reflected in the efforts of the brethren who spoke to us words of encouragement and loving exhortation. Much appreciation was also expressed for the loving services of the sisters who attended so efficiently to our temporal needs by supplying refreshments.

The Convention closed with the Love Feast, during which all members file around shaking hands while singing “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.” Then the hymn, “God be with you till we meet again” was sung, followed by the closing prayer of thanks and praise to God for all His goodness and mercies so abundantly bestowed, and asking also for His grace and wisdom to enable us to serve Him faithfully and joyfully in the days ahead. “Praise God from Whom all blessings flow.”

Convention at Nambour, Qld.

A Convention has been arranged for Nambour, Queensland, to be held July 20th and 21st (D.V.) in the Cane Growers Hall (First Floor), 38 Lowe Street, Nambour. All friends able to attend will receive a cordial welcome.

The Institute's Work

THE privileges of service have been granted to us for another year for the Berean Bible Institute, the twelve months' period ending with the close of April. It is with thankfulness to the Lord that this brief review of the efforts for the Lord's cause is presented at this time. The continued co-operation of the dear friends throughout Australia and also overseas has been most encouraging, realising that all efforts of our brethren are gladly undertaken as to the Lord Himself. The work has been of a similar nature as in past years, and for the blessings realised from the Lord much gratitude is expressed to the Giver of every good thing.

Our bi-monthly "Peoples Paper" has been the means of continued regular contact with many brethren and friends throughout this continent and overseas. Subscriptions have been maintained on a similar level as in former years, and appreciation of the contents of the "Paper" has also been received from various localities. Sincere thanks is extended again to all who have contributed to the pages of the "Peoples Paper"; the assistance in this way being greatly appreciated.

Over the past year publishing costs have been steady, and while the postage rate has not increased, the lower weight allowed for the same postage does increase some costs, especially for books weighing just over 500 gr. For instance, postage on papers or books to Queensland or Western Australia increases from 30c to \$1.00 immediately the weight passes 500 gr. The postage on our "Peoples Paper" remained the same throughout the year, but the annual subscription of 75c does not cover the cost of production. As in previous years the deficiency is made up from the General Tract Fund, from which copies of the "Paper" are supplied free to new cases of interest. Copies of our "Peoples Paper" are also supplied to the brethren in India, as well as "Voice" tracts, for distribution there where English is read, as seems good by our Indian friends. Sincere appreciation is expressed at this time again for the helpful service of some of our Melbourne friends who gladly assist with shorthand for articles, proof reading and folding, as well as other work in the production of the "Peoples Paper".

Distribution of tracts has continued in various localities throughout the year. A new "Voice" tract—"God Has a Plan and You Are In It"—has been used along with other subjects, and a good supply of the small "Do You Know?" slips are available for witnessing to the truths of the kingdom. All friends are advised to have a supply of these tracts on hand for wise distribution, especially for special opportunities. All tracts are supplied free, being provided through the General Tract Fund.

The truths of the kingdom have been proclaimed throughout the year again over the radio of 3GL Geelong. The response to these broadcasts continues to be encouraging; quite often a number of phone calls are received immediately the session ends, and the mails bring further requests for the printed copies of broadcasts which are always offered, as well as free booklets appropriate to each subject. To all who respond to the broadcasts the "Peoples Paper" is sent free for a number of months to encourage the interest.

There can be no doubt that Sunday mornings is the most suitable time for broadcasting, but so few radio stations allow time on Sunday mornings for religious sessions. Commencing last February, a trial period of six months was accepted for 7.15 p.m. on Sundays on 4GY Gympie, Queensland, this being the only time available. While our friends in that area have appreciated hearing the messages of Frank and Ernest, the response from the public has been most disappointing. Apparently, as with 2QN Deniliquin last year, the time on Sunday evenings is not at all suitable. We can only trust that some message of truth has got through to some hearing ears unknown, and which will bring forth some fruit in due time, as the Lord sees good.

The response to newspaper adverts has been moderate on such subjects as "Life After Death", and "Israel in History and Prophecy", the brethren in Western Australia having obtained the best results over the past year. To all who respond to these adverts, in addition to the particular literature supplied, the "Peoples Paper" is sent free for some months to encourage the interest.

The balance sheets for the General Tract Fund and Radio Fund reveal the financial position of the work over the past year. In the Lord's providence, the voluntary contributions of our brethren and friends have enabled the work to continue as formerly, for which we are thankful. Sincere thanks is expressed to all who have sacrificed earthly good things to support the Lord's work so well, all of which is no doubt rendered as to the Lord Himself. The prayers of all our dear friends are requested for the Lord's blessing and guidance in the days before us, that all may be undertaken in faith and humility in the service of our Lord and His truth.

World events continue to reveal the progression of God's Plan for His taking over of this present order of things on earth in the not too distant future. Deterioration of world governments truly shows that the "distress of nations with perplexity" has developed considerably in the past twelve months. How wonderful then is the hope of Christ's Kingdom to the Lord's own people. What a privilege it will be to be entrusted with the kingdom work as associates of Christ, to bring blessings to all the families of the earth. In the meantime, all who have this hope are also favored in being entrusted with the work of the last days of the Gospel harvest here on earth. Our Lord's words are fitting—"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, 1/5/73

\$245.50

„ <i>Donation</i>	2,378.96
	\$2,624.46
<i>By Free Tracts and Deficiency “Peoples Paper” ..</i>	<i>.. \$449.73</i>
„ <i>Advertisements, Convention Notes, etc.</i>	<i>51.19</i>
„ <i>General Expenses (Office, Telephone, etc.)</i>	<i>..315.80</i>
„ <i>Towards Personal and Household Expenses .</i>	<i>917.64</i>
„ <i>Postage</i>	<i>377.20</i>
„ <i>Assistance to Brethren</i>	<i>120.00</i>
<i>Travel and Sundries</i>	<i>127.70</i>
„ <i>Credit Balance, 1/5/74</i>	<i>265.20</i>
	\$2,624.46
Radio Fund	
<i>To Credit Balance, 1/5/73</i>	<i>\$135.75</i>
„ <i>Donations</i>	<i>1,326.57</i>
	\$1,462.32
<i>By Radio Stations 3GL and 4GY .</i>	<i>\$970.56</i>
<i>Microphone</i>	<i>46.50</i>
<i>Recording Tapes</i>	<i>81.18</i>
<i>Printing Dialogues</i>	<i>55.19</i>
<i>Travel and Sundries</i>	<i>.... 3 2.31</i>
<i>Bank Charges Credit Balance, .1 /5/74</i>	<i>266.58</i>
	\$1,462.32

Memorial Observances

Melbourne

WITH thankful hearts the brethren of the Melbourne Class gladly observed the Memorial of Christ’s death as the annual anniversary came around again. Each year seems to add appreciation in our hearts of the great sacrifice of our Saviour, and also the great love of our Heavenly Father in providing His dear Son to be the propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins: and not for our’s only, but for the sins of the whole world-1 John 2: 2.

Two previous studies in 1 John 3: 1-3, and 1 Cor. 11: 23-28 refreshed our minds and hearts respecting the great love of God in calling the members of Christ’s Bride to be joint-heirs with our Redeemer in the heavenly kingdom, as they gladly sacrifice in the steps of their Lord throughout the earthly pilgrimage.

During the Service prayers of thankfulness to God were offered, first for the gift of our dear Saviour, and also on behalf of all the Lord’s people in every place who were likewise observing the Memorial in spirit and in truth. The appropriate hymns 166, 42, 18, 2 and 438 from “Bible Students’ Hymnal” were sung, and the Scripture readings in Mark 14; 12-46; John 18: 10-40; 19: 1-30 impressed again, the great courage and willingness of our Saviour to do the Father’s will in becoming the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. A helpful address further impressed the graciousness of God in providing the “so great salvation” for those who walk faithfully in the steps of Christ, and also the general salvation for all mankind in due time.

Following the blessing of the emblems, all the consecrated gladly partook of these symbols of our Lord’s broken body and shed blood, thus demonstrating our hearts’ desire to be followers of our Lord, faithful unto death, by His grace. It is felt that the annual celebration of Christ’s Memorial, which includes our covenant to be dead with Him, if so be that we may live with Him, is a means of much blessing and stimulating of faith to fulfil our course with joy in the steps of our Master.

Geelong

A very small number of Bible Students met to remember our Lord’s sacrifice, as He requested on the evening preceding His crucifixion. We were not a band of academic students, according to this world’s standards, but of those referred to in 1 Cor. 1: 26, 27. We thank our Heavenly Father that we should be so favored as to be able to appreciate the significance of His Son’s sacrifice —what it accomplishes for us, and what it will accomplish for every man in due time.

A simple service consisted of prayers, hymns, readings from the Scripture—Luke 22: 39-53; Matt. 27: 11-37; John 13: 1-17; Heb. 3: 1-6, 1419; 4: 1, 2—and an address, after which we reverently partook of the emblems.

Adelaide

In our preparation for keeping the Memorial of our Saviour’s death the Adelaide Class spent three Sunday afternoons

considering the Scripture portion in 1 Cor. 11: 20-34. Also we read the accounts of our Lord's last hours found in each of the four Gospels, including also Psa. 22 and Ise. 53.

After suitable hymns and prayer we listened to a helpful address on the Memorial by one of our brethren, and then with thankful hearts we partook of the emblems which represent our Lord's body broken for us, and for all mankind; and His blood — His perfect life sacrificed to secure our ransom from the curse of sin and death.

We are thankful to our gracious Heavenly Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ for the privilege of observing the Memorial of our dear Redeemer's death on its annual occurrence. It reminds us of God's great love for us, also of the great love of our Lord Jesus; and it provides opportunity to renew our pledge of consecration to be "dead with Christ"—that we may also "live with him" —2 Tim. 2: 11,12.

What an occasion is this for prayers of thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father for the "unspeakable Gift" of the Son of His love-2 Cor. 9: 15—and what an opportunity for prayer on behalf of all our brethren, fellow-members of Christ's body, that we may have grace to enable us to "make our calling and election sure"—"looking unto Jesus" —2 Pet. 1: 5-11; Heb. 12: 1-3—"Considering Him attentively"—Diaglott.

Perth

Following our Saviour's injunction to "keep the feast" in memory of His death, we brethren solemnly partook of the emblems which so graphically emphasize His broken body and shed blood on our behalf.

The chairman reviewed the details of the sufferings of our dear Redeemer who "poured out his soul unto death" on behalf of us all. Then the reminder that Christians must follow in His footsteps; to be dead with Christ that they may later drink anew in the kingdom with their dear Lord and Saviour, in the first resurrection.

With heartsearching we renewed our dedication to our Lord as we participated in the emblems and resolved that we would follow our Lord into sacrificial death.

Sydney

Domestic necessities caused some of the local brethren to celebrate this year's Memorial away from home. Nevertheless those present, together with visiting brethren, commemorated Christ's death with the customary service that characterizes the 14th Nisan—a service which was instituted the night our Lord was betrayed and has been carried on to the present day by the Lord's goodness.

An appropriate address was given, pointing out that the "first-fruits" of God's creation are the ones being delivered today from the power of sin and death through Christ's redemptive sacrifice. We were reminded also that only those who have made a covenant of sacrifice are really "first-fruits". It was also emphasized that there will be "after-fruits" which will be delivered from the same snares in God's own good time.

We ate the bread and drank the wine in unison of spirit with all God's dear children everywhere. Needless to say, the Lord was in our midst, blessing our service which was free from artificialism, simple in every aspect, and praise God, solemn! The Lord was very mindful of us, blessing and comforting us. The service was closed with a hymn and each one left with a surety that we shall drink a new cup of joy in the coming kingdom.

Queensland—Nambour

Our meeting together for the Memorial was firstly helped by a study in 1 Cor. 11, where we are told the Lord Jesus said, through the apostle, -This do in remembrance of me." Also the apostle tells us that the cup and the bread is our communion with Christ, or as the Diaglott expresses it—"our participation of the body of the anointed one . . . for we all partake of the one loaf."

Then a brother gave a helpful talk on the original Passover and how it was a type of the Church of the firstborns, with Christ our Passover Lamb slain for us. With thankful and appreciative hearts and minds we then partook of the emblems as our Master asked. May each of us be ever mindful of our great privilege and responsibility, by the Lord's help.

Queensland—Toowoomba

A very brief report from Toowoomba states that a small group accepted the privilege of honouring the Memorial of our Lord's death, and remembering what it means to us. Also, all of like precious faith who were observing the Memorial were remembered in prayer.

Visiting Brethren

DURING the month of April we were favored in Australia with a visit by some brethren from North America. From Perth, W.A., the following brief report is to hand—In the Lord's providential leadings our Class has had the joy of the fellowship of five brethren from U.S.A. Brother Fay spent some 6 1/2 days with us, and Sister Fay, Brother and Sister Brown, and Sister Davis 3 days. A small Convention was organised and we feel that we were treated to a real spiritual feast. We had 3 Bible Studies, a Question Meeting, and 2 addresses, as well as a Public Lecture. We had two very stimulating addresses; one

by Brother Brown of Portland, and one by Brother Fay of San Francisco. We were given much good spiritual advice and edification and what with the thoughts and expressions from all the brethren attending, it added up to real spiritual refreshing.

Our visitors then attended the Adelaide Easter Convention, reference to which is made elsewhere in this issue of "Peoples Paper." Two days were then spent with the friends in Sydney, one of our brethren reporting as follows—The brethren in Sydney and those who came from surrounding districts will long remember the visit of Brother and Sister Fay, Brother and Sister Brown and Sister Davis. The precious time spent together still echoes; the memories are so sweet that we look forward to the General Assembly of the Church of the Firstborns in heaven above, when eternity will allow us to fellowship without ceasing. The meetings held while the brethren were with us proved to be exceptionally blessed. We are aware that ours is a hard fight, and every chance of a word of comfort, every chance of a tender reproach, every assurance of the brethren's love is a boost that lightens the load of care. We praise and thank our heavenly Father for granting us these opportunities and the pleasure to welcome these brethren. Our prayer is that they returned home with the same amount and more of the blessings they have left behind.

For the two full days of our visitors' stay in Melbourne, very helpful gatherings were enjoyed, and we give thanks to the Lord for His favors granted to all able to attend. As Brother Fay had spent the month of March with the brethren in India, it was most interesting and helpful to hear of the welfare of our Indian brethren and how well they seek to let their light shine in these last days of the harvest of the Gospel Age. A printed report of Brother Fay's remarks on his Indian visit will be available on application. The same evening two addresses were given by our visiting brethren which proved very encouraging to us. The second day of the visit, being Sunday, a Public Lecture was arranged on the important and timely subject—"Watch Israel—It Is Fulfilling Prophecy." This lecture was very well received by an attendance of about 100, a number of whom were from the public. Our Brother Fay's helpful presentation on this subject is also being printed for distribution to readers of "Peoples Paper" on application. Two further addresses by Brother Brown and Brother Fay in the evening of this second day added further encouragement and spiritual enjoyment for all in attendance. The fellowship with our brethren was also most valuable, in addition to the meetings, and with the observance of the Love Feast on the Sunday evening, the strains of "Blest be the Tie" and "God be with You" were very much in our hearts, as well as in our voices. The next morning a little group of our local brethren wished our visitors God's blessing in goodbye, as they left for New Zealand to spend about a week amongst the scattered brethren there before returning home to U.S.A.

Pilgrimages Ended

ON Tuesday, 9th April last, the earthly course was finished for our dear Brother Warren, of Canberra, at the age of 87. Brother Warren embraced the Truth at Queanbeyan, N.S.W., some 63 years ago, in the early days of the Truth movement in Australia. He learned the glad tidings through Brother Percival, who some time earlier had purchased the Volumes from a Sister Poole from Canada, who was colporteur in Australia.

Brother Warren engaged in colporteur work in the Queanbeyan-Yass districts for some time, then joined with other brethren in such work in Victoria and southern N.S.W.; one with whom he worked being Brother R. Martin of Adelaide, in those days. He was in contact with Brother Nicholson of the Melbourne office, and attended Conventions in both Sydney and Melbourne before and during the First World War, and is remembered by some of the more elderly brethren from those days. He was one of the small band instrumental in having the Photo Drama of Creation shown in Queanbeyan in 1915.

Amidst the siftings which took place after the passing of Brother Russell, Brother Warren remained loyal to the Truth, but for years refrained from meeting with brethren other than those like-minded ones in his home town. However, he received the first copies of the "Peoples Paper" when the Berean Bible Institute commenced in 1918, and let his light shine on every appropriate occasion, and the spirit of the Truth in his heart was recognised by all with whom he came in contact.

It was a pleasure to hear regularly from Brother Warren at the Melbourne office up to the present time, and from the mid-1940's from time to time he attended Conventions in Melbourne and Adelaide, and paid frequent visits to Sydney to encourage the diminishing numbers of brethren living in that area. While failing health forced him to curtail such visits of late, he was nevertheless able to travel to Sydney to meet with others for the last celebration of the Memorial, just four days before his passing.

Having a deep love of the beauties of nature, Brother Warren was happy in his work as a gardener, and loved nothing better than to busy himself with the pruning of trees for friends and neighbours, giving a quiet witness for the Truth here and there; and he indulged in this task to the last. For 26 years he was head gardener at the Prime Minister's Lodge, and the beautiful layout of the gardens there was due to his care and foresight. Six Prime Ministers enjoyed the fruits of his labours, and during Sir Robert Menzies' term of office he was honoured by the Queen with The Imperial Service Medal, and also the Coronation Medal.

Sincere sympathy is extended to Brother Warren's three children, and grandchildren, in the loss of a most devoted father and grandfather, and also to other members of his family to whom his sterling character had shone as a light in all circumstances. We have every confidence in our dear Brother Warren having entered into the joys of the Lord, by His grace. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

On March 22nd our dear Sister Baker of Nhill, Victoria, finished the earthly way after a brief but severe illness in hospital. Sister Baker came to appreciate the truth through an elder sister, and had rejoiced particularly in the wonderful hope of the kingdom for about 15 years.

Sister Baker was known mainly by the brethren in Melbourne and Adelaide, having attended Conventions in both places in more recent years, and became attached in Christian love to those friends in whose homes she resided at Convention times. The loss of her husband some years earlier stimulated her love for the truth, as she felt consoled in the knowledge that the kingdom would compensate for all earth's griefs and sorrows, and was the only solution for all earth's ills. Sincere sympathy is extended to the members of our Sister's family in the loss they have sustained. We rejoice that the Lord knows those who are His, and that our dear Sister will receive a fitting reward for her faith and confidence in the Lord, by His grace.

Bible Studies

THE method of conducting Bible studies and the 'co-operation given by the members of a Bible Class has much to do with the benefits and blessings received by each member of an assembly.

It is very noticeable that the tendency of chairmen generally is to speak too much when conducting a Bible Class. This may result from various causes, one of which is, that the members of a class may not be sufficiently alert in giving their thoughts, thus leaving too much time for the chairman who feels he must speak to prevent a lull in the meeting. Another reason may be that the chairman becomes so absorbed in a subject that at times he leaves little opportunity for members to take part. This is noticeable at some Conventions when there is much in a study to be brought out in a limited time, but this tendency is something to be overcome by class leaders, thus preventing a habit of giving short addresses, so to speak, after each remark by a class member.

In introducing a class study the leader should seek to be brief and to the point in giving a resume of the previous study. No doubt very often much could be said that would be very helpful, but at a Bible Class anything approaching a short address should be avoided, so that the study can proceed. Other meetings for addresses can be arranged.

The successful class leader will seek to draw out the thoughts from all members in the gathering. The members have their responsibility in being prepared to take part, which means that the lesson should be well studied at home; this is a most important point for profitable Bible study in class. Lengthy expressions are not required; indeed, the most helpful remarks are usually short and directly on the subject, with Scriptural support.

Class members can assist greatly by keeping to the subject under discussion; this is really essential to make a Bible Study the blessing it should be to all, and makes the task of the leader so much easier. Above all the Lord's spirit should be invoked so that the guidance and blessing from above may be fully realised by all, the one desire being to be built up by the truths of God's Word to His praise.

Pocket "Daily Heavenly Manna"

Copies of the pocket "Daily Heavenly Manna" are now on hand. These are nicely printed and bound in semi-flexible covers, and are very handy for the pocket or handbag. Three Indexes make it more valuable—Manna Article Index; Scripture Index to Manna, and Topical Index. Priced at 75c, plus 20c postage.

"Others"

"Lord help me to live from day to day
In such a self-forgetful way
That even when I kneel *to* pray
My prayers will be for others.

Help me, in all the work I do,
To ever be sincere and true,
And know that all I do for You
Must needs be done for others.

Let self be crucified and slain,
And buried deep, and all in vain
May efforts be to rise again,
Unless to live for others.

And when my work on earth is done
And my new work in heaven begun,
May I forget the crown I've won
While thinking still of others.

Others, yes, Lord, others:
Let this my motto be,
Help me to live for others
That I may live like Thee."

Books Available

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

- **"God's Promises Come True"**-32.00 (postage from 45c to 31.00 according to distance).
- "The Divine Plan of the Ages"**, Cloth-75c (postage 30c. Paper bound-50c potage 30c).
- "The Creator's Grand Design"**-31.00 (postage 30c).
- "The Book of Books"**-31.00 (postage 30c).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna"**—\$1.00 (postage 30c).
- "Songs in the Night"**—\$1.00 (postage 20c).
- "Poems of Dawn"**—\$2.20 (postage 20c).
- "Emphatic Diaglow"**, N. Testament-32.00 (postage 30c). "Tabernacle Shadows"-50c (postage 20c).
- "God and Reason-10c (postage 7c).
- "God's Plan"-10c (postage 7c).
- "Hope Beyond the Grave"**-10c (postage 7c).
- "Israel in History and Prophecy"**-10c (postage 7c.)
- "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"**-10t (postage 7c).
- "Manner of Christ's Return"**-10c (postage 7c).
- "Christ's Return-10c (postage 7c).
- "Some of the Parables"**-10c (postage 7c).
- "Where Are the Dead"**-10c (postage 7c).
- "Lights and Shadows in Christian Experience"**-10c (postage 7c). "Our Bible Translated"-10c (postage 7c).

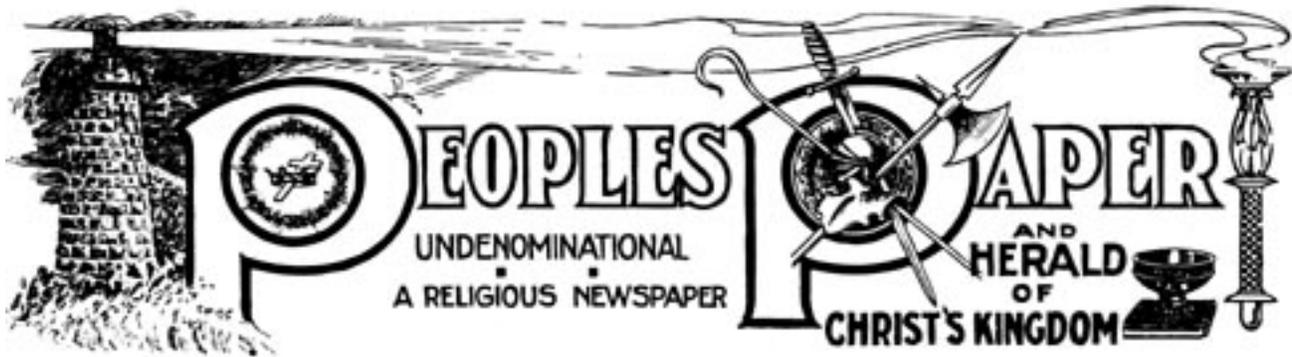
Numerous other smaller booklets.

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3GL Geelong, 1350 Kc. Sundays 10 a.m. 4GY Gympie, 600 Kc. Sundays 7.15 p.m.



Volume LVII No. 2 MELBOURNE, APRIL — MAY, 1974 Why Does God Seem to Favour Some People More Than Others?

(This Article Published by Request)

“And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest: but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee” — Heb. 5: 4, 5.

REVIEWING the opening verses of the 5th chapter of Hebrews, we see that the honour no man was to take unto himself was that of Israel’s high priest. Aaron was especially called of God, or favoured of God, for that important office, being typical of course of Christ, who also honoured not Himself to be made a High Priest, but was highly favoured by His Heavenly Father.

As a background to Aaron being called or favoured of God for service we have helpful records in Exodus chapters 4; 7; and 28; where God instructed Moses—”And take unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office”—Exod. 28: 1. Aaron is also called “the saint of the Lord” in Psa. 106: 16. It may be asked why God favoured Aaron? First, because he was worthy. Also he was a Levite, of the children of Israel, with Abraham as a forefather. And God had chosen Israel to be His particular and typical nation.

Following on God’s wonderful covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, we have a comprehensive statement respecting Israel in David’s psalm of thanksgiving in 1 Chron. 16: 13-17—”O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones. He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth. Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; and hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant.”

That the Lord continued to recognise Israel as His favoured people down the centuries to Jesus’ first advent is evident from the fact that He sent John the Baptist to call Israel to repentance, that they might more readily accept their Messiah at the appointed time. Jesus was six months younger than John the Baptist, thus allowing those few months of ministry by John, previous to Jesus being baptized and commencing His ministry at thirty years of age.

In John 1: 6-17 we have a record respecting John the Baptist, and Jesus. In verse 11 we read—”He came unto his own (His own people, Israel) and his own received him not”—as a people, as a nation. That Israel belonged to God, to whom Jesus was sent, is evident when Jesus declared on appropriate occasions—”I am not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Early in our Lord’s ministry, He began to find the “lost sheep” who were worthy to be favoured, “to be called of God as was Aaron.”

Following on in John’s Gospel 1, we have an account from verse 35 of John the Baptist introducing two of his disciples to Jesus, showing clearly that John knew his mission was to prepare those disciples who were worthy, to learn from Jesus what was required for discipleship in the Christian way. See verses 35-37. John was introducing his own disciples to Jesus as though to say, There is the Lamb of God, follow Him—”And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.” From verse 40 —”One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.” To be able to detect that Jesus was the Messiah after a few hours of teaching from Him (see verse 39—”they abode with Him that day”), shows they were worthy of being favoured with His truth, of being “called of God, as was Aaron.”

The next day Jesus had a similar experience with two more men of similar disposition to Andrew and Peter. “The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me ... Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph”—verses 43, 45. What a lovely experience that must have been for those disciples! We note how the record reads—“Jesus **findeth Philip**”—“**Philip findeth Nathanael**, and saith, We have **found Jesus**.” We realise these “findings” were not accidental. Philip and Nathanael were just waiting to be “found”; they were yearning and longing no doubt for Jesus’ message of truth, and when they were found they realised from the heart that they had found Jesus. We can understand at once why those disciples were favoured of the Lord more than Israelites in general at that time. And the Lord is still “finding” Philips and Nathanaels, and Marthas and Marys, who are in the right heart condition to be found. And when they are **found by Jesus** they also realise that they have **found Jesus**.

We notice in this lesson that Nathanael was cautious when he heard Jesus called “Jesus of Nazareth.” “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” he asked. Philip’s answer was a worthy one —“Come and see.” That is the message we can offer people who are cautious. Taste and see that the Lord and His message is good. See verses 47-49. “Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, whence knowest thou me? Jesus answereth and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.” It has been said that in those days the fig trees had branches right down to the ground; they were almost like a tent. Nathanael had been under the fig tree praying, and the Lord knew, and that was something that impressed Nathanael at once—here is a man who knew what I was doing even when he could not see me. Nathanael’s response was —“Rabbi, thou art the Son of God! thou art the King of Israel.” To which our Lord replied—“Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.” No doubt Nathanael would see the wonderful truths of the heavenly calling, and would accept them from the Lord’s hand and rejoice indeed, as one “called of God as was Aaron.”

While we have this lovely record of Jesus finding His disciples, and they feeling they had found Jesus, it was no doubt necessary that their faith and confidence in Jesus and His teachings should be consolidated. Luke 5: 1-11 is helpful here. It has been suggested that this incident in Luke 5 was almost twelve months after our Lord had commenced His ministry, and on this occasion Peter, Andrew, James and John, although previously “found” by Jesus, committed their lives fully to the Lord to be His constant and permanent disciples, to become “fishers of men.” We notice verses 1-3. Jesus was teaching the people out of Peter’s ship. We can well assume the message would be about the privileges of discipleship. The disciples would hear this wonderful sermon which the Lord preached to the people up on the shore. He would speak to them about the favour of being called of God as was Aaron. Then follows the haul of fish in verses 4-7 to impress the reality of the heavenly Father’s power. To think they had been out all night and caught nothing, and the Lord tells them to put down their nets, and they caught such a haul that the two boats are filled and almost sinking. They would say, Who is this One whom we had found previously? Here is the Father’s power operating. The Lord knew this miracle would clinch the hearts of those disciples once and for all. He did not hurry anyone into His ministry, but they were able to reason, and the spirit working quietly in them even before Pentecost, enabled them to say, Here is the One *we* will follow for the rest of our lives.

We see Peter’s reaction in verse 8—“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” He was almost overcome with this wonderful miracle. He did not feel worthy to associate with a Man who could do that sort of thing. Peter was overwhelmed as he thought of the amazing catch of fish, but the Lord knew Peter’s heart, and said—“Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men.” The Lord knew Peter would be a wonderful servant, one to be favoured above others, one to be honoured, “called of God as was Aaron.” Verse 11 reads—“And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.” This does not mean they hastened away immediately with Jesus. Mark’s account tells us that the boats were left in the care of Zebedee, the father of James and John, with the hired servants. The Lord would not expect them to neglect responsibilities. It would be necessary to make arrangements respecting the fish, and their business interests would have to be attended to in the partnership. But how clearly we see the reason for the Lord’s favour being shown to these disciples above others, because they were worthy of being “called of God as was Aaron.”

We read in Luke 9: 57, 58—“As they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.” Why did Jesus present this picture to one who seemed so willing to follow Him? The Lord did not want anyone to think it was an easy undertaking to follow Him. He requires everyone to know that being a disciple is a solemn undertaking, so that from the heart people will present their lives to Him and become real followers. “I will follow thee.” “The Son of man hath not where to lay his head”—that is, no place of His own; He had no possessions of His own, no headquarters for His ministry. But the Lord found

dwelling places. Israel was God's covenant people, and there were homes in Israel that delighted to have the Lord with them, because His blessings were upon them. We think of the home at Bethany, with Lazarus, Martha and Mary. What a privilege it was to invite the Lord and His disciples to dwell with them, and receive the blessings at His hands. But He had nowhere to lay His head of His own possession. *We* must not presume that the Lord was compelled to sleep out in the open, though possibly He may have done that with His disciples in favourable weather. However, there were no doubt many dwellings that received the Lord wholeheartedly, and the compensation through His blessings upon them would be very much appreciated. In explanation of the sacrifice required for a follower of the Master, we read His words in Luke 9: 23—"If any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." If anyone feels invited, has been thus honoured, let him take up his cross daily and follow the Lord. Jesus needed to put these propositions before all His disciples, and the same applies to all who would follow Him today. *We* must see the privilege—not "must I", but "may I", sacrifice with the Lord. What a joy it is for those who realise the privilege of being favoured above others, to be invited into God's family.

From Luke 9: 59, 60 we read—"And he said to another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." In this instance Jesus was not being hard-hearted and saying, you should not go to the funeral of your father. Rather, He was saying, Your elderly parent maybe needs much care, there could be years of old age still ahead. The Lord, knowing the circumstances of the family, was apparently implying that others in the family could well care for the aged parent—"Let the dead bury their dead"—let those who belong to the world look after the aged one. You, who could well preach the gospel, should grasp the privilege, and not delay in preaching the kingdom of God.

Verses 61 and 62 of this same chapter of Luke state—"Another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." What did the Lord mean here? This one seemed desirous to follow Him, but wanted to go and say farewell to relatives at home. Apparently this was not merely a handshake and goodbye. There was probably something more behind this farewell that would possibly detain him—he may lose his interest, lose the privilege of discipleship, by looking back on the things he was leaving behind and long for them. The Lord could detect the minds of those who wished to follow Him. "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." To be detained along the lines of earthly things would be a hindrance to this one. No doubt in each of these accounts given in Luke 9 the Lord was showing the privilege of being favoured with the invitation to the heavenly kingdom, and it was to be appreciated above all else. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."

In Luke 17 the Lord gave a prophecy revealing the time in which we are now living, in the harvest of the Gospel Age, and showing what was expected of those who would be favoured with the harvest truths, that they may be His people, united to Him as individuals, free from the errors of Babylon. Verses 34-37 of this chapter were given to promote a separation of the Lord's people from the systems of nominal Christendom in the end of this Gospel Age. Noting the context, we see in verse 34 the Lord reveals that a separation takes place respecting "two in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left." Some people who believe in the rapture theory take this literally. They think some will be snatched away bodily when the Lord comes—in the morning people will find that some have disappeared. But we do not think that is the Scriptural understanding of these verses. We think the Lord is speaking figuratively of this time of the harvest of the age. He uses the illustration of two in a bed—asleep in some creed system. One is influenced by the truths of God's Word and is attracted away from the erroneous creed, while the other slumbers on unaware of the one being favoured with the Lord's truths.

Verse 35 reads—"Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left." They are represented as preparing food—some form of religious service—and one is taken and the other left. One is favoured by being blessed with the satisfying truths of God's Word. The other, not able to appreciate beyond the milk of the Word, probably, grinds on, so to speak.

From verse 36—"Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Whether we take this to refer to the world, or the mission field, the outcome is the same—"one is taken, and the other left." Again the truths of God's Word do the separating. If anyone comes to the Lord to please father or mother, or whoever it may be, that is not necessarily God's calling. Each one must be individually responsible in hearing the Word of truth, applying it to their heart and rejoicing in it just as the disciples did when they were found of the Lord and said, "*We* have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write." We must find Jesus in our own hearts, not because of someone else's opinion.

Verse 37—"And they answered and said to him, Where, Lord?" Where are these taken from the creed bed, from

the grinding together and from the field? He said, “Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.” That seemed like a strange answer first of all. The Lord was saying—those that are taken are really keen-eyed, appreciative, alert like eagles. “Wheresoever the body is” —where the food is—“there the eagles will be gathered together.” This “eagle” class pictures the keen-eyed and alert Christians who can detect and appreciate the Lord’s food, from His storehouse of truth. “Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.” The truth is their very living; these are the ones favoured of God above others, because they have an appetite for spiritual truths.

The majority, not so favoured during this Gospel Age, are not forgotten by God. God’s plan provides for every human being who has ever lived, so God is not selecting some to the detriment of others. But God is selective. God has been selecting some in the ages past and in the Gospel Age. Later, we shall see that those not so favoured come under God’s wonderful blessing of free grace.

While thinking of the favoured position of those who are keen-eyed and alert to appreciate the truths of God’s Word, showing zeal in studying and giving of their best to become acquainted with the spiritual food, like eagles around a carcass, there is a helpful illustration of this in Judges 7, which describes the reducing of Gideon’s army. See Judges 7: 1-7. Of the 32,000 in the beginning, 22,000 are afraid and return home. In the illustration these are outside the Christian call altogether. Of the 10,000 who faced the test of drinking the water, only 300 remained for the Lord to use in demonstrating that the victory was His in the defeat of the Midianites. Those who bowed down and put their mouths to the water thought of nothing else but getting a drink. Those who lapped the water were alert and keen-eyed, and would detect the enemy quickly; these undoubtedly picture the keen-eyed Christians, like eagles, who are appreciative of God’s truths when they find them. Gideon’s 300 are a picture of the Lord’s people of the Gospel Age, observant of spiritual food, in contrast with the remainder of the 10,000 who were wholly absorbed with the drinking of the water—fully taken up with earthly things. Such people will have their inheritance in the earthly kingdom. Those whom the Lord is calling now are alert, keen-eyed, ready to walk in the steps of the Master, ready to take up their cross daily and follow Him.

Another passage of Scripture which helps us to understand God’s selection of the favoured ones during this Gospel Age is found in 1 Cor. 1: 26-31—“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise . . . And base things, and things which are despised, hath God chosen . . . to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.”

“Ye see your calling, brethren.” Do we grasp our calling as a privilege from the Lord? It is the greatest privilege under the sun, and each Christian needs to see it in that light, because the mighty, the noble, the great are more or less self-sufficient, and think only of their own abilities, and are great in this world and its affairs, and are not invited to be servants of the Master. These, of course, are general statements, that no flesh should glory in the Lord’s presence. Those who are favoured of God are really humble and lowly and feel their own weakness, and know the strength they gain in the Truth comes from the Lord Himself.

Regarding those people whom God has not favoured during this Gospel Age, the Scriptures clearly show that they are not forgotten in God’s plan of the ages. In Revelation 22 we have depicted the kingdom set up and the blessings flowing out to all the families of the earth. In the opening verses of this chapter we see “there is no more curse”—the curse of death has been overcome by the sacrifice of Christ, and the resurrection of mankind has been accomplished. In verse 17 the opportunity for lasting life will be available to everyone. This verse is often misquoted as applying at the present time, but it will be fulfilled when there is a Bride of Christ, who will be reigning with Christ when—“whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” At that time free grace will be manifested to all humanity. During the Gospel Age, and in past ages, selection and election has been going on. God has been doing the selecting. “No one can come to me”, Jesus said, “Unless the Father draw him.” God’s spirit draws to Jesus those who are worthy and who accept the privilege of walking in the steps of Christ, that they may also reign with their Lord to accomplish the blessing of all the families of the earth in the wonderful kingdom of Christ.

Do we not rejoice that God has favoured some of mankind more than others, because it is His will. It is not because some people are better than others in themselves. It is the poor of this world, the despised ones, those who are not, who are chosen to confound the things that are mighty. God knows who to choose; God’s spirit can transform such poor material into vessels fit for His service now, and prepared for greater service in the kingdom to come. We rejoice also that God will not overlook any of the human family. Christ’s sacrifice provides for all. In deciding to take “many sons to glory” God has provided for the ultimate blessing of all the families of the earth. We praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

Memorial Thoughts

AS another anniversary of Christ's death draws near the faithful follower of the Master is more particularly mindful of the important circumstances surrounding the life, death and resurrection of the One upon whom the welfare of the whole world depends.

The 34 years of Christ's sacrificial life on earth—from Jordan to Calvary—fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel relating to the fact that Messiah would be cut off in the midst of the 70th week (of years)—Dan. 9: 26, 27. Realising that He became thirty years of age (the age of maturity under the Law) just 34 years previous to this Jewish Passover, it can be seen how wonderfully accurate all things worked out in the birth, public ministry and death of Jesus, who became "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (in due time) on that important anniversary of the Jewish Passover, now over nineteen hundred years ago.

That the institution of the Jewish Passover in Egypt was a most important type, there can be no doubt. It was essential for every household to provide a lamb and carry out the instructions in detail respecting the killing of the lamb and sprinkling of the blood on two side posts and upper door post of each house, whereby the firstborns of Israel were saved from death. And inasmuch as the Lord instructed Israel to keep the Passover each year on its anniversary, it can be seen that not only was the deliverance from Egypt to be remembered, but the yearly ceremony was also intended to point forward to the time when the real Lamb of God would come, and the antitypical firstborns (the Church, the Bride of Christ) would be passed over during this Gospel Age, to be followed by the deliverance of all mankind from bondage to sin and death, in the morning of the glad Millennial day.

How truly John the Baptist described our Lord to his own disciples, as we read in John 1: 35-37—"Again the next day John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he said, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." What a different outlook it would have been for Israel, if they had believed John's message! What a change it would mean in world affairs today if mankind would also believe the testimony of John! But God knew that just as a few disciples only would accept the lowly Lord at His first advent, so similar conditions would prevail at His second advent—"When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth."

With the majority of Israel (His own) against our Lord, can we approximate His feelings, when, on the night of the Jewish Passover, 34 years after His baptism in Jordan, and knowing that on this occasion He was to become the slain Lamb of God, He gathered His little band of apostles together at the appropriate hour and said unto them, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer"—Luke 22: 14, 15.

What a momentous occasion for Jesus! What great issues must have welled up in His mind. Upon His faithfulness in the next few hours depended the salvation of mankind from death. His little band was to be left in an unfriendly world to carry on His ministry. How much He wished to tell them, but—"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now"—John 16: 12. However, in John's Gospel, chapters 13 to 17, we have preserved for us some of the most precious words of Jesus, all spoken to His little band on that momentous night—"With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer."

There can be no doubt that our Lord directed the minds of His disciples from the Jewish Passover ceremony to the all important fact that He was the real Lamb of God, and in instituting the Memorial of His death, this simple, yet solemn service was intended to take the place of the typical Passover. The Apostle says this is to be continued, "till he come"—till the last member of the Body of Christ is gathered to be with the Lord, in "that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Respecting the emblems which Jesus passed to His disciples, we read—"Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body (this represents my body). And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my blood (represents my blood) of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"—Matt. 26: 26-28. On a previous occasion our Lord said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you"—John 6: 53. The Lord was showing that only by appropriating the merit of His perfection to ourselves by faith, could we have any standing before God. And so, this is the primary lesson in the Memorial service—By faith all who have accepted Jesus as their Saviour, in spirit and in truth, receive the benefit of His all-sufficient merit and are thus justified by faith and have peace with God—Rom. 5: 1.

However, the Apostle shows in 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17, that there is a secondary and deeper thought respecting the Memorial instituted by our Lord. It is upon the basis of justification by faith that he could exhort any to "present

their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable, unto God.” This passage in 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17, describes those fully consecrated Christians who have done this, those who have been baptized into Christ’s death, sharing in His sacrifice, “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ”—Col. 1: 24.

What a privilege it is to thus view the Memorial of Christ’s death in this manner. Our Lord’s words in Matt. 13: 16, 17, come to mind in this connection—”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. But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.” It is well to be reminded also that the spirit in which the Memorial is kept is to be preserved throughout the year, by the Lord’s grace. The love of God which prompts His people to observe the Memorial in remembrance of Christ and also in demonstrating that their vows of consecration are being fulfilled in joyful service and willingness to suffer for His sake, will likewise manifest to the brethren, yes, and to all mankind, that they have been with Jesus and learnt of Him.

“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 bleed 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 on passing stay,
Impatient to resume the way.

That sprinkled blood hath had the power
To hold me safe in 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 to’ards the promised land.”
—Selected.

Passover Memorial 1974

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Friday, 5th April. It is the privilege of the Lord’s people to observe this memorial at this season “In remembrance of Christ.”

Memorial Services

Melbourne—Sunday, 7th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide—Sunday, 7th April, at 6.15 p.m., at the M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Sydney—Friday, 5th April, at 7 p.m., at 81 James Street, Leichhardt.

Perth—Friday, 5th April, at 7 p.m., at Women’s Service Guild Rooms, 7 Harvest Terrace, Perth (opposite Parliament House).

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th in the Manchester Unity Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. F. M. Grinsted, 1 Wendy Avenue, Valley View, South Australia, 5093.

Christ's Death and Resurrection Needful

IT is needless that we seek to dispute as to which ' was the more important event—the death of Jesus or His resurrection from the dead. Both were equally important. Had He not died there would be no basis for a reconciliation of Adam and his race condemned to death. Had He not risen there would have been no one to apply the merit of His sacrifice. Had He not risen there would have been no call of the church during this Gospel Age to be the Bride of Christ. Neither would there have been use for the Mediatorial kingdom to be established at His second coming for the blessing of Israel and the world.

Thus Jesus explained to the two with whom He walked to Emmaus on the day of His resurrection, saying, O slow of heart to believe all that God hath spoken in the Law and in the Prophets! Was it not necessary that Messiah should die and should rise from the dead, that in His name repentance and remission of sins might be proclaimed? How could any be invited to come to God until a way had been opened, until the redemption price had been provided? Whoever can hear this message and accept it may properly be invited to repent of sin and to reform and to live contrary to the tendencies of his fallen nature, because, in so doing, through the Redeemer, he may attain unto eternal life. And if he ask, How about the things that are past, the answer would be the same. God's provision is for the remission of sins through the merit of the sacrifice of His only begotten Son.

The eleven Apostles were commissioned—"Go ye, disciple all nations"—Matt. 28: 19. This did not signify, as some suppose, a command to convert the world. It meant that they should make disciples out of people of all nationalities—and not any longer, as formerly, of the Jews only. And the Master's injunction has been fulfilled. Disciples, followers of Him, have been found in all nations. But, as Jesus did not say, Convert all nations, neither has the Gospel message done this. Those accepting discipleship were to be baptized with Christ's baptism in the name or authority of the Father, Son and holy spirit. In all, these have been but "a little flock"—Luke 12: 32. But theirs is the "high calling" to joint-heirship in His kingdom, which is soon to bless the world.

But even this commission to disciple people of all nations could not, and did not, begin at once. For three and a half years after the cross, in fulfilment of divine prophecy, the Gospel message was kept from the Gentiles, until the door for them into this high calling was opened by St. Peter—Cornelius being the first to enter it.

All disciples of Jesus were instructed to follow Him, to take Him as their pattern and example. Any instructions contrary to these are contrary to the words of the Great Teacher. And the Master said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age." He has been with His faithful followers to bless them, to comfort them, to strengthen them, to fellowship them, to safeguard their highest interests, though often at the expense of temporal interests. And this promise of His Word, of providential guidance, was to continue until the end of the age—then He would come again in a personal and official sense to exalt His church, to establish His kingdom, to bless Israel with the New Covenant arrangements, and thus to bless the world of mankind.

Frank and Ernest Broadcast God's Covenants. (Part 3)

(Continued from Last Issue)

ERNEST: I'm looking forward to continuing our discussion, Frank, on the subject—"God's Covenants." So far we've seen very clearly how the Apostle Paul, in Galatians, shows that the followers of Christ, true Christians, are developed under the Abrahamic Covenant during this Gospel Age, and that the Law Covenant was given to Israel in the days of Moses and onward, to guide them as a schoolmaster to Christ. Then, at the close of our last broadcast I asked about the New Covenant which is mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments. I don't think the New Covenant is mentioned by the Apostle in Galatians, and that seems rather strange, in view of the fact that he was dealing particularly with the subject of the Covenants rather freely in that Epistle. Is there any special reason why Paul does not refer to the New Covenant, in writing to the Galatians, do you think, Frank?

FRANK: Well, Ernest, it does seem strange at first, as you say, that the New Covenant is not mentioned by Paul when writing to the Galatians, but the reason is that the New Covenant does not apply for Christians of this Gos-

pel Age. Hence the Apostle did not confuse their minds with an additional teaching which would not assist him in clarifying their ideas about the Abrahamic and Law Covenants. Had the New Covenant been applicable to Christians at the time Paul wrote to the Galatians, or at any time during this Gospel Age, then of course, it would have been the very place to explain it to them.

ERNEST: But, Frank, the Hebrews were Christians, and the Apostle refers to the New Covenant very freely in writing to them. How do you understand that?

FRANK: That's a good point you've raised, Ernest. The Hebrews knew of God's dealings with their forefathers back over past centuries, and the Apostle sought to impress upon them that the Lord still loved their forefathers who failed to serve Him acceptably under the Law Covenant. God's love for Israel was shown by providing a New Covenant which would accomplish what the old Law Covenant failed to do for them, that is, give them lasting life, when they are raised from the dead in the kingdom age. The Apostle explains this beautifully in Heb. 8, from verse 7.

ERNEST: I certainly wish to read that passage, Frank, as follows—"For if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord." Well, Frank, there's no doubt that the Apostle here shows that the new covenant is to be made with the same class of people, earthly people, with whom the Lord found fault under the Law Covenant. But how do you understand the words—"and I regarded them not, saith the Lord"?

FRANK: That's explained in verse 10 of this 8th chapter of Hebrews we are studying. It reads—"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord." After what days? After the days when the Lord "regarded them not"—that is, during this Gospel Age, the time when they are cast off from God's favour. Then verse 10 continues-1 will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Then verse 11—"And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." What a lovely explanation, Ernest. How clear it is that the New Covenant is made with Israel after the days when the Lord "regarded them not."

ERNEST: Yes, Frank, I can see that very clearly, and we realise also that the Apostle was quoting from Jeremiah 31: 31-34, that wonderful prophecy which God gave to the prophet Jeremiah to encourage Israel to know that their failure under the Law Covenant did not mean they were to be cast off from God's favour forever. I can see also that the Apostle brings this out in his epistle to the Hebrews that they might appreciate the wideness of God's mercy by not casting off their ancient forefathers completely. This would also prompt them to desire to serve the God of their fathers, by becoming followers of Christ. This, I believe, was Paul's main object in informing them of the blessings of the New Covenant to follow in the age to come.

FRANK: That's true, Ernest. Paul was very diplomatic in presenting the gospel of the kingdom in the very best light to suit each class of people amongst whom he preached, and to whom he wrote his epistles. And the Apostle gives us the same truth in Rom. 11, from verse 25—"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery ..that blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in", that is, until the seed of Abraham is produced. And then what? "All Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Here again we see the beauty of Paul's presentation of the truth. It is after the "fullness of the Gentiles be come in", when the full number for the Bride of Christ has been completed, that God deals again with Israel through the New Covenant—"for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

ERNEST: That's certainly very satisfying, Frank, to see how the plan of God operates for the blessing of all families of the earth through the seed of Abraham. I remember, also, that Jesus referred to the "blood of the new testament (covenant)" at the Last Supper, as recorded in Matt. 26: 28. I'll read the verse—"This is my blood of the new testament (covenant) which is shed for many for the remission of sins." You may have some thoughts on this verse, Frank.

FRANK: Well, Ernest, we remember our Lord passed the cup of wine, picturing His blood, His sacrifice, to the disciples to drink at the Last Supper, showing they were to participate in His sufferings and death, as He informed them quite often. Jesus knew that later the disciples would understand the meaning of what He expressed to them, although it was a dark saying then. They would realise that the first covenant (the Law) was made effective by the

shedding of the blood of bulls and goats, and the blood sprinkled upon the people, and the New Covenant would be made effective following the sacrifice of Christ and His Church, and with the antitypical sprinkling upon the people in the next age, including Israel and all the world, it will freely cleanse and sanctify. Whereas the blood of the Law Covenant, the blood of bulls and goats, could not take away sin, the blood of the New Covenant would do so, for the benefit of all the families of the earth.

ERNEST: Thank you, Frank, for those thoughts. As individuals we have the privilege of entering into a covenant of sacrifice with God, in response to His invitation. I call to mind the text we had before us earlier in these discussions, in Gal. 3: 29—"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." What a favour it is to belong to Christ, to serve Him now, and to be in line, as it were, for greater service as a part of the seed of Abraham to participate in the work of the New Covenant—the "blessing of all the families of the earth."

FRANK: Yes, indeed, Ernest. And to repeat another text we have had before us in these broadcasts, showing the result of the work of the New Covenant, as stated in Heb. 8: 11—"And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least unto the greatest." I would be true, for there are those who trust me,
I would *be* pure, for there are those who care;
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
I would be brave, for there is much to dare;
I would be friend of all—the foe, the friendless;
I would be giving and forget the gift;
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
I would look up (to God) and laugh and love and lift.

Pilgrimages Ended

ON Sunday, 3rd February last the earthly course was finished for our dear elderly Sister Hiam of Kalamunda, W.A., in recent years, and formerly of Victoria. Our dear Sister had reached the age of 93 and was well known and well loved by the brethren throughout Australia, and also New Zealand.

The first contact with the truth was in 1908, when, with the late Brother Hiam, a copy of the "Divine Plan of the Ages" was received into the home in Gippsland, Victoria. For a number of years the truth message was appreciated through the literature. In 1933 the Hiam family moved much nearer to Melbourne, to be able to attend the Class meetings. From that time onward, with members of her family, Sister Hiam had been in constant touch with the brethren, either in Melbourne or in Perth, W.A., and also in New Zealand when on a short visit to that country.

With her late husband, our Sister Hiam sought to bring their family up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and this had such a good effect that each member of the family can testify to the example and spiritual qualities of their parents, enabling them also to embrace the truth very fully, by the Lord's grace. It was evident to all who knew Sister Hiam that she was one of the Lord's saints, one in whom the fruits of the spirit were abundantly developed, one who was not known to complain, but who had learned in all circumstances to be content.

It has been revealed also by those who knew our dear Sister best, that she was a tower of strength, not only to her own family, but to numerous families throughout her long life, by her visits to support, comfort and console those passing through difficult times. All this was possible because of the Lord's spirit in her own heart. Sincere sympathy is extended to all members in our Sister's family circle in the loss of such a devoted Christian mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, but who nevertheless sorrow not as those without hope.

The pilgrimage of our Sister Hiam has been summed up by one of her family—She loved the Lord; she loved His Word; she loved her family and all others. She loved the hymns, one of her many favourites being, "All the way my Saviour leads me", the last lines of which are very appropriate—"This my song through endless ages—Jesus led me all the way." "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth."

Word is to hand from Perth, W.A., concerning the passing of another of our elderly Sisters in that area. On 5th March our dear Sister Phillips finished the earthly course at the age of 90 years. With her two sisters, Sister Phillips came into the truth more than 50 years ago, and never deviated from appreciation of the Lord's great sacrifice and the truth which meant so much to her over the greater part of her life. It is felt that she has been a "more than overcomer", and by the Lord's grace shall have entered into the joys of the Lord.

Our Sister Phillips had a loving, meek, teachable disposition, which meant that the Lord was pleased to reveal

unto her “the deep things” which made her wise unto salvation. Before being confined to hospital some time ago now, she had been a regular attendant at the Sunday and mid-week meetings in Perth, and was a great help at the Bible Studies. Sister Phillips was noted for her personal study and was thus prepared for helpful discussion, being able to contribute well for a profitable time.

Sincere sympathy is expressed to Sister Phillips’ two sisters who continue to rejoice in the truth, and also all members of the family in the passing of a loving and devoted Christian mother and grandmother. The brethren in Perth rejoice with our dear Sister Phillips, as we do also, realising that the race was well run, by the Lord’s grace and strength. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.”

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FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

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The Sum of All Graces is Love

(Convention Address)

"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love".-1 Cor. 13: 13.

IN the preceding chapter the Apostle has recounted the various "gifts" of the holy spirit conferred upon the early church for its establishment. He starts the chapter with the exhortation that while esteeming all of these gifts, each member of the church should covet earnestly the superior ones; and then, he adds: "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way"—something still better than any of those gifts of the holy spirit. Our lesson pertains to this more excellent ambition which should actuate every child of God; namely, the acquisition and development of the spirit of love, the spirit of the Lord. In proportion as we have the mind of Christ, in proportion as the holy spirit dwells in us and abounds, in that same proportion our love abounds.

There are different kinds of love, however, and the Apostle is here not speaking of general love, but of one particular kind, which belongs to God, and to the New Creation begotten of Him. There is an animal love, such as the brute creation exercises toward its young, a love which frequently leads to the sacrifice of life in its devotion. This same kind of love inheres in the natural man, even in his fallen condition. It is all more or less selfish love, ready perhaps, at times to rob others that it might lavish good things upon those it favours. This is not the love which the Apostle describes, nor is he addressing his language to the natural man. He addresses the New Creation, informing them that the natural man will not be able to receive, to appreciate, to comply with, that which he presents. In order to a clear comprehension of this love, and a hearty acceptance of it as the rule of life, it is apparently necessary that we be "begotten" from above.

It seems impossible to describe love itself; the best we can do is to describe its conduct. Those who possess a love with such characteristics are able to appreciate it, but not able otherwise to explain it—it is of God, godlikeness in the heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts—supervising all the human attributes and seeking fully to control them.

Before describing the operation of love, the Apostle impresses upon us its importance, assuring us that if we possess the very choicest of the "gifts" already explained, and do not have therewith love, we will still lack the evidence of our being new creatures in Christ Jesus. We should be merely "sounding brass or cymbal"—making a noise, but having no acceptable feeling or virtue in ourselves in connection with our words. He assures us thus that ability to speak fluently on gospel themes, even might not be a proof of our relationship to the Lord as new creatures. The Apostle's declaration is introduced with an "if", which might be challenged, to a certain extent, by the assertion that no one could speak forth with power, with force, the gospel of God's dear Son unless he possessed the spirit of love. Although we have all met public speakers who could deliver beautiful essays, we have generally perceived a hollowness in their teaching unless they spoke from the heart, prompted by love of the truth—not love of applause, nor love of money.

Amongst the gifts, prophecy or oratory was one which the Apostle commended, and large faith FA reckoned amongst the chief of the 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; let us each apply it to himself. Whether I am something or nothing in God's

estimation is to be measured by **my love** for Him, for the 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 measurement of character, therefore, *we* are to put love first, and to consider it the chief test of our nearness and acceptance to the Lord.

The Apostle next takes another line of argument; his hearers already understood benevolence, almsgiving to the needy, to be commendable; and to impress upon them the importance of having love as the controlling principle of their hearts, the Apostle declares that if he should give all his goods to feed the poor, keeping nothing back, and yet do this without proper love as the mainspring to the conduct, it would profit him nothing. He goes still further and declares that even if he should become a martyr, and be burned at the stake, it would not bring him the blessed reward sought, unless that martyrdom were prompted, impelled by love.

But it may be inquired. How could anyone practise such self-denial, such sacrifice, such faith, etc., and yet be without love? It is not our thought that they could practise these and be devoid of love; there must be some measure of love. We understand the Apostle to make this strong statement of the case in order to show us that our almsgiving, our sacrifices, our knowledge, our teaching, are acceptable to the Lord and appreciated by Him, only to the extent that they have love behind them. If love enters slightly into them, then they are slightly appreciated; if love enters largely into them, then God appreciates them largely. If they are prompted wholly by love, then God accepts them fully. If love be only a part of the motive power behind our conduct as new creatures, it implies that other motives are active in us, tending to neutralize in the Lord's esteem even services and sacrifices performed in His name, and upon worthy objects. Let us be on our guard against these neutralizing influences, and earnestly seek to be whole-hearted, full of love; that our every service of the Lord and of the brethren and of the truth be from a pure heart and free from personal ambition, pride, etc.

Having given us such a conception of the importance of love, the Apostle proceeds to describe what 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 love, especially for the household of faith, as leads me to suffer considerably for a long time, and yet to be kind? How quickly do I get offended? If very quickly it surely indicates that I have very little of the spirit of the Lord—love. If I am disposed to resent the trifling wrongs of life, if I have the spirit of resentment, am disposed to render evil for evil, and railing for railing—it marks my deficiency in this greatest of all the graces, so essential to my ultimate passing as an overcomer, the divine inspection.

Of our heavenly Father it is said that “He is kind to the unthankful.” Have I this spirit of kindness?—His spirit. Am I kind to my friends, gentle, courteous? Have I this mark of love pervading my actions and words and thoughts—that I think of and am considerate of others? that I feel and manifest kindness toward them in word, in look, in act?

A Christian, above all others, should be kind, courteous, gentle, in his home, in his place of business, in the Church—everywhere. With the child of God this patience and kindness are not merely put on, as grapes may be tied to a thornbush, but, on the contrary, they are the **fruits** of the spirit—growths from or results of having come into fellowship with God, learned of Him, received of His spirit of holiness, spirit of love.

Have I the love that envieth not, so that I can see others prosper and rejoice in their prosperity, even if for the time my own affairs be not so prosperous? This is generosity, the very opposite of jealousy or envy. The root of envy is selfishness: envy will not grow upon the root of love. Love envies not, but rejoices in the prosperity of all that is good.

Have I the love that vaunteth not itself? the love that tends to humility, that is not boastful, nor puffed up? Someone has truly said that “love saves a man from making a fool of himself by consequential conduct, and by thrusting himself into positions which betray his incompetence.” Boastful—over self-esteem—has led many a man not only into folly, but sometimes into gross sins, in his endeavour to make good his boasts. The spirit of the Lord is a spirit of a sound mind, which not only seeks generously to esteem others, but also soberly to esteem oneself, and not to be puffed up.

Have I the love which does not behave itself unseemly—discourteously, impolitely? Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. The secret of politeness is either a surface polishing or love in the heart. As Christians we are to have the 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 that seeketh not her own merely? that might even be willing to let some of her own rights be

sacrificed in the interests of others? or have I the selfishness which not only demands my own rights on every occasion, but which demands those rights regardless of the convenience, 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 to prefer rather to suffer a wrong than to do a wrong, to suffer an injustice than to do injustice.

Have I the love which is not easily provoked? Indeed, the original omits the word “easily”, and gives rather the thought that love does not become irritated, roused to anger. Love enables its possessor to see both sides of a question; it makes of him a veritable philosopher; it gives him the spirit of a sound mind. He perceives that exasperation and violent anger are unbecoming and worse than that, injurious, not only toward those against whom they may be directed, but injurious in their effects also upon his 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 this might come under the heading of anger, using that word in a proper sense in regard to a righteous indignation, exercised **for a loving** purpose, for doing good—but then only for a time. If justly angry we should see to it that we sin not, even with our lips or in our hearts, in which at no time may we entertain any but loving and generous sentiments toward those who are our enemies, or toward those who are our friends whom we should assist or instruct or correct.

To be easily provoked is to have a bad temper, to get worked up into a passion, where evil looks and evil words and angry sentiments are involved. 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 against this general besetment of our day. Those begotten of the holy spirit should all be good 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.

Have I the spirit of love which thinketh no evil? which is guileless, not suspicious of evil or looking for faults in others, or attributing to them evil motives? It is an old adage that “faults are thick where love is thin.”

The Revised Version presents a slightly different thought here—“Taketh not account of evil”—does not charge up the wrong against the evil-doer, as if waiting for an apology or a restitution or an opportunity to “get even.” But while love passes over offences and takes no account of them, holding no grudges, this would not mean that love would necessarily treat evil-doers in precisely the same manner that it would treat its friends. It might be proper or necessary, even, 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 wrongs.

Have I the love which rejoices not in iniquity (inequity) but rejoices in the truth? Are the principles of right and wrong so firmly in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with the right and so opposed to the wrong that I would not encourage the wrong, but must condemn 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? The love of God which the Apostle is here describing 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 and more distinctly discerned, and always firmly adhered to at any cost.

Have I the love that beareth all things? that is impregnable against the assaults of evil? that resists evil, impurity, sin and everything contrary to love?

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? Have I the love that hopeth all things, that perseveres under unfavorable conditions and continues to hope for and to labour for those who need my assistance? Have I the love that endureth all things? that is, that continues to hope for the best, and that with perseverance—not easily discouraged?

As disciples or pupils of Christ, we are in His school, and the great lesson which He is teaching us day by day, and the lesson which we must learn thoroughly if we would attain the mark of the prize of our high calling in all its various features and ramifications, is the lesson of Love. It takes hold upon and relates to all the words and thoughts and doings of our daily lives. As the poet has said, “As every lovely hue is light—so every grace is love.”

Next, the Apostle points out that as love is the most excellent thing, so it is the most enduring. The gift of prophecy would pass away; the value and necessity for speaking with other tongues would cease; and all knowledge of the present time, imperfect as it is, must surely cease to be valuable when the perfections of the new dispensation are fully ushered in. The very best informed now know only in part; but when perfection shall be attained in the kingdom, and under its ministrations, all the partial and imperfect conditions of the present time will have been superseded, and only faith, hope and Love will remain, and, says the Apostle, “the greatest of these is Love.”

An illustration of the growth which we must expect as between the present knowledge and attainments and those of the future, is of the child and the growth to manhood. Another illustration is seeing obscurely in one of the old-time mirrors, which gave but imperfect reflections. With the perfections of the new condition we will see perfectly, know perfectly, understand perfectly. Just so the gifts which were in the early Church were very suitable to it, as fitted to its infantile condition; but as it would develop to maturity the value of those “gifts” would diminish, and they would be no more; but higher developments of divine favor were to be expected, faith, hope and love. All three of these the Church of God is to cultivate, and to esteem as **fruits** of the spirit, far above the gifts of the spirit, and the greatest of these three is Love.

Love also is the most enduring, for will not faith practically come to an end when we shall see and know thoroughly? And will not hope practically be at an end when we shall reach the fruition of all our hopes and be possessors of the fulness of our Heavenly Father’s promises? Love, however, will never fail, even as it had no beginning. God is love, and since He was without beginning, so love was without beginning; because it is His character, His disposition, and as He endureth forever, so love will endure forever.

Whoever, therefore, learns thoroughly the lessons of this present time in the school of Christ, and thus becomes well stocked with this wonderful grace of love, lays up treasures which may be his to all eternity—a great blessing to himself and to all with whom he comes in contact now; and a blessing to the world to which he will be permitted to minister during the Millennium; a blessing everlasting, because it is a seal of divine approval.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM *Australia, 3101.*

Convention News

THE Annual Christmas Convention, sponsored by the Melbourne Class, and held over that period, was a very helpful season of spiritual refreshing for all able to attend these gatherings in the Lord’s name. We lift up our hearts in thankfulness to the Lord for His blessings bestowed throughout the assemblies over the four days. Visiting brethren were gladly welcomed from interstate and various Victorian centres, and their presence contributed greatly to the programme with their assistance at the Bible studies, addresses and fellowship generally.

Various sessions added profitable variety throughout the Convention. The two Bible studies on the passages 1 Thes. 5: 1-8, and Phil. 4: 4-9 were very helpful, as the thoughts were brought out relating to the days in which we are now living from the international standpoint, and also our relationship to such events as members of the Lord’s family. It was realised how favoured are God’s people in being informed from His Word respecting the present “distress of nations”, and most important how we may exercise full faith and trust in God’s overruling of every world event for the highest welfare of His people in these days. We were encouraged also to exercise such confidence in the Lord that we would gain and maintain His peace in our hearts through all experiences. We saw that this happy spiritual condition would be ours only by the indwelling of the Lord’s spirit through prayer and established thinking upon all things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, of virtue and praise. By obeying these exhortations from the apostle we were assured that “the God of peace shall be with us.

A wide range of subjects were used by the brethren in their addresses which proved most interesting and helpful, the topics being—“Blessed Are Your Eyes”; “God’s Omnipotence and Eternal Love”; “Noah and the Flood”; “Fear Not! Good Tidings, Great Joy, All People”; “God’s Purpose in Trials”; “The Jewish Nation and Prophecy”; “Judge Nothing Before the Time”; “Moses, Put Off Thy Shoes on Holy Ground”; “Thy Kingdom Come”; “David Encouraged Himself in the Lord”; “God’s Care for His Saints in the Latter Days”; “Bridge Over Troubled Waters”; “They . . . corruptible; We . . . an Incorruptible Crown”; “Sin, Sickness, Death, Versus Righteousness, Health, Life”; All Joy in Believing”; and “The Sum of All

Graces is Love.” It is expected that some of these addresses will be published in the “Peoples Paper” from time to time, and brief outlines of each address, as well as thoughts on the Bible studies, are contained in the Convention Notes, now also available and supplied free to all desiring these copies.

The messages with Christian love and greetings brought to the Convention personally by visiting brethren from

other Classes and individual friends were all greatly appreciated, as were also those greetings received through the mail from overseas and distant parts of this continent. These messages of goodwill from other members of the Lord's family are reciprocated from the Convention with the passage of Scripture, Phil. 4: 4-9, and warm Christian love from all assembled at Convention to the Lord's people everywhere.

Two Fellowship Meetings provided opportunity for praise and testimony to the Lord's providential care experienced by the brethren in times past, and also the expressions of thankfulness at being able to attend gatherings at this Convention, and enjoy the Lord's favour in company with the brethren. Appreciation was also expressed for the service rendered by the Sisters in the provision of refreshments throughout the gatherings, all of which was undertaken as a labour of love as unto the Lord. The session "Hymns We Love and Why" was very enjoyable as the personal selections of the friends were sung and the sentiments meditated upon in melody unto the Lord.

The attendance throughout the Convention was very good, and it was a pleasure again to have the company of a number of the Melbourne Polish Class, as well as appreciating addresses from some of these brethren who are now mastering our English language quite well. We feel sure that the refreshment gained at the Convention gatherings is of great assistance to us in our Christian way. As one Brother and Sister who came from Queensland expressed it on return—"The whole programme of the assemblies was much appreciated, and we felt the 3,000 miles by car well worth while." The closing Love Feast with the singing of the appropriate hymns "Blest be the tie that binds" and "God be with you till we meet again", and the prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord, asking His blessing and oversight to be upon His dear people everywhere, concluded the very helpful 1973 Melbourne Convention.

The 144,000

(Contributed Article)

"And I heard the number of them which were sealed; and there were sealed an hundred and forty four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred and forty four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."—See Rev. 7: 1-8; 14: 1-5.

IT has been stated that studying a subject in the Bible is like a treasure hunt; you have to look for the clues. This is true indeed. What a treasure it is when we are able to discern a truth which we had not before clearly understood. We believe the 144,000 to be the chosen ones of the whole of the Gospel Age—the Elect, the Bride of Christ, sons of God, and the saints. These are some of the terms used to describe the same class.

The first clue is that the angels are holding back the four winds, that they should not hurt the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till the servants of God were sealed in their foreheads. These winds being held back symbolize the great tribulation coming on the world shortly, that Jesus referred to in Matt. 24: 20, 21. We see then the "holding back of the winds" is the time in which we are now living, and the one class called during the period of the Gospel Age is the saints, called to be joint-heirs with Christ.

In Eph. 1: 1 the Apostle is addressing the saints. In chapter 4: 4 it says—"Ye are all called in the one hope of your calling." *We* feel these are called to be saints, but there is another class coming out of the Gospel Age, described as a "great multitude that no man can number", not just 144,000, so we see a clear distinction between these two classes.

As clue No. 2, we are told 144,000 were sealed, 12,000 of each of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. To some people this is a stumbling-block instead of a clue. They feel they must be natural-born Israelites, whereas these are the whole of the chosen ones throughout the Gospel Age, composed of some of the natural-born Israelites and the remainder from the Gentiles. It is not surprising they are all referred to as Israelites, as all of God's elect become spiritual Israelites. From Rom. 11: 17, 19, 24 the Apostle Paul explains how some of the natural branches were broken off, the natural branches being the Israelites. He goes on to show how the Gentiles are grafted in. See Eph. 2: 11, 12, and in verse 15 he says the two, Israelites and Gentiles, are to be one new man in Christ, the one new man meaning the Christ, head and body, Christ and the 144,000, the Gentile Christians being grafted in to the Commonwealth of Israel and are now spiritual Israelites.

Gen. 22: 18 says, referring to Abraham's seed—"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The Apostle Paul tells us in Gal. 3: 16 of that seed "which is Christ." All the nations of the earth are to be blessed, not just some. This is to happen in the Millennial Age, which is shortly to start when Christ's kingdom is established, and the blessing will then go to all those nations which at present are heathen and do not know Christ.

In Gal. 4: 28 we read—“We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise”; and they are, together with Christ as their Head, to be used to bring the world of mankind in general up to a state of perfection; all those who are willing to obey. The point is they are all Abraham’s seed, and as such are all Israelites. There are many people who come to Australia from other lands, and many of them become naturalized and are then entitled to be called Australians. It is much the same with those whom the Lord is calling, those who accept the call and make a full consecration of their lives to the Lord are grafted into Israel and become naturalized Israelites. So we should not expect the 144,000 to be referred to by any other name than Israelites.

In Rev. 21: 9, 10 the angel said to John—“Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife . . . and he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem.” In verse 12 we are told the twelve gates of the city had the names written thereon of the twelve tribes of Israel. This symbolizes God’s kingdom, the kingdom of heaven, composed of the elect. In Gal. 4: 25, 26 the Apostle Paul indicates the earthly Jerusalem represented fleshly Israel and the Jerusalem above represents Christians. The point to notice is that the city has twelve gates, each with the name of one of the tribes of the children of Israel. The only way into the city would be through one or another of the gates.

Some seem to think there must be more than just 144,000 in this heavenly class. However, it is more reasonable to think they would be comparatively few in number, because this is a very special class who are to be made partakers of the divine nature, as stated in 1 Pet. 1: 4. It says in 1 Cor. 15: 53 the Lord’s faithful people are to be made immortal. To realise fully how special this is, we have to understand that only God the Father and Christ have immortality. Not even the angels in heaven have it. In 1 Tim. 6: 16, speaking of Jesus, it says “who only hath immortality.” This, of course, would mean except for the Father. We are also told—“Many are called, but few chosen”, and “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom”—Matt. 22: 14; Luke 12: 32. In view of such statements, we should not expect them to be a great number.

For clue No. 3, in Rev. 14: 1 it says “I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.” *We* realise the Lamb is symbolic of Christ. In John 1: 29 John the Baptist said—“Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world”, and it is mentioned in many other places. The earthly Mount Zion is in Jerusalem, the city of God’s government in Old Testament times. King David’s throne was there; so the Mount Zion mentioned in Rev. 14: 1 is symbolic of God’s heavenly, spiritual government. Christ and the 144,000 are at the seat of God’s government, and that kingdom is to be composed of the chosen ones, the elect of the Gospel Age. See Obadiah 21—“Saviours shall come up on mount Zion.”

Clue No. 4, says—“Having their Father’s name written in their foreheads.” This means they are sons of God. This is one of the terms which apply to the elect, and is mentioned in several Scriptures. In Rom. 8: 14 we read—“For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” In verse 19 of this same chapter of Romans we see that the “creation (all mankind) waiteth for the manifestation (revealing) of the sons of God”, which will mean “deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God”, for the whole world of mankind—verse 21.

Coming to clue No. 5, we read—“And they sang as it were a new song before the throne . . . “ This indicates they had entered into the “joys of the Lord” in the spiritual realm, and are able to praise God together with the “Lamb” as never before. The fact that “no man could learn that song but the hundred forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth”, shows that 144,000 is the full number of this class. If there were to be any more they would also have learned the same song.

Clue No. 6 reads—“These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins.” The Church is symbolized by a woman, so we would understand this as meaning not defiled with the wrong doctrines of the false churches—the many creeds of Christendom. All true Christians must be virgins in several ways. They must keep themselves pure for the Lord and not allow themselves to be defiled by the world, or by sin, or by anything else. The Lord must be the first love of the virgins. Nothing else must seem of the same importance. Nothing else must ever come first in their lives, as these are Christ’s Bride and He is the Bridegroom. The term “virgin” here is quite a good clue that they are the elect, the Bride of Christ. In 2 Cor. 11: 2 the apostle says—“I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” In Matt. 25 we have the parable of the ten virgins. These represent the called ones. Five did make their calling and election sure and became the Bride of Christ, but five did not. We see the term “virgin” is applied to this class.

As clue No. 7—“These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.” This again shows them to be the chosen ones, because it proves they are fully consecrated to the Lord. We have to follow Jesus, the Lamb. We have to mould our lives after Him, and accept Him as our Head. We have to ask ourselves, before acting on any important subject, Would Jesus approve? We have to follow Him whithersoever He goeth. No matter how steep

the path or difficult the going, or how long the trials we have along the way, we must keep following Him until we reach the end of the journey.

Luke 9: 23 says, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” We see the 144,000 in Revelation have done this. That brings us to clue 8. “These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb.” This is a most important clue, because we are told they are the first-fruits, and the Scriptures make it very clear that this term applies to those to be first resurrected from the dead. James 1: 18 reads—”Of his own will begat he us, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.” So there cannot be any who receive a resurrection before them. This same class is referred to in Rev. 20: 6—”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.” We know that those who are in the first resurrection are the elect; they will reign and rule over the world with Christ during the thousand-year Millennial reign. See also 2 Tim. 2: 12.

The 9th and last clue reads—”And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault.” In John 1: 47 we read—”Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” The 144,000 are Israelites indeed. Of our Lord the Apostle Peter wrote—”Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.”

In Rom. 8: 29 we are told we have to be conformed to the image of God’s Son. The 144,000 with no guile in their mouths are those who have become copies of Christ. We are told they are “without fault.” All those who wish to have part in God’s heavenly kingdom must be without fault at heart, though they cannot expect to be perfect in this life owing to their inherited weaknesses, but their intentions must be right. We must all desire and long to be perfect, and strive to that end to the best of our ability.

Frank and Ernest Broadcast God’s Covenants. (Part 2.)

(Continued from Last Issue)

ERNEST: Frank, I’m pleased that we’re able to continue our subject—”God’s Covenants”—again today. At the close of our last broadcast you had quoted a very interesting text in Gal. 3: 29, written by the Apostle Paul to all true followers of the Master. I’ll read the verse again now, so we’ll have it clearly in mind. It reads—”If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” I take it Paul means that Christ and His Church are the spiritual seed of Abraham to carry out God’s promise to bless all the families of the earth when the Church is with Christ in the heavenly kingdom.

FRANK: Yes, Ernest, that’s right. And following our lesson in Galatians 3 of last week in verses 15 and 16, verse 17 is most interesting and important. It reads—”And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God (that is, the Abrahamic Covenant), the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” We notice, Ernest, how the Apostle is impressing the importance of God’s promise to Abraham in this verse, that while the Law Covenant was added 430 years after the Abrahamic Covenant, it did not interfere in the least with the promise God made to Abraham to bless all the families of the earth through Abraham’s seed—through Christ and His Church. This is confirmed further in the next verse, verse 18—”For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.”

ERNEST: From that standpoint, Frank, it is understandable that the Apostle follows that reasoning of verse 18, in verse 19 of this 3rd chapter of Galatians, by asking—”Wherefore then serveth the law?” In other words, if the adding of the Law Covenant did not disannul the Abrahamic Covenant, then why bother about the Law Covenant at all. “Why serveth the law?” Then he answers his own question—”It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.” Perhaps you would like to express a thought on this verse, Frank?

FRANK: Well, Ernest, it’s rather a comprehensive verse, showing the necessity of the Law Covenant being given to Israel because of their transgressions, for a limited time—”till the seed should come.” Verse 24 of this same 3rd chapter of Galatians helps us here, as it reads—”Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” In other words, the Law Covenant was given to Israel to demonstrate that they came far short of gaining life by their own efforts, but by obeying the Law as well as possible they would be trained to receive Christ, by faith in His sacrifice, at His first advent.

ERNEST: Thank you, Frank, for those thoughts, and I like the way the connected verses read in this 3rd chapter

of Galatians—”But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. And after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus”—verses 23, 25 and 26. Before we pass on from verse 19 in this 3rd chapter of Galatians, Frank, perhaps we could have a few thoughts on the reference to the Law Covenant being “ordained in the hand of a mediator.”

FRANK: Well, Ernest, the Apostle is showing there that Moses was the mediator of the Law Covenant, to try and reconcile Israel to God’s instructions given in that covenant. A mediator is a go-between to seek to reconcile opposing parties, and Israel needed God’s law because of their transgressions, as we saw a while ago. If Israel had been obedient to God as a nation, the Law Covenant would not have been needed, God’s Abrahamic Covenant would have been sufficient to reveal God’s plan. And that’s where we see a great difference between the Abrahamic and the Law Covenants. You’ll remember, Ernest, that God’s promise to Abraham was unconditional with no mediator, no go-between, because God could see that Abraham was really faithful no mediator was necessary, and this is also typical of Abraham’s spiritual seed, the church, who need no mediator. Not so with Israel, they needed a mediator, Moses, to act as a go-between with God, on their behalf.

ERNEST: Following the verses we examined a while ago, Frank, with reference to the change available to the Galatians when they had faith in Christ’s sacrifice, and were no longer under the schoolmaster of the Law Covenant, the Apostle continues in chapter 4 from verse 4—”When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” That must have been very wonderful for the Galatians in those days when they grasped the privilege of accepting Christ’s sacrifice as a means of salvation, instead of striving under the Law Covenant to gain life, which was never possible.

FRANK: That’s right, Ernest. It was wonderful for those who could exercise faith in the sacrifice of Christ, for the Apostle continues in Gal. 4, from verse 6—”And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” Despite this happy condition of some of the Galatians, there were still some in that church who were clinging to the works of the law as shown by verses 8 to 11 in this 4th chapter of Galatians.

ERNEST: I’d like to review those verses, Frank, and they read—”When ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereby ye desire to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.” Then in verses 19 and 20 of this same chapter, the Apostle very tenderly appeals to them—”My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you. I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.” There’s no doubt about the Apostle’s concern for those who had previously accepted Christ as their Saviour and had been accepted into God’s family, and were returning to the weak and beggarly elements of the Law Covenant.

FRANK: That’s very true, Ernest. And the Apostle continues from verse 21 in this 4th chapter of Galatians—”Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” These are explanatory verses, Ernest, showing the great advantage we have as Christians of being developed under the Abrahamic Covenant, and not being hindered by the bondage of the Law Covenant to gain salvation.

ERNEST: I can see that very clearly, Frank. And there’s just two more verses in this 4th chapter of Galatians, verses 28 and 31, which seem to clinch Paul’s presentation so helpfully, as follows—”Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise ... So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.” In other words, we, as Christians, are developed under the Abrahamic Covenant, and not the Law Covenant. But what about the New Covenant, Frank, which is also mentioned in the Scriptures?

FRANK: Well, Ernest, as our time is up for today, we’ll consider that next time we meet.

(To be continued)

Correspondence

U.S.A.

Dear Brethren: Blessed be the tie that binds.

Received such a blessed surprise with your booklet of Brother Muir's thoughts and poems. I had the privilege to know Brother Muir in my young years in growing in the truth and had many a blessing through his ministry. I would love to have a dozen of his "Lights and Shadows in Christian Experience." Sending a \$5.00 cheque. Close in bonds of love we all share in Christ.

Passover Memorial 1974

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Friday, 5th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "In remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

Melbourne-Sunday, 7th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide-Sunday, 7th April, at 6.15 p.m., at the M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Sydney-Friday 5th April, at 7 p.m., at 81 James Street, Leichhart.

HEART PURITY

"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."

Broadcasts on 4GY Gympie

Following recent enquiries in the Nambour, Gym-pie, Maryborough areas of Queensland, we have been offered the opportunity of broadcasting the Frank and Ernest Dialogues on 4GY Gympie. While time on Sunday mornings would have been preferred for this witness of the Lord's messages, 7.15 on Sunday evenings seemed the best time offering, so this has been accepted for a trial period of six months on 4GY Gympie. This station broadcasts on 600 Kc., having recently changed to this wave length, and all friends within range of this station in Queensland are invited to make the broadcasts known in their areas. Supplies of the "Do You Know?" slips are available on which the 4GY broadcasts could be stamped, and all friends able to assist in making the broadcasts known are invited to co-operate in this work. All are also invited to ask the Lord's blessing on this witness of the truth, as He sees good.

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th in the Manchester Unity Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary-Mr. F. M. Grinsted, 1 Wendy Avenue, Valley View, South Australia, 5093.

Books Available

In view of increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:-

- “**God’s Promises Come True**”-\$2.00 (postage from 45c to \$1.00 according to distance).
- “**The Divine Plan of the Ages**”, Cloth-75c (postage 30c. Paper bound-50c postage 30c).
- “**The Creator’s Grand Design**”-\$1.00 (postage 30c). “**The Book of Books**”-\$1.00 (postage 30c).
- “**Daily Heavenly Manna**”-\$1.00 (postage 30c).
- “**Songs in the Night**”-\$1.00 (postage 20c).
- “**Poems of Dawn**”-\$2.20 (postage 20c).
- “**Emphatic Diaglott**”, N. Testament-\$2.00 (postage 30c). “**Tabernacle Shadows**”-50c (postage 20c).
- “**God and Reason**”-10c (postage 7c).
- “**God’s Plan**”-10c (postage 7c).
- “**Hope Beyond the Grave**”-10c (postage 7c).
- “**Israel in History and Prophecy**”-10c (postage 7c.) “**Our Lord’s Great Prophecy**”-10c (postage 7c).
- “**Manner of Christ’s Return**”-10c (postage 7c).
- “**Christ’s Return**”-10c (postage 7c).
- “**Some of the Parables**”-10c (postage 7c).
- “**Where Are the Dead**”-10c (postage 7c).
- “**Lights and Shadows in Christian Experience**”-10c (postage 7c). “**Our Bible Translated**”-10c (postage 7c).

Numerous other smaller booklets.

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The Gospel Preached in all the World — Then Shall the End Come

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye and teach all nations.” “But ye shall receive power, after that the holy spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Matt. 24:14; 28:18, 19; Acts 1:8.)

Taking up this subject the three Scriptures above quoted will be reviewed first of all. Examining the first part of Matt. 24:14, most people are well acquainted with the meaning of the word “gospel”, for by common use it carries the thought of a good message, or glad tidings of the kingdom. This means hope of salvation from the sin and death condition which commenced with the disobedience of our first parents in the Garden of Eden.

Early in our Lord’s ministry He used the term “the kingdom of heaven”, as found in Matt. 4:17-20. This was when Jesus commenced to select those who were to be His followers indeed, as we read —”And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.” In these verses it is clear that Jesus was inviting Peter and Andrew to become prospective members of the kingdom of heaven, and He implied that He would train them to become “fishers of men” for that heavenly kingdom. However, as it is also clearly stated in the Bible that there will be an earthly phase of the kingdom, we can rightly assume from Matt. 24:14 where our Lord said “this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world”, that Jesus meant both phases of the kingdom would be preached or proclaimed in all the world, in due time. The Lord’s ministry with the message He was proclaiming was not restricted to the heavenly phase, for the kingdom is to be both heavenly and earthly—for spiritual beings and for earthly beings.

Then we notice in Matt. 24:14 there is a particular feature of the preaching or proclaiming of the gospel—that it is to be for a witness to all nations. What does “for a witness” mean? The word “witness” is a good translation of the Greek, and it means to give testimony or evidence. The preaching of the gospel of the kingdom for a witness means to give testimony of the glad news that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for all mankind, and salvation is provided through faith in His great sacrifice for all who accept Him as their Saviour. This is the glad news of the gospel, proclaimed particularly from our Lord’s first advent, when the “so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.” (Heb. 2:3.)

This prophecy of our Lord’s of giving witness to the gospel of the kingdom does not indicate how that witness would be received by all nations in the world. It has been claimed over the years that this preaching of the gospel to all nations was for the conversion of the world to Christ’s gospel. But that was not what the Lord really implied. Rather, His true gospel was to be a **witness** to all nations throughout the Gospel Age, irrespective of how that witness would be received. The fact that Jesus said to Peter and Andrew,—”Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men”, showed that the preaching of the gospel by Christ’s servants would mean a selective work would be undertaken, with the message of the gospel as bait, to attract to the cause of Christ. The message, the glad tidings, would have such an appeal to certain people that they would embrace it almost at once. That was the case with some of Jesus’ disciples; a few recognised this perfect Saviour almost immediately, through His message of salvation.

In one of our Lord's parables, in Matt. 13:47, 48, we have a clear indication of the selective work which has been going on all this Gospel Age. We read—"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." Later on we may have opportunity to see what happens to the "fish" cast back into the sea. Just now we are interested in the good fish, which pictured certain of mankind selected as prospective members for the kingdom of heaven—those who are attracted by the message of the gospel since our Lord's first advent.

The second of our selected texts in Matt. 28:18, 19, records the words of Jesus as He was about to leave His disciples and ascend to heaven. He said—"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye and teach all nations." The margin reads, "make disciples or Christians of all nations",—meaning "out of, or from all nations." Jesus did not commission His disciples to convert all nations, but make Christians by the message which had been given to them, which they had learned from the Lord for about 3 years. This agrees with the words of the risen Lord during one of His appearances, after His resurrection, in John 20:21—"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." The Father had sent Christ into the world, He had given the sacrifice for sin, He was now risen from the dead and was about to leave them,—"So send I you." They were to represent their Lord in a comparatively hostile world, but they would be armed with the spirit of God. They were equipped and prepared how to present the message of the gospel, not to force it on anyone, but as a witness to find those who were worthy, those who would rejoice in the same message which had attracted the disciples to the Lord Himself. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

The third selected text in Acts 1:8, records the final instructions of the risen Lord to His disciples prior to His ascension to heaven,—"And ye shall receive power, after that the holy spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." "Ye shall be witnesses unto me." We notice the gradual widening out of the witness to be undertaken. First of all the witness was in Jerusalem, and this was well impressed on the Day of Pentecost with the outpouring of the holy spirit. Jesus said they should wait for the promise of the Father "which ye have heard of me." This was the commission, the holy spirit coming down into their hearts, thrilling them with the true message of the gospel. Various tongues were used to communicate the gospel to foreigners. We find it quite understandable why tongues were used at that time with many nationalities there present to receive the message of the kingdom. How different is the position today when we hear of tongues being used. When everyone can understand the language, it is not the Lord's way to make a show before people. This is one of Satan's counterfeits. It was necessary in those early days when they did not even have the Bible.

The witness was extended, in accordance with Jesus' words, as shown in Acts 8:1, 4,—"And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." That is just what the Lord said would happen, and desired to happen. The disciples were not intimidated with the persecutions, but "went every where preaching the word." Throughout the Gospel Age the witnessing of the gospel of the kingdom has continued throughout one country after another, until with the invention of printing and the establishment of societies for the printing of the Bible, the witnessing to the gospel of Christ has widened until today it is claimed that this witness has been extended to the uttermost part of the earth. This does not mean that everybody has heard the message, but rather the witness has been given to all parts of the earth.

Combining the thoughts of the three particular texts used, we have clear evidence of the responsibility of Christ's servants who have had the witnessing of the gospel of the kingdom committed to their trust. Our Lord outlined the dangers to be encountered by His servants, and also the privileges of being entrusted to bear His message of the gospel when He gave the particular words of wisdom to the twelve apostles as recorded in Matthew 10, from verse 16. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves . . . And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles." The word "testimony" translates the same Greek word as does the word "witness", so we see that in the persecutions endured, the testimony given would be as a witness for the Lord's cause. Verses 19 and 20 continue,—"But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Isn't that lovely? What a comfort and support such words must have been; the spirit of the Father would be with them; they were not to be anxious. The same spirit of the Father that was with Christ would be with them. "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you."

Further verses in Matthew 10 show what is required of Christ's servants who are worthy to become "fishers of men." The promise also is given in verse 32,—"Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also

before my Father in heaven.” Who would not delight to bear the Lord’s name and witness for Him and His truth, in view of this wonderful assurance from the Master. Our Lord also confirmed this promise in His message to the church in Sardis, in Rev. 3:5,—”He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” This is a lovely promise, given by the Lord as He walked amidst the candlesticks (the churches), supervising the work being accomplished by those who walk in the steps of their Master throughout their earthly course.

Another text of special interest in connection with the witness for the Lord and His gospel of the kingdom, in the time of the Apostle Paul, is his message to Timothy, in 2 Tim. 1:8,—”Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God.” In this verse the word “testimony” is also from the same Greek word as is translated “witness” when referring to the gospel being preached in all the world “for a witness.” Witnessing for Jesus and witnessing for His gospel are closely allied. This is beautifully expressed in the vision of Rev. 20:4, where John says he saw, the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God.” These were not literally beheaded, necessarily, but had committed their whole lives into Christ’s care, to witness for Jesus and the Word of God, taking Christ as their Head. The vision is of those who had been successful in this, for they are shown as being worthy to live and reign with Christ a thousand years in His kingdom, to bless all mankind.

Coming to the latter part of Matt. 24:14, we find that after the gospel has been preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, “then shall the **end** come.” What “end” did Jesus refer to here? The meaning of the Greek word from which our English word “end” is translated carries the thought of “to set out for a definite point or goal; the point aimed at as a limit; (by implication) the conclusion of an act or state.” Some other Scriptures where this Greek word “telos” is used are helpful. In Matt. 24:12, 13, we read—”Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the **end**, the same shall be saved.” In Heb. 3:6, 14, we read—”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**. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the **end**.” Also in 1 Pet. 1:9, the verse reads,—”Receiving the **end** of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” Therefore, in Matt. 24:14, we conclude the meaning to be, that when the gospel of the kingdom has been preached in all the world, for a **witness** to all nations, to select all the members of Christ’s church, then shall the **end** come for the rewarding of these true followers of the Master, in the close of the Gospel Age, in readiness for the Kingdom Age to follow.

We should be helped further in this matter by the vision given to John, in Rev. 7:1-3, which refers to the sealing of God’s servants,—”I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree . . . Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.” World events surely indicate that the “four winds” of trouble are not yet allowed to blow full blast upon the present order of society, although there are various troubles world-wide. “The earth” represents the present order of society; “the sea” pictures the restless masses of humanity, and “the trees” represent the nations generally. Today the last members of the “servants of God” are being “sealed in their foreheads” as well as in their hearts, in preparation for the heavenly kingdom. It is obvious the “winds” are still held back; from time to time over recent years it seemed the winds would be let loose. We are surely living in the time of the fulfilment of this vision.

What may we expect when all the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads? Our Lord gave us a guide in this matter in John 9:4, when He said —”I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” The Lord knew the time would come when He could not work; He knew He would be apprehended and would become the “Lamb of God” when His work on earth would be finished. He was also speaking prophetically of our day. The “night” will come when God’s servants will be unable to work, but that time is not yet. There is still opportunity to proclaim His Word, to witness to the gospel of the kingdom, when one here and there still appreciates the message. These see through the darkness of the present evil world that God has a plan of salvation for every emergency.

Regarding the symbol of “trees” picturing nations, we have our Lord’s words when He spoke of the “fig tree” to picture Israel in Luke 21:29-31. (See also Luke 13:6-9.) Not only did Christ refer to the “fig tree”, but all the “trees”—all the nations, coming to life, and stirring the world with their claims and counter-claims. What we see going on in the world today tells us that the kingdom of God is nigh. This is something for which to look forward, following the devastating time of trouble. The prophet Nahum also mentioned the shaking of the nations by the symbol of “trees”, when he declared,—”The chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his (God’s) preparation (the preparation for the kingdom) and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken”, Nahum 2:3. Also in Nahum 1:5-9 we have the whirlwind of trouble shown in symbolical language,—”The mountains (kingdoms) quake at him,

and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein ... What do ye imagine against the Lord? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.” Rebellion shall not rise up a second time in God’s creation. God has determined, once and for all, that the great demonstration of rebellion with the sinfulness of sin, over about 6,000 years, will be sufficient to induce all worthy of life to accept salvation on the basis of Christ’s sacrifice for them. The majority of mankind will probably rejoice in this wonderful redemption when they realise what it cost to provide the salvation from the death condition.

The Apostle Paul tells us about the groaning creation waiting for deliverance, though unknowingly at the present time, in the words of Rom. 8:22, 19,—”For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. For the earnest expectation of the creature (creation) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.” Mankind are waiting for the revealing of the over-comers of the Gospel Age with Christ in the heavenly kingdom. This helps us to understand the meaning of the words in our text Matt. 24:14—”then shall the end come”,—the time when Christ’s faithful church will be with Him to bless all the families of the earth, at the conclusion of the witnessing of the gospel in all the world to all nations, to find the members for the heavenly calling.

The prophet Isaiah in chapter 60 reveals how Israel will be used of God when they come back into harmony with Him, following the humbling experiences of Jacob’s trouble. This is a very wonderful prophecy, showing how God’s great blessings will flow out to all nations, through Israel,—”The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea (all mankind) shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.” Previously mention was made of the drag-net parable, when only the good fish were selected during the Gospel Age. Now we see from Isaiah that the “abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee”— the abundance of mankind shall be converted in the Kingdom Age when the blessings of God will be flowing out to all the families of the earth. Mankind, raised up in the general resurrection, will learn that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man. That will be the time when they will have full opportunity of accepting the Lord and by obedience to the laws of His kingdom, will rejoice in the salvation provided and gain lasting life on the restored earth.

How wonderful is God’s plan for the salvation of the human family! The salvation of the Church first for the heavenly inheritance, and the world of mankind to be blessed on the restored earth throughout the kingdom age, following the great humbling in the time of trouble, all made possible through the sacrifice of Christ.

The words of the Psalmist help us also in these days of stress, when we read in Psa. 76:10,—”Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.” The

Lord will speak “Peace, be still”, to the raging masses of humanity in the time of trouble, and there will be a great calm. Mankind will know that the Lord has taken charge of earth’s affairs, that Christ’s kingdom is established, and nothing “shall hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain (kingdom); for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea”, [so. 11:9.

The Man Born to be King

(See Matthew 2:1-15.)

THIS subject is certainly a most important one, and we feel that a correct understanding of our Lord’s life on earth is of vital value to all of God’s people who are seeking to walk in the steps of our Saviour and Redeemer.

To all who are acquainted with the birth of Jesus as the Babe of Bethlehem, His earthly mother being used to nourish and rear this Babe into boyhood, it is evident that the Heavenly Father chose this means of giving His dear Son to be the Redeemer of mankind, as being the best way in keeping with His plan of salvation for a dying human race.

We have no doubt at all that God could have sent His Son as a fully developed man, direct from heaven, had His wisdom seen that it would have been the best way; but inasmuch as Jesus came into the world, born of an earthly mother, this must be considered as the very best way, not only to accomplish God’s plan of redemption, but also as the best means of conveying to the minds of earthly beings the great truth that our Saviour was the Messiah from heaven.

Supposing that Jesus had appeared suddenly in the midst of the Jewish people, as a fully developed man at the age of 30 years, and claimed to be the Messiah, the Saviour to Israel, there would have been some reason for the

majority of that nation to believe that He was more than a man, and this lingering supposition would have been a great hindrance to the faith of those who longed and yearned for the Messiah, and desired to walk in His steps, in hope of the kingdom. Even as it was, *we* remember that it was difficult enough for the most sincere in Jesus' day to understand (after they had witnessed an outstanding miracle by our Lord), that He was really human. *We* call to mind the instance in Matt. 8:27—"But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

What our Lord ever sought to impress upon His disciples was the fact that the works He did, the miracles He performed, were accomplished by the power from above—not by His own bodily power. In John 14:10, we read—"The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Also in regard to His teachings, He declared—"My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7:16, 17.) How this helps us to understand the philosophy of the ransom—that our Lord was a corresponding price for the life of our first parent, Adam. How important it is that this truth be grasped and understood in our hearts and minds, because until we do see that our Saviour was a perfect human being, at His first advent, we cannot really and truly co-operate intelligently as members in the Body of Christ.

It was to assist the disciples of Christ in particular, we may be sure, that God sent Jesus as the babe, so that He may grow up as other children, only of course, He was a perfect child, and was not affected or influenced by the imperfections of the dying human race. God knew, of course, that some in Israel would stumble at the lowly manner in which the Saviour came into the world, and would ridicule the suggestion that He was the Messiah. No doubt many thought of Him as stated in Matt. 13:55—"Is not this the carpenter's son?" They would reason—He is just one of us; and yet, as verse 54 shows, they could not but ask—"Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?"

While, then, the lowly birth of Jesus stumbled some to conclude that He was just one of the ordinary children in Israel, as He grew up, those in right heart condition could see that He was no ordinary man, because He was guided and directed of God so fully, and the miracles He did marked Him out as God's special messenger, even the Messiah.

However, how many sincere people today conclude that our Lord was more than a human being while on earth. Some seem to feel that it is belittling to think that our Saviour was not Divine in some way. A sincere person once wrote—"I cannot have any thing to do with teachings which tamper with the Deity of Christ." It is sad to note this attitude, for how necessary it is to really study God's Word, and not be so sure of having gained the truth in regard to any matter, that we are not open to correction, as the truths of the Scriptures are revealed to those worthy of them.

How clearly did the Apostle John explain our Lord's nature when He came as the Babe of Bethlehem. In 1 John 4:2, 3, we read—"Hereby know ye the spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." It is most important, surely, to understand this matter of our Lord's perfect humanity at His first advent—that He was truly the Man born to be King. In 1 Tim 2:5, 6 we read—"The man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." It is absolutely clear that our Lord gave His humanity for the life of the world—a man's life for a man's life, that He may pay the death penalty against Adam, and the race condemned to death in Adam. (See Heb. 2:9. "A little lower than the angels," was the same nature as that possessed by man in his perfection; see verses 6, 7.)

Some sincere believers who are able to grasp the fact that our Lord gave His human life in sacrifice, feel that in some way He will again appear in human form at His second advent. The truth on this matter is of equal importance, surely, as is the nature of Jesus when He came to redeem humanity; and how definitely did our Lord declare of Himself—"My flesh I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:51.) And again, in speaking to His disciples He stated—"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye (shall) see me (in the heavenly kingdom); because I live, ye shall live also." (John 14:19.) The Apostle Paul also revealed that in His great exaltation our Lord was made in the "express image of the Father's person,"—the divine nature; while Peter adds his testimony that Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened (resurrected) in spirit." (Heb. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:18.)

Someone may feel that it is not really important to know and understand these things, but it is of great importance that we do become clear and definite on the doctrine of the ransom—the corresponding price which our Redeemer gave for the world—and also the manner of His return, so that, as members of His Body, we may be in full harmony and co-operate in all things with our Lord and Head.

When the time came for our Lord to complete His sacrifice, we find that the answers He gave to Pilate are of great instruction to us respecting His kingship and kingdom. After being questioned by Pilate, we note the answer He gave in John 18:36, 37—"My kingdom is not of this world (kosmos, order of things; this 'present evil world'); if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

The great purpose of our Lord being born as the Babe of Bethlehem was that He may become the Man, Christ Jesus, to give Himself a ransom, corresponding price, for the world of mankind. He certainly bore witness unto this truth; and every one that is of the truth (with a heart and mind for the truth), heareth the Lord's voice. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:27.)

Pure Religion

(Contributed Article).

The Epistle of James is a particularly valuable one, because it gives so much practical advice. Our text is taken from chapter 1:27—"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Before examining our text in detail, it should be helpful if we gain an overall picture of what the apostle is saying. In doing this the particular text in verse 27 has much more meaning.

The apostle begins with exhortation. In verse 2 he says—"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." He was drawing their minds away from the temptations they were experiencing, and saying, I know you have temptations, that is your life; but let us count it all joy. Then we go down to verses 9-11,—"Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted; but the rich, in that he is made low; because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways." Nothing surely could be more basic than that. But note the apostle's words in verse 12,—"But blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

So that is the way the apostle opens up this epistle, and there is a point there also for us. It is very important for us always to exhort first and censure, if you like, later. We must have conviction of faith before we can have any constraint of action. "If any man have this hope in him, he purifieth himself." But he must have the hope there first.

Verses 16-18 read—"Do not err (make no mistake), my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." Then verse 19, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren"; because of this, "let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." Because of his exhortation, let us do likewise. See also verses 21, 22.

In verse 26 we read—"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." Then we have the opposite in verse 27—"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this. To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." The obligation in this verse 27 seems to spell out in detail two types of work the Christian should be doing. On the one hand we have to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. On the other hand, the Christian must keep himself unspotted from the world. What does it mean, to carry out these two sides of the question? Visiting the fatherless and widows, to us in these times might be rather meaningless. But we can take them in a purely physical sense, and in 1 Tim. 5:3-16 we have some practical advice about looking after those in the flesh who are not as fortunate as ourselves. Perhaps there is also some symbolic meaning here. In Rev. 18:7 symbolism is used; we might read verses 2 and 3 first of all,—"And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies." Then verse 7,—"How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." Because Babylon claims proudly that she is no widow, the thought comes to mind whether or not the true Church could be pictured as being a widow, and therefore whether

in our text in James in particular, to visit the fatherless and widows has a special implication for us to do our best to do good to all, but particularly to the household of faith.

The word “fatherless” is not quite so easy. These thoughts are presented for consideration—while the straightforward obligation of help is the prime thought, probably there may be something extra for us. The only other place where this word “fatherless” is found is John 14:18. From verse 15 Jesus said—“If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that it may abide with you for ever ... I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” “Comfortless” is from the same Greek word as “fatherless” in James. So Jesus was assuring the disciples that they would not be left fatherless or without a comforter. There Jesus was talking to them in the spiritual sense and saying, you won’t have a father on earth, our Father is in heaven, but I will not leave you fatherless. We are really “fatherless” on the earth, just as much as the Church can be classified as being a “widow” on the earth.

There is no doubt that James 1:27 has first a physical implication. Referring to Gal. 6:9, 10 we read—“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” The word “especially” has the meaning in the Greek of “most” or “the greatest degree” or “particularly.” Let us do good to the greatest degree to the household of faith,—“one of the least of these My brethren.”

On the other side of the question on the text in James, we should keep ourselves unspotted from the world. When first considering this years ago, the thought came to mind that the easiest way to carry this verse into effect would be to be a lighthouse keeper. You would be separate from the rest of the world, and in this way you could quite easily be unspotted from the world. But Jesus said in His prayer to the Father,—“I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” John 17:15-17. It is not a physical separation from the world that is required; it is a sanctifying or renewing of the mind. “Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” “This is the will of God (concerning you), even your sanctification.” “God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.”

Regarding the way in which we may best sanctify ourselves, we read in Heb. 10:25,—“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” The word “approaching” has various meanings, but at present we have the thought of provoking to love and to good works and not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together. We are favoured in this regard, in that we can assemble ourselves together. Some people who assemble often are not as fortunate as we are because they do not have the same opportunity to make the Truth their own. They are not completely free to express what they think; they are not completely free to question any decisions made. *We* in this country are very fortunate, therefore we should realise the opportunity and take hold of it and make good. “Be ready always to give an answer to every man who asketh concerning the hope that is in you.” “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself.” It is important for us to have this hope in ourselves.

In 1 Pet. 4:12 we read,—“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.” This is a well known verse, and it has some application when it comes to keeping ourselves unspotted from the world. Our trials must take place in the world, working things out in that situation. The words of the Apostle Paul in Heb. 4:15 help us to be patient in tribulations, and to persevere and keep ourselves unspotted from the world,—“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Again in Heb. 2:17, 18, with reference to our Lord, the apostle states,—“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” Thinking about that, in God’s wisdom He subjected our Lord and Master to discipline, and surely we should not be surprised at the fiery trial that is to try us.

The words of exhortation to the Ephesians by the Apostle Paul in Eph. 6:10-13 are well-known verses, but should be ever fresh and ever encouraging,—“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not (merely) against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places: Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

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 Apostle 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.

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.

Steadfast, Immovable

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.

“Songs in the Night”

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Is There Salvation After Death?

The subject of salvation is really the most important presented and explained to us in God's Word, because however true and beautiful other features of the plan of God may be, without salvation none of the human family would be able to enjoy and benefit from them for more than the few years of this present life. The Apostle Paul had this thought in mind when he stated—"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." (1 Cor. 15: 19.) Paul would reason—If there is not real, lasting salvation, which continues in the hereafter, then we have cause to be most miserable.

Then the question may be presented to our minds—What do we mean by salvation? The main meaning of the Greek and Hebrew words, from which our English word "salvation" is translated, is—"rescue or safety". And someone may ask—Rescue or safety from what? Our Lord's words give us the answer—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3: 16.) The Greek word which is translated by our English word "perish" means—"to destroy fully." In other words, it means death, lasting death, with no thought at all of consciousness. So, the salvation mentioned in the Bible means, to be rescued or made safe from death, from destruction.

Inasmuch as every member of the human race has been condemned to death in Adam, the matter of salvation will have to be faced, sooner or later, by every man, woman and child who has ever lived; and the Lord be praised that it is this way, because every human being will thus have an opportunity for salvation—to be rescued, made safe from destruction: as the Apostle Paul so clearly declared—"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." And "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (1 Cor. 15: 22; Heb. 2: 9.)

The majority of our readers will remember one of Sankey's hymns—"Rescue the Perishing"—and this title really gives the correct thought behind the word "salvation", so long as we remember that perishing means destruction. Probably the compiler of the hymn had the thought that if people were not rescued in this present life they were lost, condemned to eternal torment. This idea is both unscriptural and unreasonable, as any school child can prove from the Bible.

Quoting from the words of Jesus, when He was speaking with the woman of Samaria, we read in John 4: 22—"Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews". Someone may say, That seems strange, why was salvation, or rescue from death, destruction, only for the Jews at the time Jesus spoke? The instructions which our Lord gave to His twelve disciples may assist: He declared—"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10: 5, 6.) Also Jesus' reference to Himself is enlightening, as found in Matt. 15: 24-1 am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

The Apostle Paul, looking back to the time of Jesus' first advent and before, stated—"What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly, because unto them were committed the oracles (utterances) of God." (Rom. 3: 1, 2.) Again, in speaking of his kinsmen according to the flesh, Paul declared—"Who are the Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all. God blessed for ever." (Rom. 9: 4, 5.)

The above quotations help us to understand what John meant in John 1: 11—“He came unto his own (Israel) and his own received him not.” The nation of Israel had been God’s chosen people for centuries, and Christ was sent to them, as their Messiah, to give them the opportunity for salvation to the heavenly kingdom, prior to all other nations. This was surely a great privilege which the Israelites as a whole did not appreciate, as shown again by the statement of Acts 13: 45—“When the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye have put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” (See also Eph. 2: 11-13.)

A further statement by the Apostle Paul is most enlightening in connection with our subject, as found in Rom. 1: 16—“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek”—Gentiles generally. How clear it is that God determined to give the Jewish people the first opportunity for the heavenly calling, but seeing that sufficient were not worthy of that “so great salvation,” the invitation to believers in Christ from all nations was made operative 31 years after our Lord’s sacrifice unto death, so that the full number of the Bride of Christ may be called, chosen and proven faithful to reign with Christ in His heavenly kingdom.

Now, it may be asked, What happens to those Jews who rejected Jesus at His first advent, who had the opportunity to hear the “gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth”? Following the words of advice which our Lord gave to His disciples in Matt. 10: 6, where He directed them to preach the message to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” only, we read in verses 14 and 15—“And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.” It will be seen that the Israelites would be rejecting the light and truth of the Lord in rejecting the disciples of Christ, and so would not be worthy of any special consideration from the Lord as respects the heavenly calling—they had shown their lack of appreciation for such a high honour. Yet, Jesus implied that it would be a tolerable time for Israel in the day of judgment, but more tolerable for the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha, because the people of those cities had sinned against much less light and truth.

Through the prophet Ezekiel we have a wonderful account of how God will deal with Israel, Samaria, Sodom and all other nations in the day of judgment—the thousand years of Christ’s reign, when He will judge the world in righteousness. (See Acts 17: 31.) In Ezekiel 16, the prophet, speaking for the Lord, after revealing the sins of Sodom and her daughters, declares that God “took them away as He saw good” (verses 48-50), then continues, speaking prophetically to Israel—“Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins; but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they, and hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done . . . When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them. That thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art a comfort unto them. When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and *her* daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate.” (Verses 51-55.)

The declaration that the Lord would “bring again the captivity” of Sodom, Samaria and Israel, is more clearly revealed in the Revised Standard Version, which translates verse 53 as follows:—“I will restore their fortunes, both the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters, and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters, and I will restore your own fortunes in the midst of them.” Thus, God’s prophet was speaking of the great resurrection day in restoring the fortunes of these nations. They shall all “return to their former estate”—come again from the land of the enemy, death—that they may profit from past experiences, for “when the Lord’s judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” (Isa. 26: 9.) (See also Ezek. 16: 60-63.)

The Apostle Paul confirms the words of the prophet in Romans 11: 1, 2—“I say then, Hath God cast away his people? (Since they had rejected the high calling for the heavenly kingdom.) God forbid . . . God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.” No, indeed, after showing that “blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in”—to make up the full number of Christ’s Bride—Paul goes on to state—“And so all Israel shall be saved (shall be resurrected from the death condition); as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (natural Israel); for this is my covenant unto them (the New Covenant which the Lord will make with Israel at that time), when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel (the high calling for heaven), they are enemies for your sakes (you Gentiles); but as touching the election (by which they were promised, through Abraham, that they should be the earthly seed to bless all other nations), they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” (Rom. 11: 25-29.)

Does this mean that Israel and all the Gentile nations will have a second chance for salvation? No, all who will be dealt with in the Kingdom Age will really be having their first, full chance. They were not really touched by the message of the gospel previously (even if they heard the words of Jesus or His disciples; the majority, of course, having never heard Christ's name), hence were not called for the heavenly kingdom. Our Lord very clearly explained, even respecting those who heard Him—"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John 6: 44.) By meditating on this statement of our Master's we are able to see, as never before, that during the Gospel Age (between Christ's first and second advents), God is drawing to Jesus only those in the right heart condition. If these accept Christ as their personal Saviour they may be prompted by the spirit of God to present themselves in full consecration. It is an individual matter as to who accepts the invitation for the heavenly salvation, but one must first be invited, and having answered the call, all must then be proved faithful unto death to gain the inheritance.

Truly an understanding of the drawing and calling of the members who will make up the Bride of Christ helps us to be sympathetic towards all who now do not show interest in spiritual things; for if God draws only a very limited number to Jesus during the Gospel Age, and the Scriptures affirm that this is so, then the majority of mankind cannot be having any chance for salvation in this life. Their first, full and only chance will be in the Kingdom Age. Our Lord indicated this when He said, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the words that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12: 46-48.) The "last day" here mentioned by Jesus will be the judgment day of a thousand years on earth, and how reasonable it is to note that the words (truths, principles) spoken by Jesus at His first advent, will be the standards by which all mankind will be judged in this "last day" prior to the handing back of the kingdom to God, even the Father, when all the obedient will be able to stand before God's justice, as was the case with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden before sin entered. (1 Cor. 15: 24-26.)

Another statement by the Apostle Paul which agrees so fully with the foregoing, is found in 1 Tim. 2: 4-6, where we read—"God will have all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth." Strange as it may seem to some people, Paul here states that all men will be saved first, and then brought to a knowledge of the truth. Yes, indeed, they could not be brought to a knowledge of anything while in the death condition; hence, they are saved from death in Adam by a resurrection, and then instructed during the Millennial Age concerning the wonderful truth that "the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom (corresponding price) for all, to be testified in due time." All who then receive this testimony into good and honest hearts (it not having been their "due time" to hear it previously) will progress up the highway of holiness to human perfection, with life everlasting on the restored earth.

Of course some texts of Scripture are misunderstood and misapplied in connection with this subject of an opportunity for salvation after death. As an example is the passage in 2 Cor. 6: 1, 2—"We, then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee; behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." The Apostle is here referring to the day of salvation for the heavenly calling, and of course the Gospel Age is the only "day" for this; but to imply from this text that there is no hope of salvation beyond the present life for mankind in general is quite erroneous. The Apostle was not dealing with mankind in general, but writing to those who had already received the favour of God, and exhorting them not to receive this favour in vain, for truly, now is the only accepted time for the heavenly calling—during this present Gospel Age, and during the present lifetime of each one called of God and who has responded to that call to walk in the steps of Christ.

How important it is to keep the salvation for the heavenly calling—to the Jew first and also to the Gentiles—separate and distinct from the general salvation for mankind in general on the earth. By so doing, there is no confusion as to whether there is a second chance for salvation after death. It is hoped that the Scriptures used in this article clearly reveal that there is one full chance for salvation for every member of the human family, and no second chance for anyone. Also that the consecrated followers of Christ receive their full chance for the heavenly salvation in this present life, whereas the world of mankind will receive their full chance for the earthly salvation in the resurrection day. Should any of the consecrated followers of the Lord reject the favour of God, and wilfully despise the blood of Christ there would be no further opportunity for salvation for them; they would die the second death. (Heb. 10: 26-29.) Likewise with the world of mankind in the judgment day to come: if they refuse to obey the laws of that kingdom, under the favourable conditions of that time with Satan bound and no outside hindrances (Rev. 20: 1-3), they must be destroyed in the second death also. (Acts 3: 20-23.) Thus God will have

perfect and obedient beings in heaven and earth following the kingdom reign of Christ, and even death will then be no more, because all then living will be worthy of lasting life, to God's praise. (1 Cor. 15: 25, 26.)

How favoured are the Lord's true people during this "acceptable time" of the Gospel Age, having been drawn of God to accept Christ as their personal Saviour, and then called further to present themselves in full consecration, to walk in the way of sacrifice in the steps of their Master, in hope of the heavenly inheritance, as they prove faithful unto death. While the blessings upon all mankind in the kingdom of Christ on earth will be gracious and perfectly satisfying, even "the desire of all nations" to all in that earthly sphere who have no aspirations for spiritual things, yet the heavenly inheritance will be the glory that excelleth, for the Lord's faithful people now, as expressed by the Apostle—"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man (the naturally minded), the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us (the followers of Christ) by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2: 9, 10.) It is when we see clearly the two salvations which God provided through Christ, that our hearts surely long to serve such a loving Heavenly Father, and the language of the Psalmist expresses the desire of all who are now yielding their hearts and lives to God in spirit and in truth—"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psa. 116: 12-15.)

More Value than Many Sparrows

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Luke 12: 6, 7.)

These words of the Master, which, as verse one of the chapter shows "He began to say unto His disciples first of all," have no doubt been of very great comfort and encouragement to His true followers who, without such assurance of the care of their heavenly Father, may at times have thought they were wholly forgotten amidst severe trials and persecutions throughout the centuries of the Gospel Age.

Right through this 12th chapter of Luke's Gospel the same lesson of the assurance of God's utmost care over the followers of Christ is brought out for the benefit of all who have been, and are yet walking in the "narrow way" of sacrifice in the steps of their Master. Verses 24, 27 and 28 are especially noteworthy—"Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap ... and God feedeth them; how much more are ye better than the fowls?" "Consider the lilies, how they grow . . . Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass . . . how much more will He clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

But is this the only meaning our Lord intended? The question may arise as to why the Lord mentioned the sale of the sparrows—"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?"—or as Matt. 10: 29 reads—"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" Then again, what is the connection between the sale of these birds and "one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." Why should God be so specially interested in remembering these birds as they "fall on the ground" after their sale at small cost?

From the Old Testament we find that God accepted typical sacrifices of animals and birds as sin-offerings, or even a portion of fine flour when a person was very poor, and these offerings to the Lord (through the priest appointed) made satisfaction for sins in a typical way, prior to Christ's sacrifice on Calvary. This is explained in Lev. 5: 7-11—"And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the Lord; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering. And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer that which is for the sin offering first," etc. It is of interest to find that the Hebrew word for sparrow is used for all sorts of clean birds, or such whose use was not forbidden by the law; and in most of the passages where sparrow is read, we may understand a bird of any kind.

It would seem that our Lord in speaking to the disciples about "two sparrows sold for a farthing" or "five sparrows sold for two farthings" was reminding them of the typical sacrifices for sin, and in a way fitting to their own cases, which no doubt they would understand—they being men of small means who could not likely offer a lamb for sacrifice. Then He would lead their thoughts from the typical sacrifices which God was still remembering (until Christ's sacrifice was complete) to the much more important sacrifices, even the privilege of offering themselves as sacrifices through the merit of His precious blood shortly to be shed at Calvary.

It is a truly great privilege for all the consecrated followers of Christ to be counted in with His sacrifice in the offerings for sin, the "better sacrifices" which will indeed take away the sins of the world, all the value or merit

being in Christ himself—"Fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (See Col. 1: 24.)

One has stated respecting this subject—"The more I consider Luke 12: 6, 7, the more sure I feel that our Lord was indeed referring to the typical sacrifices. Naturally He would often behold these birds being bought and used for the purposes of sacrifice. We know the typical sacrifices were intended to impress that 'without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.' Therefore, while our Lord would note sympathetically the fall of the birds, He would rejoice in the Father's good pleasure being accomplished, in that, then the requirements for atonement were being complied with. How much more, indeed, would God take note of the 'better sacrifices' which in His providence are to mean so much in the way of blessing to all people."

EVENING

Another closing day,
Another setting sun:
What progress have I made?
What duty have I done?
Behold the record, Lord,
and see If I have tried to live *for* Thee,
And where I fail, O pardon me.

Have I in simple faith,
Before Thy gracious throne,
Lived only in Thy strength,
Or trusted in my own?
Behold the record, Lord, and see
If I have tried to live for Thee,
And where I fail, O pardon me.
—Anon.

OUR BIBLE TRANSLATED

A new print has been made recently of the very interesting and informative booklet, "Our Bible Translated", compiled some time ago by the brethren of "The Dawn". To cover cost of materials this booklet is supplied at 10c per copy, post paid.

The Kingdom a Prize

(Matthew 13: 44-52)

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matt. 6: 33.

There are precious lessons from the Great Teacher respecting His kingdom in this Scripture from Matthew 13. The parable of the treasure hid in the field, and the parable of the pearl of great price, both picture to us the great value of the kingdom of glory which is ultimately to be established amongst men for the blessing of the world. These parables also furnish lessons of what it will cost to secure a share, a place in that kingdom. A third parable treats of the embryo kingdom; that is to say, the parable of the net cast into the sea, pictures the condition of this present age, during which the elect, or kingdom class, the bride, is being found and gathered by the Lord's providences.

Treasure Hid in the Field

This is not one of the parables which Jesus expounded. His people, therefore, are left to exercise their judgment of its meaning, under the guidance of the holy spirit and the light shed upon it by other Scriptures. Indeed, there might be more than one application of it correct. For instance, we might apply the parable to our Lord Jesus and say that He bought the whole world at the cost of all He had, and that He purchased the world because of the “treasure” which it contained. And that treasure might consist of a variety of treasures of different values—for instance, the church, the bride class, the Lord’s special “treasure”, and such of the world as will ultimately receive and be blessed by the Messianic kingdom.

But our preference of thought is that the Great Teacher referred, not to Himself at all, but to those whom He instructed. By virtue of His own covenant of sacrifice, the kingdom was already promised to Him, and He, in turn, in the Father’s name, was inviting those who had the ears to hear, and hearts to appreciate, to become members of His bride class—members of His kingdom class.

He recommends that these should view the kingdom after the illustration of this parable. Suppose in their journeying they saw a field for sale at a certain price, and suppose, upon examination of it, they found it to contain a great treasure. The treasure might consist of very excellent soil, especially suited to their purpose, or it might consist of a valuable vein of precious metal, or it might consist of money buried long centuries ago, and forgotten, and not belonging to the owner of the field more than to others who might find it. In such a case, the parable suggests, anyone of ordinary intelligence would be willing to invest everything that he possessed to acquire the title.

So the Master declared to those that heard Him then, and to us who receive His words now, that He has information to give respecting a great treasure, a priceless treasure, which can be obtained, but only by the expenditure of great energy and the investment of everything of value. The great treasure is the share in the Messianic kingdom—that by accepting the terms of discipleship we may become not only sons of God, but if children, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord to His heavenly inheritance.

This inheritance was the same as was promised to the seed of Abraham, and we acquired an interest or share in it, not by being the actual seed of Abraham and the actual heirs to the kingdom, but by becoming Messiah’s bride and joint-heir.

When we think how much time and energy are put forth, and how much money and influence are expended to obtain some little, petty earthly honor of worldly renown and glory, and when *we* reflect that these at the most will last but a few years and be unsatisfactory at best, then we can appreciate the better the glory, honor and immortality which God has in reservation for the “called and chosen and faithful”, the bride, the Lamb’s wife.

A Pearl of Great Value

In the days of our Saviour pearls were represented amongst the most precious and most desirable of jewels, and the larger and more nearly perfect the greater its value. The Great Teacher used this familiar matter as the basis for a lesson on the value of the kingdom. The merchant of the parable found a pearl so superior in every respect to all other pearls that he considered it cheap to give everything he possessed to become the owner of that pearl.

This, said the Master, illustrates the value of the kingdom, with its glory, honor and immortality, which I am inviting an elect, saintly little flock to share with me. Those who prize it properly will show their appreciation by the amount they will be willing and glad to pay for it. Whether a man be wealthy or poor, learned or ignorant, influential or otherwise, the cost of this kingdom pearl of great value will be—his all. It cannot be had for less.

The wealthiest or most talented person in the world could not obtain a share in that kingdom if he kept back one single atom of his possessions; the price of the kingdom is self-sacrifice, even unto death, and nothing less will secure it. Nor would any sacrifice that we could make secure a share in this kingdom for us, except as our sacrifice would first be made acceptable in God’s sight through the precious merit of our Redeemer’s sacrifice, which he finished at Calvary.

The Parable of the Fish Net

We are not to think of the kingdom as like a net, but to understand that the embryo kingdom resembles a fishing experience with a net, in which were gathered all kinds of fish, which were brought to shore and sorted. This is a parable of the embryo kingdom because it relates to a work done in this age, in connection with the finding of the “little flock” who will constitute the kingdom in glory. The

Lord during this age has not been fishing for all kinds of fish; He has not been seeking for all kinds of people.

He has been calling, drawing especially, and dealing with only the elect, only the saintly.

But, incidentally, a variety of other kinds of fish have gotten into the Gospel net, some from worldly ambitions, some because religious systems are a good matrimonial field, others because of social privileges and standing, others because they desire to breathe a moral atmosphere, others because they would use religion as a cloak for business enterprises, etc. But the suitable fish, which the Lord is seeking, which alone will constitute the kingdom class, are those who hear His message with joy and count the cost and appreciate the situation and desire to be “bond servants of the Lord Jesus Christ.” They are willing to suffer with Him now that they may be glorified together with Him in His kingdom.

The parable tells us that “when the net was full it was drawn ashore” and the fish sorted. This evidently signifies that there will come a time in the end of this age when the Lord will have gathered a sufficient number of saintly ones to serve His purpose—to complete the number foreordained by the Father to be members of the elect church in glory. Then the fishing will cease. Who can say that the opportunity for entering the “net” as one of the true “fish” of the kind the Lord is seeking may not be almost at an end? Who can say that the Gospel net, with its full assortment of churchianity of every style, will not soon be drawn ashore that the suitable, the elect, may be gathered into the kingdom.

The unsuitable “fish” of this parable correspond with the “tares” of the “wheat and tares” parable. The “furnace of fire” will be the same “time of trouble” which will come upon the whole world of mankind very shortly. The unsuitable fish in the net are all church members—the unprofessing world are not represented in the parable at all.

Jesus asked His disciples if they understood the parable. They answered, yes, and He told them to consider His parables as a householder would consider his reserve of food supplies, from which from time to time truths “both new and old” would be brought.

Our text emphasizes this study. If the kingdom is the pearl, and the treasure, which the Master indicated—if we believe His testimony, then by all means let us show our faith, not merely by professions, but in every act and word. Let us seek the kingdom as the pre-eminent matter of our lives, in comparison with which all other things are inferior, and, as St. Paul declared “not worthy to be compared.” If seeking the kingdom seems to hinder some of our earthly prospects, so much the better. The Master said it must cost us our all. Our earthly considerations we have left in His hands. Let Him apportion our earthly blessings according to His wisdom of what will be most helpful to us in making our “calling and election sure” to a place in the kingdom. (From “Reprints”.)

Faith Healing

There are various schools of faith healing, such as Christian Science, Theosophy, Spiritualism, Pentecostals, and others, such as Hypnotists and healers by suggestion, who make no profession of Christianity at all. Certain men appear to be born with such powers, enabling them to bring relief to sufferers. All will agree that much of the healing done is not by the power of Christ; the question is whether any “faith healing” of today is of the Lord or not.

The fact that most of it is done under such different conditions to the miracles of Christ should be sufficient to cause suspicion. With the Lord and the Apostles they went about doing good, and sought no gain in return. They required no promise of joining their party, no promise that the restored ones would even become Christians. There was no attempt at display. There was the simple delight to do good to God’s glory. “Silver and gold have I none,” says Peter, “but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth arise and walk.” So with the Master, there were no agonising screaming prayers, no jargon of mingled shoutings by several praying aloud at the same time, while others sang hymns. There was no blaming the poor patient for lack of faith. The faith was in the Master and in the apostles, and the wondrous words, “Go in peace and sin no more,” could not be purchased by gold and silver, but they never failed to accomplish their purpose. There were some beautiful incidents of faith on the part of the cured, or by those who sought help for the afflicted. In such instances their faith was rewarded, “Thy faith have made thee whole,” as in the case of the Syro-Phoenician woman, and the faith of the Centurion resulted in the healing of his servant, but the Lord was not depending upon the faith of others for power to do His mighty works.

There was a purpose in all our Lord’s miracles. It seemed but appropriate that He who would one day reign over the earth, as the Great Physician, who would cure all diseases, aches and pains, and wipe away all tears, banish death, and empty the tomb, should during those 3+ years’ sojourn as a man, give some little illustrations of the great blessings which were due at His second presence. Thus we read, “This beginning of miracles did Jesus in

Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory.” (John 2: 11.)

There seemed more the necessity also for such demonstrations of power at that time. The Lord was operating with natural Israel; none were as yet begotten of the spirit, and therefore they could not understand spiritual things. The natural mind requires natural demonstration; the Jews naturally looked for such demonstration when Messiah would appear. In this way they would expect to recognize Him as is intimated in John 7: 31, “And many of the people believed on him and said, when Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done.”

While such demonstration was necessary at that time, because of the great change of dispensation which was taking place, and particularly because of treating with the natural minded people of God, there was not the necessity for its continuance. In fact, to have continued the acts of healing would surely have thwarted the purpose of the Gospel Age. It would have soon won the popularity of the world, and taken away the reproach of Christ. That will be just what will happen when the Great Physician takes up His great power, and reigns, and heals the diseases of all the willing and obedient, not only bringing a temporary release from pain and disability, but He will then even destroy death. When righteousness will be so rewarded, the heathen and the sceptics will all be attracted, and the knowledge of the Lord will soon be popular. During this Gospel Age, however, the Lord has not attempted to make the religion of Jesus Christ popular. He has purposely allowed Satan still to reign, and sickness, sorrow, and death to prevail, and His own people to suffer persecution, “They who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” God has purposely permitted such conditions because He has not been desirous of converting the world as yet—that has been quite a mistaken idea on the part of many Christians. If God had desired to convert the world at this time He would doubtless have continued miracles of healing, etc., but the Scripture states that He has only desired to take out a “little flock,” “a people for his name,” such only as are willing to “suffer with Christ,” and be like their great Leader, perfected through suffering. These, far from seeking to escape death, have devoted themselves to death, “as many as are baptised into Christ are baptised into his death.” Only if we suffer with Him shall we reign with Him. Such consecrated followers of the slain Lamb are not looking for physical healings; they are rather looking for grace and strength to prove loyal to God in the same way that their Master trod. It is only by having similar experiences that similar character can be attained. The desire is not how to escape suffering but how to be rightly exercised by it.

We see, then, that there was no question for the continuance of miracles of faith healing, etc.; on the contrary, we observe good reasons why such should not be continued. *We* are, therefore, not surprised to find that the power to pass on the gift of miracles was confined to the apostles, and that these gifts passed away with the generation following. It was this power of passing on the gift by the laying on of hands that Simon the Sorcerer desired to purchase. When Philip the Evangelist (not the apostle) had been preaching, and had made converts in Samaria, it was necessary that the apostles should send two of their number along, in order that they might lay their hands upon the converts that they might receive the holy spirit.

The Apostle Paul, after having spoken regarding various gifts of miracles, in 1 Cor. 12: 12-31, finishes by saying, “Yet show I unto you a more excellent way.” He then proceeds to describe the principal grace of Christian character, and shows that while the gifts of faith, prophecy, and tongues, etc., should pass away, this grace of the spirit would be eternal, and therefore how much more important it is that we should exercise ourselves to attain the fruits and graces of God’s holy spirit than that we should be so interested in such gifts of tongues and healing, etc., which were after all the things of childhood, things which were essential only during the church’s infancy.

Satan has sought out counterfeits for probably everything in connection with the Christian religion, and we have such a warning in 2 Cor. 11: 13-15, “Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness.” Spiritualists, Theosophists, and Christian Scientists all deny the fundamental doctrine of Christianity and the Cross—the ransom sacrifice for all, and therefore any power of healing they exercise cannot be of God. Regarding other “healers,” we find them generally much confused on simple Christian doctrines, and we cannot but think that before God will use a man in any such remarkable way He will first lead him to a clear knowledge of Himself and His word. Others, such as the Pentecostals, do not give evidence of God’s holy spirit, the spirit of a sound mind, of peace and joy and moderation, but rather by their fanatical ways in screaming prayers and irresponsible actions and unintelligible mutterings and sometimes railings on the floor, give evidence of demoniacal possession. The great adversary has surely greatly succeeded in bringing in strong delusions one way and another that if it were possible even the elect would be deceived.

No doubt all these poor people think they are right; think they are under the influence of God’s holy spirit; but that is just where the great adversary has deceived them. There is nothing in the New Testament to indicate that

there would be another Pentecostal shower. There is only “one baptism” of the holy spirit, which came on the Lord Jesus Christ, and flowed down to the church at Pentecost. The only way to participate in this Baptism is by becoming members in the body of Christ by repentance, faith and consecration. “We are all baptised by one spirit into one body.”

I WISH THEE GLADNESS!

I wish thee gladness!—gladness, strong, uplifting:
A true, sweet gladness with each fresh-born day:
A gladness which, while landmarks all are shifting,
Remaineth firm: to ne'er be swept away.

I wish thee gladness!--gladness deep, abiding:
Which comes when eyes of faith behold the Lord.
The gladness of a prayerful heart-confiding.
And daily dwelling on God's precious Word.

I wish thee gladness!—quiet, but yet telling:
A gladness which will mark both tone and *face*:
A gentle gladness, fount-like, inward swelling,
And overflowing into streams of grace.

wish thee gladness! Yes, through all life's *sorrow*:
The gladness which, supreme, o'er all can rise:
A gladness which, however dark life's morrow,
Doth have its springs beyond earth's clouded skies!

J. Danson Smith.

Faith the Basis of Peace

If we would know the foundation and security of this abiding peace which is able to survive the heaviest storms of life, we have only to look to the teaching and example of the Lord and the Apostles. What was it that held them so firmly and gave them such rest of mind while they suffered? It was their faith—their faith in the Love, Power and Wisdom of God. They believed that what God had promised, He was able also to perform, and that His righteousness and benevolent plan could know no failure. (Isa. 46: 9-11; 14. 27.) On the assurance of God they rested. In Him their faith was anchored; and it mattered not how fiercely the storms raged or how they were tossed by the tempests of life while their anchor still held fast to the Throne of God.

In the midst of the Christian warfare let our hearts be cheered and our minds be stayed, not only with such assurances that all the Divine purposes shall be accomplished, but also with such promises of personal favour as these:

“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him, for He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust.”

“Can a woman forget her sucking child? Yea, they may, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have engraven thee upon the palms of My hands.”

“The Father Himself loveth you.”

“It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.”

“Such as are upright in their way are His delight.”

“Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desire of thine heart”—the peace of God, even in the midst of storm and tempest.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 22nd, 23rd, 25th and 26th, in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. Further information from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy St., South Oakleigh, Victoria, 3167.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at \$10.50.

The Incomparable Christ

He came from the bosom of the Father and was born of a woman. He put on humanity that we might put on Divinity. He became a man that we might become sons of God. He lived in obscurity, only once crossed the boundary of His land, in childhood. He had no wealth or influence. His relations were inconspicuous and uninfluential. In infancy He startled a King: in boyhood He puzzled the doctors; in manhood ruled the course of nature. He walked upon billows and hushed the sea to sleep. He healed the multitudes without medicine and made no charge for His services. He never wrote a book, yet not all the libraries of the country could hold the books that could be written about Him.

He never founded a college, yet all the schools together cannot boast of as many students as are His. He never practised medicine and yet He healed more broken hearts than the doctors have broken bodies. He never marshalled an army, drafted a soldier, nor fired a gun, yet no leader had more volunteers, who have under His orders made rebels stack arms and surrender without a shot being fired. Great men have come and gone, *yet* He lives on. Herod could not kill Him. Satan could not seduce Him. Death could not destroy Him, the grave could not hold Him. He laid aside His purple robe for a peasant's gown. He was rich yet for our sakes He became poor. How poor? Ask Mary; ask the wise men. He slept in another's manger. He cruised the lake in another's boat. He rode on another's ass. He was buried in another's tomb. All failed, but He never. The ever perfect One. He is the chief among ten thousand. He is altogether lovely. He is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Books Available

"God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00, plus postage.

"The Divine Plan of the Ages," Cloth bound—\$1.00, including 24c postage. Paper covers-75c, including 24c postage.

"Emphatic Diaglott," New Testament—\$2.00, plus postage.

"Daily Heavenly Manna", birthday pages—\$1.25, post paid.

"Tabernacle Shadows"-75c, post paid.

"The Book of Books," Reviewing the Bible as a whole—\$1.25, post paid.

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy"-16c post paid.

"Manner of Christ's Return"-16c, post paid.

"Christ's Return-16c, post paid.

"Some *of* the Parables"-16e, post paid.

"Hope Beyond the Grave"-16c, post paid.

"God and Reason"-16c, post paid.

"Where are the Dead?"-12e, post paid.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS
3GL Geelong, 1350 Kc. Sundays 10 a.m.



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God Has a Plan and You Are In It

REVIEWING human history we are able to determine the cause of the terrible distress of nations the world over. All intelligent people will admit that this world-wide distress is increasing despite the twentieth-century civilization which many people feel, with the great increase of knowledge, should help to eliminate rather than increase the “distress of nations with perplexity”, which Jesus predicted at His first advent would be experienced at this time in which we are now living.

What is the primary cause of this state of affairs which Jesus said would be so pronounced in this end of the Gospel Age, with men’s hearts failing them for fear as they beheld the things coming to pass on the earth? In a word, the primary cause of the present world distress is **disobedience** to our loving Creator.

Turning to the apostle’s words in Romans 5:19 we read—”For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.” How many were made sinners by one man’s, Adam’s, disobedience? We have the answer in verse 12 of this 5th chapter of Romans —”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.” Again, in 1 Cor. 15:22 we read—”For as in Adam **all die**” —all lost life in Adam. Further, in Rom. 6: 23, the first part of the verse reads—”The wages of sin is death.” That was the penalty God imposed in the Garden of Eden—”In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” This is the A.B.C. of Bible truth, so to speak. We know that death in the Bible means death, the opposite of life. It is essential that this be kept in mind when considering our subject.

Let us examine some texts of Scripture which assure us that death means death, and not life in any sphere of existence throughout the Universe. The Psalmist was inspired of God and has given many helpful messages for our benefit, as follows—”For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks”; “The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence”; “His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish”—Psa. 6:5; 115:17; 146:4. The wise man was also inspired of God, and has given us helpful information—”For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten”; “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest”—Eccles. 9:5, 10. Who would contradict all these Scriptures? In Christendom today, when a person dies he is considered even more alive than ever. Such teaching is contrary to the whole Word of God from beginning to end.

Looking at the New Testament, in John 11 we have the occasion when Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, became ill and the sisters sent word to Jesus—”Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.” Jesus did not hasten back to cure the sickness of Lazarus; He waited where he was and returned on the fourth day, and raised Lazarus from the dead. We realise that Lazarus was asleep in the death condition for those four days; if he had been in heaven, the Lord would have been doing him a disfavour to bring him back to the sorrows of earth. Lazarus lived on a few years; he possibly became a faithful Christian and finished his course, to be raised in the resurrection day. Our Lord’s words respecting Lazarus—”Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep”, and “Lazarus is dead”, was the truth, and what we need to believe as the basis for grasping further truth in God’s wonderful plan of the ages. What a wonderful rejoicing it was when Jesus restored Lazarus to life! That is a beautiful illustration of what the Lord will do for every human being who has ever lived—they will come again from the land of the enemy, the great enemy, death.

If you believe that the disobedience of Adam was sin, and sin brought death, and all mankind are condemned in Adam and also suffer the penalty of real death, then you are better informed than all the great theologians in Christendom. You understand God’s simple foundation truth respecting the need for His help in our condemnation

in Adam. The leaders in Christendom who believe that death means life of some kind, claiming a continuing life without God's help, would fulfil the words of the Apostle Peter respecting a denial of the Lord who bought them, whether they realise this or not. If people are really alive in death they do not need a Saviour to bring them back to life. The lines of a hymn express this situation rather well—"That I may read, with childlike eyes, truths that are hidden from the wise." They are hidden from the great theologians. *We* need a childlike faith in the simple statements of God's Word.

Having established our great need of God's help in our condemnation, let us consider some of the same Scriptures in full. Turning again to Rom. 5:19, we read—"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." As many as were sinners have the possibility of being made righteous. Why do we say they have the possibility of being made righteous? Because there are conditions attached, to which reference will be made later.

Next we refer to 1 Cor. 15:22—"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." As many as have died in Adam are to be made alive in Christ. That is all-comprehensive; it embraces every human being throughout the wide world.

In Rom. 6:23 we read—"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Why is eternal life spoken of as a gift of God? We read in Rom. 5:6-8--"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we *were yet* sinners, Christ died for us." Eternal life is a **gift** of God because God could have quite justly allowed all mankind to remain in death after the death penalty took effect. But God commended His love toward us, in providing Christ to be our Redeemer, as we see in this passage.

In Heb. 2:9 we are told of the condescension of Jesus to come down to man's estate, to the same nature as man represented in father Adam in the Garden of Eden—"We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." This is God's plan. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. "God commendeth his love." God has a plan, that Christ should "taste death for every man." God has a plan for every human being and **you are in it!** Do you feel you are in God's plan? Whether you feel you are or not at present, we are sure that everyone is in God's plan, because Christ tasted death for everyone. That includes all living in Melbourne, all in Australia, all people in the world. Think of that—Christ tasted death for every humanbeing! Notice it does not say Christ tasted death for every believer only, in the first instance.

This wonderful truth is beautifully presented for us again in 1 Tim. 2:4-6. The Apostle says—"God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." What a lovely text this is! Here we are assured all mankind will be saved from death in Adam. They will have a resurrection from the dead, and come to the full knowledge of the truth, that the man Christ Jesus gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. This is God's wonderful plan, and **you are in it!** Every human being throughout the world is in this plan of God, because Jesus paid the "ransom" or corresponding price for Adam and also for all mankind—"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Notice also the wonderful provision that this ransom for all is to be testified or revealed to all in God's due time. This lovely truth reminds us of John 1:9—"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We might say, Not so. Jesus has not lightened every man that cometh into the world. But in due time He will, and that is what the text means, What each individual does with the true light when it is revealed to him will be his own responsibility. The verse quoted in 1 Tim. 2:4, that "God will have all men to be saved", is not saying all will be saved eternally, but all will be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth that Christ paid the ransom for them, that they may accept Him as their Saviour and gain lasting salvation, lasting life.

This wonderful provision brings us to the words of Jesus in John 10:10, 11—"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." Jesus came that He might give Himself a ransom or corresponding price for Adam and all mankind in Adam. But additionally, within this general salvation for humanity, He came to give life **more abundantly** to a comparatively few of mankind who would be willing, yes, and delight to walk in His steps of sacrifice, that they might also live with Him in His heavenly kingdom. So we are not wrong in saying that God has two plans, or one plan in two parts, for the salvation of the human race. One part is to give human life on the restored earth to all the families of the earth, and the other part is to give more abundant life, spiritual life, to those whom God is drawing to Jesus during this Gospel Age, as described in John 6: 44, 45. Our Lord speaking says—"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him . . . And they shall all be taught of God." All those drawn of God to Jesus shall be taught of God, by His spirit. They come to Jesus because He is the Way, the Truth and the Life, the only means of salvation that God provided in this wonderful Saviour. Those who are drawn of God to Jesus during this Gospel Age have the privilege of presenting their lives fully in His service, if they feel the Lord is calling them for sonship. It is no use pretending to be a Christian if God is not drawing us; we will never be a Christian if God is not drawing us to Jesus.

The words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Cor. 5:14 help us in this matter—"For the love of Christ constraineth us." The meaning of the Greek word translated "constraineth" is "to hold together." If you have felt the Lord's drawing power and His influence to yield your life to Him day by day, this is for the special plan of God, and **you are in it!** This is God's special plan during this Gospel Age, when He is selecting the Bride of Christ to be associated with our Lord in His heavenly kingdom. Those who feel they are drawn to God are in this special plan, and should accept it day by day and improve their privileges as God's children. It is our privilege as well as responsibility to stay in this plan of God for us, as we allow God to work in us to will and do His good pleasure. We have an important part to play by staying in this plan of God for us, this special plan for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Shortly after our Lord commenced His ministry, after His baptism in the River Jordan by John the Baptist, symbolizing His consecration unto death for the redemption of humanity, and following His temptation in the wilderness when He resisted the devil so resolutely, we have a helpful account of His visit to Nazareth, where He had been brought up as a boy. He visited the synagogue, and gave a sermon on the prophecy of Isa. 61 concerning Himself. He knew, of course, that the prophecy had been spoken under God's inspiration concerning Himself. The record of this outline of our Lord's ministry is found in Luke 4:14-22. This record is given quite briefly, for He must have preached a wonderful sermon, if we only had the full account of it. Jesus was anointed by God's holy spirit at His baptism, so in the quotation from Isa. 61, in Luke 4:18, we read—"The spirit of the Lord (Jehovah) is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor"—not poor in money matters, but the meek and lowly. "The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way", Psa. 25:9. Our Lord was sent "to heal the brokenhearted." There were plenty of people broken-hearted in Jesus' day, as well as since. Our Lord's message does comfort and heal such hearts, as indicated in Matt. 11:28-30—"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 you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy (gracious), and my burden is light." The Lord's yoke is not burdensome, because the Lord is in the yoke with His people; He guides and comforts and directs them as they walk the Christian way with Him.

Our Lord was also anointed "to preach deliverance to the captives." This is expressed very well for the Gospel Age followers of the Master in Col. 1:13—"God hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." God's Word supports His people so they are able to resist the power of darkness, being translated prospectively into the kingdom of Christ. Also in Eph. 4:8, referring to the Lord's ascension, we read—"When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive." The meaning is, "he led forth a multitude of captives"—first of all His own dear people who gain life during this Gospel Age, as they are delivered out of captivity in death. These are passed from death unto life in Christ.

Jesus was also anointed to give "recovering of sight to the blind." In Eph. 1:18 we read—"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." In regard to our inner sight, the message of 2 Cor. 4:6 is very helpful—"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." This would be the object of our Lord's preaching—the recovering of sight to the spiritually blind, that they may see, as quoted previously, truths hidden from the wise.

Our Lord was also commissioned "to set at liberty them that are bruised." The "bruised" or oppressed would be those crushed by the sin of this present evil world, and who would be in a heart condition to respond to God's drawing to Jesus. The words of Jesus in John 8:31, 32, 35 are helpful—"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, 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. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." What a lovely thought, to be free in Christ Jesus.

Further, Jesus was anointed "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." This is a reference to this Gospel Age, between Christ's first and second advents, when God is "taking out a people for his name" for the heavenly calling, well expressed by the Apostle in 2 Cor. 6:1, 2—"We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." How often is this Scripture misused to imply that the present life is the only acceptable time for all mankind to be saved. Rather, it is the only acceptable time for the heavenly calling. For those who, by the Lord's grace, are receiving life more abundantly, this is the acceptable time.

But what about the majority of mankind, all the remainder of humanity for whom the Lord died, and who shall receive, not life more abundant in heaven, but a resurrection to life on earth. They will gain lasting life on earth, when obedient to the laws of the kingdom. The prophecy of [Isa. 61], explained briefly by Jesus in Luke 4, will also be fulfilled for "all the families of the earth." This is indicated in Isa. 61:2. After referring to "proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord", the prophecy ends—"and the day of vengeance of our God" which Jesus omitted in Luke 4, as not being applicable at His first advent. We know that the great time of trouble at the end of the Gospel Age is necessary so that a new order, Christ's kingdom, can take over for the "times of restitution of all

things” on the earth. The latter part of verse 2 and verse 3 of Isa. 61 have application during this Gospel Age, but will also apply for all the obedient of mankind following the “day of vengeance of our God.” Then verse 4 brings in the great restoration throughout the earth—”And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.” The comforting of all that mourn, and of all who are brokenhearted and ready for the blessings of Christ’s kingdom will proceed, as described in Zech. 12:10 —”And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and 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 when Israel has been through “Jacob’s trouble”, God’s blessing will be due to come down upon them. The spirit of grace and supplication will be poured out. They will look upon the Lord whom they pierced, not literally, for the Lord will not come back to earth as a man to be observed. But their minds will go back to the time of His crucifixion—they will realise they crucified the Lord of Glory, and the majority we believe, will repent of such a dreadful act. Israel will then receive the blessings of the Lord.

In Isa. 61 the Lord has promised blessings for all who mourn, and so the position of those who desire to be right with God and come into line with the laws of His kingdom will be favourable. Of that time, when all nations will be **in God’s plan**, we read in Isa. 2:2-4 a prophecy which reveals the benefits to result from the establishment of Christ’s kingdom throughout the earth. See also Isa. 11:1-11; 25:6-9; 52:9, 10.

In this plan of God, in which every human being who has ever lived is included, human problems will be overcome. Many people are concerned about the over-population of this planet, and rightly so. The greatest thinkers today are greatly troubled because they think the present order as we have it today will continue indefinitely. God told our first parents in the Garden of Eden that they should increase and fill the earth; not over-fill it. God has a plan, and it is a perfect plan. It will not get out of hand, because when the kingdom comes, the present problems of earth will be solved. In Luke 20:27-36 we have a passage of Scripture which explains the matter of world population for the future. The words of Jesus in verses 34 and 35 are explanatory—”The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world (the Millennial Age), and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage.” There will be no more family circles as we have them today, but mankind on the earth will be one great family of God.

Many people are also concerned about the extreme pollution of our planet. This is also of great importance. We would like to quote a report from the Melbourne “Age” of May 10th under the heading—”Our River too can Sparkle with Coal Char.” The report is as follows—”Fancy the Yarra River cleansed of 99.9 per cent, of its sewage germs? Such a clean-up has already been achieved by Melbourne University researchers—on samples of polluted water. They ran the water through beds of brown coal char to extract the bacteria. Mr. Geoffrey Cullen talked about the discovery at the University of Melbourne, where he heads the Institute of Materials Research in the Department of Metallurgy. ‘Two years of research have shown that char produced from brown coal can purify water polluted by bacteria’, he announced. ‘If this process is further developed the water now polluted by sewage ought to be made not only swimmable but drinkable.’

“Mr. Cullen’s team took water from the Yarra near Princes Bridge during a drought, when it contained 250,000 E. Coli organisms a litre, 200 times the number considered safe for swimming. Two hours treatment with brown coal char removed 99.9 per cent, of the ‘bugs. Water taken from septic sewers at Croydon contained 10 million E. Coli per litre; these were reduced by 99.6 per cent, by five minutes treatment with the char. The brown coal char works because of the expanse of inner surfaces in its porous structure, which absorbs—that is, chemically and physically takes hold of—atoms, molecules and micro-organisms. A single gram of char has 700 square metres of inside surface. Another material currently used in absorption of bacteria from polluted water is called activated carbon. Mr. Cullen said the brown coal char would give a comparable purification for one tenth of the cost. Further, the char can be regenerated by roasting it red hot in a furnace now and then. This disposes of the ‘garbage load of bugs’ stored inside and destroys only 5 per cent. of the char body.”

If man can accomplish such things in his imperfection, what can God do, when the time comes to clean up this planet for the habitation of the renewed human family! We remember our Lord said, “Behold, I make all things new.” He is going to make all things new for everybody in His plan. In the kingdom age all the obedient of mankind are **in His plain** for the general earthly salvation throughout the world, and Christ’s true followers of this Gospel Age are **in His plan** for the wonderful heavenly calling of God in Christ Jesus. In Rev. 21:1-5 we have revealed God’s wonderful new order established throughout this earth for the benefit of redeemed humanity—”And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea”—no more restless masses of humanity—”And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.”

Revelation 7.

THE sincere student of God’s Word will have no difficulty in determining that the first three verses of chapter 7 apply to the harvest period of this Gospel Age, when Christ, the “angel ascending from the east,” (verse 2) takes

control of events as they affect the “sealing of the servants of our God in their foreheads.” The command to hold back the winds until the work of sealing is accomplished, shows that the Lord will not permit the commotions of earth to interfere with the gathering and full intellectual development of His servants during this period of the presence of Christ as the Chief Reaper, throughout the harvest of this age.

In Matt. 24:34 the same harvest work is described as follows: “And he (Christ) shall send his angels with a great trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” It is very evident that the “heavens” here mentioned is the ecclesiastical heavens, from which all the true servants of God are called during the harvest of the age, that they might be fully informed of all the truth respecting the harvest and kingdom work, “sealed in their foreheads,” in preparation for their reigning in kingdom power with Christ, as they prove faithful to their consecration vows, by His grace.

The holding back of the four winds “that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree”, being only for a specified time, implies that the “earth”, “sea” and “trees” (all symbols of the present order of society) will be “hurt” when the winds are released. While there is much trouble and suffering in the world, it is evident that the “four winds” are not *yet* loose, for the various elements of society still exist; however, before the close of this age, the “great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world”, (Matt. 24:21) will bring about the passing of the present order, in readiness for the time when the “new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness”, shall operate for the blessing of all mankind (2 Pet. 3:13).

The statement that the winds are restrained “till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads”, (verse 3) agrees with the words of our Lord in Matt. 24:22—“Except those days (of tribulation) should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved, but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.” The implication is, that the shortening of the days of tribulation “for the elect’s sake”, means the holding back of the severity of the trouble before it bursts upon the world, while the last members of the elect are still in the flesh—till they are sealed in their foreheads—and so are then able to prove victorious through whatever portion of the tribulation the Lord sees fit they should experience, prior to their deliverance to the heavenly inheritance.

“The sealing in the forehead,” as described in verse 3, refers not so much to character development, as to a full intellectual understanding being gained by those servants who have the character-likeness of Christ as their pattern, and which they are ever seeking to copy, by His grace. In other words, it will be only those servants who have the heart desire for characters pleasing to the Lord who will be “sealed in their foreheads”—being informed of all the details of the harvest and kingdom work, that they may be fitted to co-operate in the grand work in the heavenly kingdom. That this is the correct thought is further indicated in verses 4 to 8, where it is stated that the number of the sealed ones was 144,000. It will be realised that this number comprises the whole Bride of Christ, the members of which have been selected from the world of mankind throughout the Gospel Age. Further, it will be evident that only a portion of this number would be living in the harvest period of the Gospel Age, and receive their sealing in the forehead while still in the flesh. It therefore follows, that those servants who proved faithful to their consecration vows prior to the harvest, when the light of truth was not completely revealed, would be sealed in their foreheads—intellectually—at their resurrection, when, early in the harvest period “the dead in Christ would rise first.” It is one thing to be fully faithful to the vows of consecration, and still another to be “sealed in the forehead” with the intellectual knowledge necessary to prepare all the Bride of Christ for their work with Him in His Kingdom.

The fact that the 144,000 sealed ones are divided into the twelve tribes of Israelites, with 12,000 in each tribe, indicates that the offer to make up the Bride of Christ was made to Israel at our Lord’s first advent. However, only a limited number of Israelites were worthy, and were received into God’s family, and so, as the Scriptures clearly show, the call went to the Gentiles to make up the required number. These are grafted into the original olive tree (see Rom. 11), as Israelites indeed—by becoming Christ’s, they are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise. (Gal. 3:29.) “The fulness from the Gentiles will come in”, (Rom. 11:25) and sufficient will be allotted to each of the tribes to make up the required number, as predetermined of God before the foundation of the world. (Eph. 1:3-6.)

The verses 9 to 17 explain the last vision seen by St. John under the sixth seal, and describe a great multitude of saved ones from all nations, kindreds and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, in contrast with the definite number of the sealed ones of verses 4-8.

That this innumerable multitude is a spiritual class is clearly shown by the setting of the vision; there can be no doubt that the throne mentioned in verse 9 is the rainbow circled throne of God (Rev. 4:3), and the presence of the Lamb, and the elders and four beasts, etc., leaves no doubt on this matter.

This class of spiritual beings could be none other than those who have been redeemed from the earth throughout the Gospel Age, and who, on account of various hindrances have not proved worthy of a place in the Bride of Christ, to sit with Him in His throne (Rev. 3:21), yet, by coming through great tribulation their robes are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, and they are granted a place “before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple.”

While there is no call to the Great Company of this vision, this class is, nevertheless, mentioned in various Scriptures. They are the “foolish virgins” of the parable in Matt. 25:1-13, and are mentioned by St. Paul especially, in his Epistle to the Corinthians. (See 1 Cor. 3:15; 5:5.) This class is also pictured in Psalm 45:14, as “the virgins her companions that follow her”—those who follow the Bride. While those who comprise the Great Multitude will be disappointed at first, in not gaining the chief prize for which they were called, yet, they will quickly realise that they were not fully zealous during their pilgrimage on earth, and on being raised to the place of honour before the throne will proclaim in the words of Rev. 19:7—“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.”

Verses 16 and 17 clearly show that the position of the Great Company, while not being of the divine nature like the Bride of Christ, will be a favoured inheritance in the heavenly realm, and the work they will do in serving God day and night in His temple will no doubt be in connection with the uplift of the world of mankind, in co-operation with Christ and His saints who will direct the Kingdom work, to the praise and glory of God.

“HER CREED”

She stood before the chosen few,
With modest air and eyes of blue;
A gentle creature, in whose face
Were mingled tenderness and grace.

“You wish to join our fold,” they said
“Do you believe in all that’s read
From ritual and written creed,
Essential to our human need?”

A troubled look was in her eyes;
She answered as in vague surprise,
As though the sense to her were dim,
“I only strive to follow Him.”

Creeds change as ages come and go,
We see by faith, and little know;
Perchance the sense was not so dim
To her who “strove to follow Him.”

—Selected.

Paul Speaks as Under the Law

MUCH perplexity has been caused to many Christian minds by the statements of the 7th chapter of Paul’s Epistle to the Romans. Some have concluded that he here teaches that he lived a life of sin, according to the flesh, but a life of righteousness according to his mind. Yet they are ready to concede that this is rather a perplexing, unreasonable and unsatisfactory view of the matter. Others reach the conclusion that the Apostle must here be describing his condition of heart and mind before conversion, while he was still a sinner; yet these also find difficulties, and confess that many features of such a view are quite inconsistent with the Apostle’s language. The following is submitted as being a helpful and correct understanding of the matter.

In his letter to the Romans (chapter 7), the Apostle reasons to Jewish converts to Christianity; “For”, he says, “I speak to them that know the Law.” He then represents the Law Covenant as a husband, and Israelites bound by it as a wife to a husband. He shows that as it would be a sin for the woman to unite with another man while her husband lives, so it would be wrong for Israel to leave Moses, and to unite with Christ, unless released by death—either the death of the Law Covenant or their death to the Law Covenant.

It is a common mistake to suppose the Scriptures to teach that the Law Covenant died, or was destroyed by our Lord. **It still lives;** and all the children of Jacob are still bound by it, **unless they have died to it.** Only those who realise that they could not gain everlasting life through their union with Moses (the Law Covenant) are ready to abandon all hope of saving their life by that union with Moses, to become **dead** to all such expectations, and to accept the death of Christ, the ransom for Adam and all his race, as the basis of a **new** hope and of a **new** life. Hence, only such Israelites as by faith reckon themselves hopelessly **dead** under the Law Covenant, and as risen with Christ to a new life secured by His sacrifice, and who in **will are dead** to sin—only such could be united to Christ as the new husband. Thus, according to the Apostle’s reasoning, the thought of being united to both Moses and Christ, was wholly out of the question—compare Rom. 6:2.

The text, “Christ is the end (or fulfilment) of the Law (Covenant) for righteousness **to everyone (under it) that believeth**” (Rom. 10:4), does not conflict with the above, because only believers are specified. (Compare Rom. 3:31; Gal. 2:19). Eph. 2:15 should be read: “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity of the law of commandments contained in ordinances”, etc. Col. 2:13, 14 refers to “quickenened” Jewish believers for whom the handwriting of ordinances is blotted out. Verse 20 refers to the Gentile converts who had to become **dead** to the “rudiments of the world”, even as the Jews must become **dead** to the rudiments of their Law Covenant.

That the Law Covenant with Israel is still binding upon that nation is further evident from the fact that upon their national rejection of Christ, they were nationally blinded until the end of the Gospel Age (Rom. 11:7, 25), and that God declares that He has “not cast away his people” of that Covenant, but that He will yet open their eyes to see Christ as the only door or hope, and that of a **new** life purchased with His own, (Rom. 11:2 27, 29; compare Deut. 30:1-9). Meanwhile, we have the evidence that their Covenant continues in force in the fact that, as a nation, they have for centuries been receiving the very “curses” specified under their Covenant—see Deut. 28:15-67.

Rom. 7:6 is not out of harmony with this explanation (that the Israelite who would unite with Christ must **die** to his nation’s Covenant, and that the Law Covenant is not yet dead); for, properly rendered, it reads, “But now we are delivered from the Law (Covenant), being dead to that wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit (with our minds, our wills), and not (be required to serve) the very letter of the old, Law Covenant, which has passed away.”

What was defective in the old or Law Covenant? Was it sinful or bad? No. How came it, then, that under that Covenant we learned so much about sin?

Because, previous to receiving the Law, Israelites were like the remainder of the world—dead in trespasses and sins; and, being already under sentence of death, we were like the remainder, unrecognised of God, and without any special commands; and hence we could not disobey or increase our sin by disobedience, until the Law Covenant began to command us.

But, notwithstanding that death sentence under which we and all the world rested, we Israelites were “**alive**” before the Law Covenant came, because God had promised our father Abraham that somehow and at some time He would **bleed his seed**, and through it all the families of the earth. Thus, in God’s promise to Abraham, a **future life** was assured to us all, before the Mosaic Covenant was made; but just as soon as that Law Covenant went into force, and required that we must obey its every command, in order to secure life, that soon we found that we could not absolutely control our poor, fallen bodies, however much we willed to do so with our minds. And, as sin developed, **we died**—our hopes of life expired, because we could not keep that Law Covenant. I speak for, or as representing, our whole nation. Thus we found that the Law Covenant, promising **life** to the obedient, really sentenced us to death, because we **could not obey its requirements**.

Thus we acknowledge that the law and the Covenant were good in themselves, but not helpful to us, because we were fallen beings. But God intended that it should show us how imperfect we really are—verse 13. For the Law is adapted to all who are in full harmony with God’s spirit—perfect beings—and this we Israelites were not; we were and are by nature carnal, depraved, even as others.

And if our hearts be right, we can and will admit that we are unable to obey God’s perfect law and that perfection is not to be found in our fallen flesh, even though in our mind we approve God’s law and would gladly obey it.

This is the wretched condition in which we find ourselves (verse 24), wanting to obey God’s law, and to have His favour and the everlasting life promised to them that love and obey Him, and yet unable to do so because of our dead bodies—fallen and sentenced through Adam’s transgression. Oh, how can we get release from this, our difficulty! We cannot obey God’s law, and God cannot give us an **imperfect** law to suit our fallen condition. Oh, wretched hopeless condition!

But no, brethren, there is hope in Christ! Not a hope of our fulfilling the Law Covenant—no hope of doing those things commanded, and **living** as a result; nor any hope of saving anything out of the wreck of Adam’s fall and sentence. That must all be abandoned. We Israelites must **die** under the Law Covenant, as unsaved by it as we were before it was made, as unsaved as the Gentiles who never had a share in it. But as we realise ourselves **dead** under the terms of the Law Covenant, we see that Christ has **died** for Adam’s sin, paid his penalty and thus redeemed him and all—lost through his disobedience—Jew and Gentile, bond and free, male and female. And this relieves us Jews, because Christ was a Jew, “born under the Law” Covenant, that He might redeem those who were under it—Gal. 4:4, 5. In consequence, therefore, God can be just and accept all who serve His law in their minds and wills, and whose only hindrance from perfect obedience is the weakness of the fallen flesh.

Thanks be unto God for this unspeakable **gift**; a new life, purchased by the precious blood. This we can obtain through Christ, even though we could never justify the Adamic life by obedience to any law that God could give.

THE BEST WINE

“Thou hast kept the good wine until now.”—John 2:10.

When from life’s feast the glory has departed,
And weariness creeps on,
When on thy lips the bread has turned to ashes
And all the wine is gone.

Then fill the jars once more, though but with water,
And fill them to the brim;
And *to* the waiting guests about thy table,
Pour out thy best—for Him.

His power only waits for thy small effort,
To add His mighty touch,
Transmuting thy poor gift to His rich vintage,
Making thy little—much.

So shalt thou know again the joy of service
That thou hadst thought was past,
And find the Master of the Feast has given
The best wine at the last.

—Annie J. Flint.

OUR BIBLE TRANSLATED

A new print has been made recently of the very interesting and informative booklet, “Our Bible Translated”, compiled some time ago by the brethren of “The Dawn”. To cover cost of materials this booklet is supplied at 10c per copy, post paid.

(Continued from page 3.)

Correspondence

U.S.A.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brethren in the Lord. Greetings of peace in the precious name of Jesus!

Thank you for the “Peoples Paper” which has been coming quite regularly and which we enjoy immensely together with the Convention Report Notes. May the Good Lord be with you in your endeavours to serve Him and His people.

If they are still available, we would appreciate receiving 3 copies of “Why We Observe the Lord’s Supper Annually”, and also 3 copies of “Index for Songs in the Night” alone. We have the book, just the Index is what we would very much appreciate. *We* are enclosing one dollar to cover cost of printing and mailing, for which we thank you very kindly.

May God bless you through Jesus Christ, and may you eventually lay hold on eternal life by fighting the good fight of faith—1 Tim. 6:12; Rom. 2:7. *We* send much love in the Lord to all God’s dear children. Psa. 100. Your brethren by God’s grace.

Queensland

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir—Thank you so much for all the copies of your “Peoples Paper” which you have sent over the last few months. It is a truly wonderful “Paper” and I have enjoyed it tremendously; it has quite a lot of helpful and useful information in it, for all to read.

I have been meaning to write ever since I received the second issue, but just haven’t got around to it, and in the recent issue was a little note telling me of the price annually for a subscription to it. I enclose the subscription, plus some extra to cover the issues you’ve sent me free, plus a bit to help with your policy of giving issues free to those who perhaps can’t afford to subscribe to it, or to those like myself, who forget.

Please advise me when the year’s subscription is up, as I have a shocking memory, and please continue to send it to me. Yours in Him.

(For some time now, all subscriptions to “Peoples Paper” expire at the end of the year; this arrangement is working well, the work is greatly assisted by subscriptions being kept up to date.—B.B. Institute.)

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at \$10.50.

The Lord is My Shepherd

THE story is told of a noted actor and an aged Christian who were at a social gathering. Someone suggested that the actor be asked to repeat the 23rd Psalm, the request being supported by the venerable man of God. Obliging the actor consented, and with a voice thoroughly disciplined by the most perfect elocution, all the shades of tone, all the delicate accents and meaningful inflections were goldenly evident as he repeated, "The Lord is my Shepherd."

Then, after the actor had finished, someone asked the old Christian if he would not also repeat the Psalm. Naturally timid under the spell of the actor's elocution, the Christian hesitated for a time, but finally consented. And as he finished, the faces of the company were not aglow with admiration, but hushed and rapt and washed with something akin to tears. Taking the Christian's hand in his, the magnanimous actor said to him: "I know the Psalm; you know the Shepherd."

Many of our readers have appreciated the booklet "The Lord is My Shepherd" in the past, and supplies are still available. Like the story above, it is hoped this booklet may be used further to reveal the Shepherd, as well as the Psalm, to others mindful of spiritual things. This booklet of 24 pages is supplied at 12c per copy, or 4 copies for 30c post paid.

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford **Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$16.00.**

Books Available

"God's Promises Corns True"—\$2.00, plus postage.

"The Divine Plan of the Ages," Cloth bound—\$1.00, including 24e postage. Paper covers-75c, including 24e postage.

"Emphatic Diaglott," New Testament—\$2.00, plus postage.

"Daily Heavenly Manna", birthday pages—\$1.25, post paid.

"Tabernacle Shadows"-75c, post paid.

"The Book of Books," Reviewing the Bible as a whole—\$1.25, Post paid.

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy"-16c post paid.

"Manner of Christ's Return"-16e, post paid.

"Christ's Return-16c, post paid.

"Some of the Parables"-16e, post paid.

"Hope Beyond the Grave"-16c, post paid.

"God and Reason"-16c, post paid.

"Where are the Dead?"-12c, post paid.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

3GL Geelong, 1350 Kc. Sundays 10 a.m.



Volume LVI No. 3 MELBOURNE, JUNE — JULY, 1973 The Miracle Book

This article on The Bible is by an unknown writer, but many of the thoughts and the manner of their compilation will no doubt be much appreciated by our readers.

I WANT to speak to you tonight on the Bible—a miracle of diversity in unity. The Bible is its own greatest evidence to its Divine origin and authority and we cannot consider these two great facts without being tremendously impressed with the fact of the diversity of Holy Scripture and the fact of its unity.

Thinking of the diversity of the Bible I would remind you that there is diversity of language. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and portion of it in Chaldean. The New Testament was written in Greek. There is a diversity of authorship. These Scriptures were not written by any one man, neither by a company of men collaborating with one another. Men with greatly diversified mental calibre and training and occupation were employed in writing the Bible. Moses was a shepherd, Joshua was a soldier, Samuel was a seer, David was a King, Solomon was a philosopher, Amos a herdsman, Daniel a statesman, Ezra a scribe, Matthew was a taxgatherer, Luke a doctor, John a fisherman, Paul was a scholar. Men of such diverse temperaments and training were employed in the writing of these sacred Books. But there is a further diversity of place in which these Scriptures were produced. They have come to us from the desert of Sinai, from the wilderness of Judea, from the banks of Chebar, from the city of Zion, from the public prison of Rome, from the Isle of Patmos. There is no literary phenomenon in the world to be compared with it; not only so, but there is diversity of form. In Genesis there are stories, in Leviticus there is ritual, in Deuteronomy there is oratory, in Ruth there is romance, in Samuel and Kings there is national history, in Job there is drama, the Psalms are sacred hymns, in Proverbs we have ethics, in Ecclesiastes we have philosophy, in the Canticles we have a love song, in Joel and Habakkuk we have rhapsody, in Isaiah and Jeremiah we have prophecy, in the Gospels we have biography, in Acts we have church history, in the Epistles we have doctrines, in Revelation we have the Apocalypse. These and other literature have place in this great spiritual classic. But not only were we have diversity of language, of authorship, of place, of forms, and of writing, but also of subject matter. Is there any other book in the world to be compared with it from this standpoint? In the Bible we read of God, men, of angels and demons, of Jews and Gentiles, of Christians and pagans, of saints and sinners, of the church and the world, of peace and war, of friends and foes, of blessings and curses, of holiness and sin, of honour and shame, of faith and unbelief, of time and eternity, of life and death, of love and rage, of heaven and hades. These and countless other subjects are brought to our notice within the covers of this extraordinary volume.

But we are not impressed with any sense of incongruity. There is an eminent fitness in the revelation of these Tremendous Themes to one another. Nor were these writings produced at any one time; they do not belong to any one age; they have come to us as the growth of some 1,500 to 1,600 years. Is there any other book in the world that can be compared with this as to its diversity? Were the number of subjects treated or their equivalent brought together in any other book no publisher would take the risk of publishing it and no purchaser would ever buy it and yet the Bible is the most widely circulated book in all the world. Other books have a season, they have a run and then we hear of them no more. But this Book lives on through the ages, and outlives all other literature and is the Queen of all literature. But think our astonishment is infinitely greater when we come to realise that notwithstanding all this diversity the Bible is nevertheless A Sublime Unity. We take the fact of this unity, then its nature. There are laws that govern organic unity. There are two kinds of unity which we may speak of as mechanic and organic. Mechanic unity is the unity of a building and is lifeless. Organic unity is the unity of a body and is alive. Scripture in its unity is not mechanic, it is organic. What are these laws? I only know of three. First, each and every part is essential to the whole. A famous Hebrew scholar once heard a sermon and criticised it, and said

that the sermon was twice too long, it should be cut in half, it does not matter which half. It is quite evident that sermon was not a unity. It cannot be said of the Bible that it is twice too long; that we could well do without one half and it does not matter which half. The Bible is a whole in order to the perfection of the body. Every member is necessary. It does not follow that every member is vital.

If you gave me the choice of having the top of my finger cut off or my heart taken out, I should not take long to decide, but when the top of my finger is cut off the body is no longer perfect. We are not going to claim that every part of Holy Scripture is of equal value, but we claim that every part is essential to the whole, and that it all originates in the will and revelation of God. The two Testaments are essential to one another. They brood over the mercy seat as the cherubim of gold did of old, each answering to the other. "The New is in the Old contained, the Old is in the New Explained; Genesis and Revelation are essential to one another. Genesis is the book of commencement, Revelation the book of consummation. There can be nothing before the commencement, there can be nothing after the consummation and so Genesis anticipates Revelation and Revelation consummates Genesis. Each and every part is essential to the whole. The second law that governs organic unity is this, that each part is related to and corresponds with every other part, Genesis with Matthew, the two great beginnings. The books that introduce the two covenants, Leviticus and Hebrews—Leviticus giving all that is essential to Judaism, and Hebrews all that is essential to Christianity. Exodus with Acts—Exodus telling of the nationalisation of the people of God and Acts of the beginning of the Christian Church and the first generation of her history. Joshua with Ephesians of the Inheritance of the heavenly people. Daniel the Old Testament Apocalypse with Revelation the New Testament Apocalypse, pointing beyond the rise and fall of the world's empires to the coming of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords. Each other is related to every other part, corresponds with every other part.

There is an extraordinary illustration of such correspondence. Yea 'fake the first three chapters of Genesis and the last three of Revelation and you will find that each of these three chapters of Genesis and last three of Revelation treats of the same subjects but in the reverse order. In Genesis we have the first Heaven and Earth, in Revelation 22 the last heaven and earth. In Genesis 2 we have husband and wife, in Revelation 21 the Lamb and the Bride. In Genesis 3 the sentence is pronounced upon Satan, and in Revelation 20, the sentence is executed, It is little wonder that the devil attempts to get us to believe that the one book is all myth and the other all mystery. ^{1,174}, claim that where there is organic unity every part is pervaded with the spirit of life. Hebrews speaks of the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. The Word of God is not a dead letter. *We* can no more leave the Bible alone or leave it out of our reckoning than we can leave Christ alone. Christ does not derive His value from the Bible; the Bible derives its value from Christ. Only through the Bible can we get to Christ; our eternal knowledge of Christ comes through the Bible.

There can be no question as to the fact of organic unity in the Scripture. The nature of that unity—structural unity: The Bible is built up in an extraordinary way not to be accounted for by accident or chance and in both Testaments we find some sequence. For instance in the Old Testament from Genesis to Esther we have history and further back we cannot go. But begin that first verse of the first of Genesis and interest is aroused, we are led on through all these Books right to the sublime end in the Apocalypse of John. *We* are impressed as we read with the amazing diversity of which we have spoken. The thing unfolds and presents itself as a sublime story. All these stories are one story, all these revelations are one revelation and all these records are one record; Across the whole of the Old Testament you May write the word expectation and across the whole of the New you may write the word realisation. In Genesis there are Origins, in the Revelation there are issues and all the way between from Exodus to Jude there are processes leading from those origins to those issues. The revelation of God to man has been made in history and everywhere in Holy Scripture there is historical continuity and sequence. There is historical unity everywhere in Scripture; there is further Prophetical Unity. Here there is opportunity for the wildest confusion and multiplied contradiction, as witness modern prophecies. But although there was not and could not have been any collusion among the writers of Holy Scripture there is no contradiction.

There are four great themes of prophecies—the Messiah, the Jews, the Gentiles and the Church. Some treat of one and some of another and not a few touch upon them all. But there is an amazing harmony everywhere, there is no contradiction among the voices. In the Old Testament there are predictions, in the New there are fulfilments. In the Old *we* get types, in the New antitypes. The whole of the Old is leading up to the First Advent and the whole of the New is leading up to the Second Advent. There is prophetical unity as well as structural unity, and historical unity everywhere in Scripture. Let me remind you further that we have here doctrinal unity. Now, were men left to themselves how utterly impossible it would be to have synthesis of doctrine and harmony of teaching. But these many writers across the Ages were not left to themselves. It is a wonderful Book and if it is not inspired it is much more wonderful!

Everywhere in Scripture Jehovah is God. To take one doctrine, we are told in some quarters that Jehovah was

the tribal Deity of the Hebrew placing Him much on a level with Ashtoreth of the Old Testament and in the New declared that

Jehovah was the God of all the earth, the creator of the universe and its sustainer. The Jehovah of the Hebrews is no tribal Deity, He is the God of all men. God so loved—not the Hebrews, nor the Church—but the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Everywhere in Scripture man is a sinner. The Old Testament does not present man as half a beast on his way up to morality and the New as a man made like God; both Testaments agree in saying that man has sinned and come short of the Glory of God. There is perfect harmony of doctrine. Both Testaments teach that Christ is the One and only Redeemer and His Cross our only hope. Redemption in the Old Testament anticipated, is in the New accomplished and it is from the Acts to the Apocalypse applied. It is the One Great Theme which runs through all the Scriptures. It is the note that dominates in this Orchestra from start to finish.

We also have spiritual unity. Think of the level of thought in the Bible. Think of its range, of its vision. Think of the sublimity of its themes. Think of the loftiness of its ideals. Think of the power of its appeals. The horizons of the Bible are infinitudes and immensities. The current coin of this realm is Faith, Love and Hope. Think what the Bible has done for the individual. Think of the countless millions who, were they with us still would say, “this one thing I know—that whereas I was blind now I see.” No man ever came to say that by studying philosophy or science, but many have through an acquaintance with the Word of God. Think of what the Bible has done for society. Think of what it has done for the Church of God throughout the world and in all ages and for national life, especially for our own and for the whole wide world and where the Word of God goes it is accepted and believed. There is emancipation, there is deliverance from the degradation and from cruelty. The Bible has brought release and relief to men and women and safeguarding of children. It has turned the demons out of cruel hearts and made men sober and kind. If the Bible is to be judged by what it has accomplished then verily it is the Book of Books and the Word of God. It could have no other origin than God Himself. And if of Divine origin then it is of Divine authority. It does not need our apology or our special pleading. Give it a chance, it will demonstrate its own character and its own Power.

This is the staff upon which multitudes of Pilgrims have found their way to the shining home far away up among the delectable mountains. This is the star that has guided mariners on the storm tossed oceans through the ages. This is the weapon with which Christian soldiers have fought their battles to glorious victory. This is the compass that has guided men in darkness and distress. This is the Book on which your sainted mother and father laid down their heads as upon a pillow in the last moments of life and passed away crooning some Old Testament Psalm such as “The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want”, etc. This is the Book of all ages and they who build upon it are as eternal as God.

Convention News

ONCE again we have pleasure in reporting that the Easter Convention at Adelaide was a season of helpful and happy spiritual fellowship. The Lord’s blessing was upon our meetings, and our hearts are filled with thankfulness to the Giver of every good gift, for the many blessings received, Mal. 3:10. It was a pleasure to welcome to our midst a number of brethren from the Melbourne and Geelong Classes, including some of the younger Melbourne friends whose presence among us was much appreciated. We were pleased also to have with us a Sister from Nhill, Victoria, and a Brother from a country centre in South Australia.

The Scripture portions selected for Bible Studies were—1 John 1:5-2:2; Psa. 51:7-17; Col. 1:9-15. Each of these Bible Studies was helpful to us all, and we are thankful to the Lord for the assistance of His Word which is as “a lamp to our feet, and a light to our pathway.”

The addresses given by the brethren were—“Jerusalem”; “The Test of Discipleship”; “The Christian’s Cleansing”; “God’s Timetable”; “Confidence”; “What Shall I Render to the Lord?”; “The Names and Titles of Deity”; “Christian Holiness”; “We Have Tasted that the Lord is Gracious”; “The Lamb of God”; “Trusting and Obeying”; “Defensive Armour”; and “What Sayeth the Spirit unto All the Churches?”

It was pleasing to receive many messages of Christian love and greeting from several Bible Classes and individual brethren throughout Australia, and also from brethren in U.S.A., and England. These messages and assurance of Christian love and prayers of the brethren were much appreciated. The Christian love and greetings with the Scripture message Col. 1:9-12, are sent from the Convention to all brethren who so kindly remembered us, and also to all brethren everywhere. The Praise and Testimony meetings gave opportunity for expression of grati-

tude and thankfulness to God for all His loving-kindness. The “Hymns We Love and Why” session was, as usual, heartily entered into. We do thank the Lord for the lovely hymns which enable His people to express thankful praise with heart and voice.

The Adelaide Class appreciated the assistance of visiting brethren who conducted the Bible Studies in helpful manner. Also much appreciation was expressed for the loving service of the sisters who attended so helpfully to our needs by supplying refreshments. *We* are assured that all these various services are done as unto the Lord; and we give all thanks and praise to Him for blessings received.

The Convention concluded with the Love Feast, and singing of the hymns “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian Love”, and “God be with you till we meet again.” Then followed the closing prayer of thanks and praise to God for a very helpful season of spiritual fellowship, and asking His grace to help us to serve Him faithfully in the coming days, and requesting His blessing upon the Israel of God in every place.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM *Australia, 3101.*

The Institute’s Work

ANOTHER year’s work for the Berean Bible Institute was completed at the close of April, and it is with much thankfulness to the Lord for His blessings upon the efforts over the year past that this brief review of the work is presented. The cooperation of the dear friends throughout Australia and also overseas, has once again given much encouragement, as it is realised that all is gladly rendered as to the Lord Himself. The efforts to serve the Lord’s cause have been of a similar nature to past years, with some added privileges and opportunities for service.

Regular contact with a goodly number of brethren and friends throughout Australasia and overseas has been maintained by the distribution of our bi-monthly “Peoples Paper”. Our mailing list for the “Paper” has increased with some additional subscribers during the year, mainly as a result of enquirers to newspaper advertisements being supplied with free copies of the “Peoples Paper” over a period. Appreciation of the contents of the “P. Paper” has been expressed by these new friends, as also by our brethren generally. Our sincere thanks is again extended to all who have contributed to the pages of the “Paper” over the past year.

Publishing costs over the twelve months have remained steady, and also the postage rates, but the annual subscription of 75c for the “Peoples Paper” does not cover production costs. However, as a goodly number of the “P. Paper” is supplied free to all enquirers for literature, as mentioned above, this is considered a good witness for the Truth, and the expense to the General Tract Fund, in making up the deficiency, is thought well used in the Lord’s service. The arrangement for all subscriptions to expire at the end of each year is also proving helpful. Our brethren in India are gladly supplied with a number of free copies of “Peoples Paper”, as well as “Voice” tracts for distribution amongst their friends and others who read English in that land. Appreciation is expressed again at this time

OUR BIBLE TRANSLATED

A new print has been made recently of the very interesting and informative booklet, “Our Bible Translated”, compiled some time ago by the brethren of “The Dawn”. To cover cost of materials this booklet is supplied at 10c per copy, post paid for the efforts of some of our Melbourne friends who gladly assist with the proof reading and other work connected with the “Peoples Paper”.

Free tracts have been made available throughout the year past, as formerly. Two new “Voice” tracts, “The Gospel Preached in all the World—Then Shall the End Come” and “Why Doesn’t God Do Something?” have been printed recently, and these and other subjects are available to all our friends for wise distribution. Supplies of these tracts, also the small “Do You Know?” slips are gladly provided free, the cost being covered by the General Tract Fund.

It has been a pleasure to continue broadcasting the message of the kingdom over 3GL and 2QN for the past twelve months. The response on Sunday mornings through 3GL has been encouraging, as in past years, but the time of 7.15 p.m., for 2QN was not suitable, results being very small, so these sessions have been discontinued. As 3GL covers not only the whole population of 24- millions in the Melbourne area, as well as some other large centres and parts of Tasmania, it is not surprising to hear quite often from people appreciating a message from Frank and Ernest for the first time. Printed copies of all broadcasts are offered to listeners to encourage Bible study, and this method appeals to earnest listeners generally. 3GL is also used to announce the public lectures given in Melbourne from time to time in conjunction with the Melbourne Class. All interested friends within

hearing range of 3GL are invited to procure a supply of the “Do You Know?” slips to encourage listeners to the undenominational broadcasts on Sunday mornings.

Some good response to newspaper adverts of appealing subjects has been received by our brethren in Perth, W.A., and recently the booklet “Life After Death” was advertised in the Brisbane “Courier Mail” by one of our Queensland brethren, which has brought a response of 43, and we trust some of these enquirers may be helped by the message of truth. All who answer the adverts are entered on the mailing list for free copies of the “Peoples Paper” for some time, to encourage interest. We ask the Lord to bless all who are seeking the truth of His Word in sincerity.

The financial position of the work by the Institute is revealed in the General Tract Fund and Radio Fund presented. In the Lord’s providence, the voluntary contributions of our brethren and friends have enabled the work to continue as formerly, for which we are thankful. On behalf of the Lord’s work, sincere thanks is expressed to all who have sacrificed present day good things to support the work so well. The prayers of all our dear friends are also desired and requested for the Lord’s guidance and blessing, that in the days ahead all may be done in faith and humility in accord with His good will. All who are participating in the work of the Lord in every place are also commended to the love and favour of our Heavenly Father, from whom all blessings flow.

The Spirit of Prayer

(Continued from last issue)

(Convention Address; Luke 18:9-14)

THE Pharisees were a very moral class amongst the Jews, devout at least outwardly, very exact, though inwardly, the Lord tells us, they were far from right. He alone was competent to make the terrible arraignment that they were like sepulchres, beautifully whitened on the outside but inwardly full of corruption. There is a similar class in Christendom today, who are outwardly moral, very particular, exact, scrupulous, and yet not pleasing to the Lord. They are proud of their righteousness, and seem to fail to realise that if they are naturally less depraved than some others they have nothing thereof in which to boast, because they are still far from being actually perfect. This parable is intended to show that God would look with more sympathy, more compassion, upon the more depraved man if he were the more honest and more humble, rather than on the morally better but-less humble.

The parable pictures two men going up to the temple according to the Jewish custom to pray; the one was a self-righteous Pharisee, a moral man, in many respects a good man, but very conscious of all his righteous deeds and careful observances of Divine rules. The other man was of a lower class and caste, who had more weaknesses and blemishes and who realised his condition. The Pharisee, we are told, stood and prayed with himself, apparently his prayers did not ascend to the Lord, and it would be strictly true, therefore, to say that he prayed with himself, heard himself pray, congratulated himself in the prayer, and rejoiced in his own self-consciousness generally. His prayer was not of the kind which the Father invites, for He seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth; and it seems impossible for anyone to come before the Lord in a proper manner who does not appreciate His own weaknesses, imperfections, blemishes, and acknowledges these and seeks the divinely arranged means for covering them.

The Pharisee said, “God, I thank thee that I am not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.” It is quite true that such a prayer uttered truthfully would imply a compassion of heart for which we might well give thanks to God. All Christians by virtue of their relation to God, the covering of their sins, the begetting of the spirit, the transforming work progressing in their hearts, have every reason to give thanks to the Lord that by His grace they differ from the majority of their fellow creatures. But they have nothing thereof to boast, for as the Apostle has said, “What have we that we have not received from the Lord? Who hath made us to differ?” (1 Cor. 4:7). If, therefore, the difference between ourselves and others be recognised as of the Lord and His work of grace in us and not of ourselves, this is the proper attitude of heart, and all who have this realisation may properly enough give thanks to the Lord that in this respect they are different from others, because He has made us to differ, by His grace we are what we are.

The difficulty with the Pharisee of the parable was that he prayed with himself, congratulated himself, and merely pretended to give thanks to the Lord for these differences. He did not thank the Lord that He had made him to differ, but thanked the Lord that he had made himself to differ—he was trusting in His own works of the flesh, which could never be acceptable to the Lord, and was, therefore, as a Pharisee, rejecting the imputed righteousness of the Atonement Day sacrifices. The condition would be similar today to us if we boasted in ourselves in any sense or degree. Such a man offering such a prayer should know that it does not go to God, that it

was merely self-adulation and that he profited nothing by it. We are in the right attitude when we realise that our sufficiency is of God, who has made us to differ, and who keeps us by His own power, covers us with the robe of Christ's righteousness, and is preparing us for the glory, honour and immortality which He has promised to us if we are faithful in obedience to His lessons and guidance.

All of the Lord's people should be able to assure themselves at the throne of grace that they are not extortioners, not unjust, not adulterers, nor like other men. This is all in harmony with our Lord's declaration, "If ye were of the world the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." We are to be glad if we find these evidences of our separateness from the world, but we are not to boast of them, nor consider that they are of our own institution, nor attempt to take credit to ourselves from them. As already shown, we are what we are by the Lord's grace.

The Pharisee, as a part of his boast, claimed that he fasted twice in the week, as well as gave tithes of everything that he acquired. In this fasting he was going beyond anything that the Law required, and doubtless felt that he was to be especially commended therefor. But not so from the Lord's standpoint—works of this kind can never justify us. If we were to fast, starve ourselves to death, it would not be meritorious; no works can be of value except based upon proper recognition of our own imperfections and proper acceptance of Divine justification, which is granted to us now through faith in our Lord Jesus, and which in that day was typically imputed to all the members of the Jewish nation through the typical sacrifices of their Day of Atonement. As for fasting, the Lord's people today will find plenty of things from which they may well fast. Fasting simply signifies self-denial, and self-denials of food are not the greatest nor the most estimable in God's sight, we may be sure. There are other desires of the flesh which all who are the Lord's true followers are to strive to control and diminish and starve out, that they may proportionately flourish and be nourished spiritually and made strong.

The tithe-giving was proper. God had enjoined, as a mark of respect for Him, that one tenth (or tithe) of all increase of herd or flock or field should be set apart peculiarly to His service; and obedience to this arrangement was nothing of which to boast; particularly when it is remembered that the Lord is the bountiful Giver of all good. Where then was the room for boasting in connection with such tithe-giving? It showed a self-satisfied condition of heart, unready to make the still greater consecration required of all who would be accepted as members of the house of sons, the followers of Jesus, who are expected to consecrate their all to the Lord, and thenceforth to act as stewards who will be prepared to give an account of the use of every dollar, every talent, every opportunity. Are the saints inclined to boast of their self-denials or services? Let them reckon the matter carefully and see how little the most energetic is able to accomplish, and then doubtless with shame many will confess how little of all they desired to accomplish they have been able to render unto the Lord.

The publican was a sample of those who made no profession of great piety. Humble-minded people, they realised that they did not live up to the grand requirements of God's perfect Law, and discouraged by the assertions of the Pharisees that they could obey and live up to those requirements, these more humble-minded ones were often in a discouraged attitude, and sometimes in consequence lapsed into carelessness and sinful ways. In the parable the publican stands afar off; he did not approach close to the precincts of the temple; he stood at a goodly distance. He recognised the great difference between God's perfection and his own imperfection and sinfulness. He smote upon his breast, upon his heart, as though indicating that he accepted the Divine sentence of death as well deserved, merited, yet he appealed for mercy—"Lord have mercy upon me, I am a sinner!" Although outwardly not as moral nor as good a man as the other, judged by any human standards, inwardly, from God's standpoint, his was the better heart of the two, the more hopeful. He was not trusting in himself, and was in a better condition, therefore, to receive the grace of God upon the only terms whereby it could be obtained, humble faith. Our Lord indicates that of the two, this one—outwardly less noble, less moral — was inwardly more acceptable to the Father, justified rather than the Pharisee. And then, as a lesson based upon this, comes the words, "Everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Is it not remarkable that so frequently throughout the Scriptures the Lord calls attention to the great necessity for humility, assuring us that without it, whatever may be our conditions, our qualifications, we could by no means enter the Kingdom. In the parable just considered this quality of humility is illustrated in the publican, the lack of it is illustrated in the Pharisee. To reason the matter out we can see that only the humble-minded could possibly be prepared to confess themselves sinners and unworthy of Divine favour and love, needing justification, forgiveness, provided for us in Christ. Not only so, but even after exercising such humility and coming to the Lord and being accepted of Him, if the humility be lost, our gracious standing in Christ is forfeited. Pride signifies self-satisfaction, and the corresponding ignoring of the all-sufficiency of our glorious Head, who said to us, "Without me ye can do nothing", John 15:5.

Alas, that so many of those who have some knowledge of God and His plan of salvation are hindered from laying hold in a proper manner by a lack of humility and readiness to see their own faults, confess them and to accept Divine mercy and grace. Alas, also, that so many, after having exercised faith and been washed from their old sins, are through lack of humility led to haughtiness, high-mindedness, which in one way or another is sure to work injury to us as New Creatures—sure to destroy the prospect for a share in the Kingdom in which only those who humble themselves shall be exalted.

By Thy Cross and Passion.

“He hath given us rest by His sorrow, and life by His death”.—John Bunyan.

What hast Thou done for me, O mighty Friend,
Who lovest to the end!
Reveal Thyself, that I may now behold
Thy love unknown, untold,
Bearing the curse, and made a curse for me,
That blessed and made a blessing I might be.

Oh, Thou wast crowned with thorns,
that I might wear A crown of glory *fair*;
‘Exceeding sorrowful’, that I might be
Exceeding glad in Thee;
‘Rejected and despised’, that I might stand
Accepted and complete on Thy right hand.

Wounded for my transgression, stricken sore,
That I might ‘sin no more’;
Weak, that I might be always strong in Thee;
Bound, that I might be free;
Acquaint with grief, that I might only know
Fulness *of* joy in everlasting flow.

Thine was the chastisement, with no release,
That mine might be the peace;
The bruising and the cruel stripes were Thine,
That healing might be mine;
Thine was the sentence and the condemnation,
Mine the acquittal and the full salvation.

For Thee revilings, and a mocking throng,
For me the angel-song;
For Thee the frown, the hiding of God’s face,
For me His smile of grace;
Sorrows of hell and bitterest death for Thee,
And heaven and everlasting life for me.

Thy cross and passion, and Thy precious death,
While I have mortal breath,
Shall be my spring of love and work and praise,
The life of all my days;
Till all this mystery of love supreme
Be solved in glory—glory’s endless theme.

F. R. Havergal.

Memorial Observances

Melbourne

THE brethren of the Melbourne Class were joined by the brethren of the Melbourne Polish Class on 15th April, and all gladly observed the Memorial of our Lord's death together. It is with much gratitude to our Heavenly Father that we acknowledge His blessing upon our Service on this anniversary of the institution of this simple, yet sacred occasion formulated by our Lord on the evening prior to His sacrifice as our Passover Lamb.

Previous studies on [so. 53 and Matt. 26:26-30 were very helpful, impressing upon us the loving condescension of our dear Saviour in giving Himself a willing sacrifice for "our sins", and "for the sins of the whole world"-1 John 2:2.

On the Memorial evening an address to the Polish brethren in their language, with prayers, refreshed their minds and hearts for the sacred remembrance. During our Service the appropriate hymns 437, 345, 280, 2 and 414 from "Bible Students' Hymnal" were sung with reverence. Prayers of thankfulness to God for the gift of our Redeemer were offered, also on behalf of all brethren everywhere, as well as ourselves, for the privilege of being invited into God's family, to walk in the steps of our Saviour, that by proving faithful we may also live and reign with Him in His Kingdom. A helpful address also impressed the privilege we enjoy in serving the Lord's cause, in gladly laying down our lives in His service, by His grace.

Following the blessing of the emblems in both English and Polish, we all gladly partook of these symbols representing our Lord's broken body and shed blood, thus demonstrating our hearts' desire, in the words of the Apostle Paul—"That we may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means we might attain unto the resurrection of the dead", Phil. 3:10, 11.

Geelong

A few brethren, fewer than the little group who gathered for the institution of this Memorial with our Lord, met together in the evening of April 15th to comply with the expressed wish of our Master on that first occasion—"Do this in remembrance of me.

The Service consisted of four hymns, 370, 259, 437 and 327 from the "Bible Students' Hymnal", the reading of four passages of Scripture, Exod. 12:1-14; John 12:1-16; Matt. 26:17-32, and John 19:10-30, and an address suggesting meditation upon the last words spoken by the Lord on the cross—"It is finished." The emblems were then partaken of and we dispersed after the singing of the final hymn.

Adelaide

In harmony with our Lord's request, "Do this in remembrance of me", the Adelaide Class met on the evening of April 15th to observe the Memorial of our Saviour's death as the ransom-price for our sins (the Church's sins) and also for the sins of the whole world of mankind.

We thank our Heavenly Father for the gracious Gift of His only begotten Son to be our Redeemer, and we thank Him also for this annual Memorial Service, which brings to our minds the loving loyalty of our Lord Jesus who so willingly laid down His perfect human life that we might be reconciled to God.

In Heb. 12:3 the Apostle urges us to "consider him (our Lord Jesus) who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." What a privilege is given to the consecrated followers of Christ, "not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake", Phil. 1:29. We pray earnestly for heavenly grace and strength to enable us day by day to fulfil our vows of consecration to God—to follow closely in the Master's steps of self-denial and sacrifice of the earthly good things, so that we may be faithful "even unto death", and hear, at the end of the way, the Master's "Well done."

The signs around us indicate that the Church is nearing the end of her earthly pilgrimage. Soon the number of God's elect will have been completed; the Bride will have made herself ready; the marriage of the Lamb will have been consummated, and the blessing of all the families of the earth will take place. "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable Gift."

Perth

Again we carefully considered our dying Lord's admonition, "This do in remembrance of me", Cor. 11: 24, 25. We were reminded to constantly thank our great Heavenly Father for the Gift from heaven of His only begotten Son who was willing to joyfully satisfy the claims of justice by giving His humanity as a "ransom for all" in order

that He could save mankind from their sins, resulting in death.

After a brother explained God's plan and purpose of redemption through Christ's sufferings and death, we gladly and soberly partook of the precious emblems that our Lord used on that momentous night before His betrayal and death. Gladly we acknowledged our dear Lord Jesus as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." Reverently we thought of our Lord's ordeal when "he was wounded for our transgressions." "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows", who was "brought as a lamb to the slaughter." We renewed our pledge to be dead with Christ, as we partook of His precious emblems. Praise ye the Lord!

Sydney

The anniversary of Christ's death was commemorated by the Sydney Class, together with visiting brethren, and it was with gladness of heart that we partook of the emblems used by the Master to properly represent His pure body and His perfect life—unstained by any trace of Adam's transgression. We were happy in knowing that He suffered once and for all, but in going back to the time He was slain we could not help but feel moved.

In our mid-week Bible Study we examined Isaiah 53, which prepared us for the 14th Nisan in a wonderful way, knowing that Jesus had no need at all to die for Himself, but He went through the death of the cross for our transgressions. This, plus a fitting talk on the typical and antitypical lamb on the Memorial night, and appropriate hymns and prayers made up a very reverential evening which permitted us to participate in solemn manner in partaking of bread and wine. Praise God for His love shown in giving His only begotten Son to die for us.

A sister in a country part of N.S. Wales writes,— I had hoped to be in Sydney for the Memorial but providence has ruled otherwise. Being detained here, I kept the Memorial with three friends. We met at one of the homes where the dining table was prepared with flowers and emblems. As the others seemed to prefer that I should give some leadership, I offered a simple prayer of thanksgiving and asked a blessing on pilgrims near and far, and on our humble gathering. I then read aloud "The Church's Share In The Sin Offering" from "Our Most Holy Faith", which was well appreciated. Asking a blessing on the emblems we silently partook of them, closing our little ceremony with some beautiful recorded hymns.

Queensland, 'Nambaur

As the due time came around for the Memorial that Christ asked us to keep in remembrance of Him, a little group gathered to read and study about the original Passover, and more importantly to us, its antitype, Christ, our Passover who is sacrificed for us. We also studied about the days and hours of the Memorial, and His death and resurrection..

That evening we listened to a good discourse on tape and then partook of the emblems with thoughtful and appreciative hearts and minds. May our days ahead be filled with sincerity and truth as we strive to follow Christ, our Passover Lamb.

Queensland, Toowoomba

In our little gathering here there were equal numbers of Australian and Polish brethren. The Service was opened with prayer and a hymn in English, and the Polish friends sang a hymn in their language. A brief discourse was then given in English, at the conclusion of which a hymn was sung. A talk on the Memorial was then given in Polish, followed by a hymn. Summing up in both English and Polish and asking a blessing on the emblems we all kept the observance in remembrance of our Lord. It was wonderful to have had the added company of the Polish brethren with us.

Pilgrim Way Ended

Word is to hand from England of the passing of our dear Brother H. J. Bottrill. Our Brother had first come to the knowledge of the Truth through the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts over 5AD in November, 1943, and had lived most of his life in South Australia, having attended the Adelaide Class for many years.

Brother Bottrill was a faithful, humble and devoted follower of our Lord Jesus Christ, his daily life revealing much of the Lord's spirit of patience, gentleness, mercy and loving-kindness. *We* believe our dear brother was "faithful unto death", and that he has entered into the reward of the faithful overcomers, by the Lord's grace. Our sympathies are extended to our brother's daughter and grandchildren who live in Bristol, England. "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", Rev. 14:13.

Question Book

Should any of our friends have a copy of the Question Book—"What P.R. Said"—not being used, and would be willing to part with it, would they kindly contact our office.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS
3GL Geelong, 1350 Kc. Sundays 10 a.m.



Volume LVI No. 1 MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY — MARCH, 1973

Why Doesn't God Do Something?

TO-DAY there is great mention of new machines, but even new machines and devices made by man sometimes have their shortcomings. This is one of the reasons why we need and desire to turn to God, because we recognise Him as an absolute Being, One who has no shortcomings. But as we look around us and see the world filled with shortcomings, plagues, death and war—any spot on earth where we look, whether it be in the eastern part of the world, in Vietnam, the Middle East, Israel, our own country, the United States—there is one recurring question, and for those who are Christians there is a challenge—Why, if there is a God, doesn't God do something?

Now, if we are going to answer that challenge we need to fairly and honestly look not only at the world situation but at the Bible as the Word of God. Whenever we turn to the Bible we should turn to it in a prayerful condition of mind. So, as we look at this question, Why doesn't God do something? let me ask a question. What would you do, if you were God; if you had in mind to create an entire race of human beings, a race that would want to serve you willingly and of their own free will, a race that had a choice to serve you or not to serve you, and yet would willingly and lovingly render the service desired—what would you do, if you were God?

There are several alternatives that would be open to you. One of them would be that you could create a race of beings with the instinctive desire to do that which is right, the instinctive notion to obey. Then you would have a race of beings that would obey you. But this plan has a fallacy. They would obey, because they had no alternative. You would not be accomplishing the objective desired.

A second possibility would be to create a race of beings who did have a choice, freedom to choose right or wrong, but to create them in such a way that there would be a natural tendency to choose that which is right, so that when evil was presented as an option, it would not be considered a desirable option, and would be rejected. But that has basically the same problem as the first possibility and you would have a race of semi-robots who would obey because you had planned it that way.

Take a third possibility, to create a race of beings who had the alternative of serving or not serving, obeying or disobeying, according to the experiences that touched them, but loading their experiences of good. The choice they would make would obviously be that which is right. Once again you are failing in your basic objective, for they would be already biased in your favour.

A fourth alternative would be to make a race of beings that had an equal option to choose good or evil, to present them a fair test where evil is presented in a setting appearing as good, and good as evil. Let man choose, and if he chooses that which is evil, permit him to suffer the consequences of that act. Afterwards give him a new experience with good and evil, instructing him fairly and fully in the lessons of the sinfulness of evil, along with a sampling of the goodness of God, so that the renewed choice would be that which is right. It would seem that this alternative is one which would give a free and open choice, and if it could be arranged, would work to that end. This, we suggest, is the plan God has chosen. We will try to establish it from the Scriptures, that man has been given a free and open choice to choose good or evil. God has fore-arranged a plan whereby man has an association with evil and a contrasting experience with good, and so having an informed choice of good or evil, man as a whole will choose good and live.

Yet if that were the plan God had in mind, when we look about us and see the various degradations man has fallen into, wouldn't we have to say, If that is God's plan it has been a failure? No doubt we would. If we were

to stop the course of human history today, and at this time take an evaluation, seeing man has been allowed to do what he would—we would have to admit that plan is a failure. But we do not have to stop the clock today! This is where the Bible comes in as a wonderful guide for us. If in looking at the Bible we can see that the course of human history has been prophesied in advance by God, and the very course mankind would take, and if we can additionally see the Bible contains prophecies yet unfulfilled that would provide the full scope of this experiment, then we have reason to hope that the Bible's plan is valid.

If we see a new building in construction, and look at the framework and scaffolding, the lack of windows and so on, you might say, Whoever designed that building is a miserable architect. But you know that building is not yet complete, and you are not in a position to judge it until the building has reached its final stage of completion. So we cannot judge by God's unfinished plans, or a situation which exists at any particular time, such as today. There must be an experience with evil followed by an experience with good. We will find this plan basically in the Bible.

First, it was necessary for man to have an experience with death. That is obvious. That does not take any looking at the Bible, but at human history. **Second**, the Bible has a plan providing a legal means of redemption from the penalty man has to pay for his experience in sin. That takes on an element of faith. There is a story in the Bible of Jesus of Nazareth, and the death He died on Calvary's cross. **Third**, the Bible tells us that man will be resurrected from the dead to live on this earth, and in that resurrection he will have an experience with good with full instruction in the Word of God. That is not an historical event, and takes more faith. That looks to the future. **Fourth**, in that educational experience man is to be given a contrasting experience with good, in contrast to evil, that he may choose good and live. **Fifth**, God has provided in His plan a full, final test for all mankind, having given them an experience with evil at the present time, and an experience with good in the Kingdom. The final test will see if each man, having had a full opportunity, will choose good or evil. Man will choose, having had such contrasting experiences. As the Psalmist says in Psa. 119:67, 71, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." And Eccles. 1:13, "I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven; this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith."

And yet this whole plan centres around one experience which Christians have to accept by faith, an experience of the past. There must be an acceptance of the value of the sacrifice of Jesus, and His death for all mankind. This may be hard to accept for many because this happened 2,000 years ago, yet it has not changed world events as far as the reign of evil is concerned. So the question persists—Why doesn't God do something? The answer to that, we believe, is because this great plan of God is like a drama in five acts, each act having its own specific purpose, each act dramatising one thing, man's need of God, and God's ability to solve all the problems of mankind.

The first act lasts from the creation of man in the Garden of Eden to the time when God wiped out all mankind from the earth except Noah and his family. This act taught the lesson that mankind could not, as individuals, trying to bring themselves back to righteousness, even having the assistance of the powers of heaven, find a solution. It was beyond the powers of men or angels to solve the dilemma.

The second act goes from the end of that Flood to the death of Jacob. Jacob was the son of Isaac, who was the son of Abraham. Up to this time God permitted man to experiment, under patriarchal arrangements, and He dealt with such people as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, giving them His instructions directly, and those instructions were passed on down through family arrangements. But this failed to produce any real righteousness, showing that man by himself does not have the power to solve his problems.

In the third act, from the death of Jacob to the Cross, God's dealings were with one nation, the nation of Israel. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." God, in His dealings with Israel, gave them a Law through which by keeping, they could obtain life. What was the result of that experiment of nearly 2,000 years? Even though they knew God's Word, and many were sincere in trying to keep God's Law, it required a perfect man to do so, and it dramatised the need for something else. The Law, which would have given them life if they kept it, brought only condemnation. Rom. 7:7—"What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." If anyone could have kept it, he would have been pointed out as a perfect man, qualified to give his own life for the life originally forfeited by Adam. So the law was, as Paul said, a schoolmaster to point to Christ. Except for His keeping of it, the failure of all others once more dramatised the essential point, man's inability to save himself, and therefore his need of God.

The fourth act was from the death of Christ to the present time. This was the time for spreading a new concept, that Jesus Himself introduced. It was termed by His followers Good News, because it prescribed a new way to life through the gospel of Jesus. During this period it was the plan of God to deal with individuals from every race

and group of people, who would try in their hearts to walk the way that Christ walked and follow closely in His footsteps. As Rom. 8:17 tells us, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." This was the selection of what is called in the Bible the Bride of Christ, the Church of Christ, those identified with Him, and by such identification and faithfulness would be rewarded by being given life with Christ in heaven. We read in 1 John 3:1, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

This brings us to the fifth act in this drama, called the Millennium, the Kingdom of Christ, the Kingdom of God, the grand climax act, for which Jesus wanted His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth even as it is in heaven." The Bible describes this period of time in Rev. 20:1, showing that Satan, the great enemy of mankind, would be bound for a thousand years.

Isaiah 35:8-10 tells us that "a highway (a way to approach to God) shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." In other words, this is describing a time which would enable mankind to go from unholiness to holiness, and the Bible predicts that then no man would need to say, Know the Lord, for the knowledge of the Lord would cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. This is the age spoken of in Acts, "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained", even Jesus Christ the righteous. It is this act which rounds out the purposes of God in this great drama. It is this act in which the class of individuals selected during the Gospel Age will live and reign with Christ, and use their experiences to help others to live forever as perfect beings on this earth. In this act also man needs to recognise his own inability, in order to appreciate that the only thing that could lift him back up to standing with God was something God Himself must do.

Why doesn't God do something? Man has been doing many things, and they have all failed. Man has tried every form of government. He has tried theocracy, claiming God as his head. He has tried monarchies and empires. He has tried democracy and republics. Now he is trying socialism and communism. Each of these things has shown that they have not been able to solve man's basic needs, the removal of sin from an imperfect heart. Often, the various solutions have been tried with good motives. Men such as Constantine the Great, who tried to unite Church and State to see if this would do something, brought in an age of persecution, an age of inquisition; it ended in the stopping of all freedom of thinking about God. A great society, a new deal, has often been proposed. Each time it has been an ideal which has tried to bring in equality to a people who have not had equality, but each time it has not worked.

The churches of the world have offered great programmes with the best of motives, to try to correctly distribute the wealth of the world and eliminate poverty and discrimination. Despite the greatness of their efforts, poverty and discrimination persist. They have to learn one lesson. It was expressed very well by Billy Graham—"Man cannot legislate Paradise." That is one lesson—it cannot come through outward changing of laws. The one thing man is proving himself unable to do is changing the heart. But in the plan of God as revealed in the Bible, describing what He calls a New Covenant He will make with man, He says He will take away their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. But He would begin by changing the heart, and with that change, changed laws are necessary.

Man feels he has one more thing to try—limited or unlimited anarchy, each man doing his own thing, each one doing what he wants to do, granting to all others that same freedom. Yet the fallacy of this has already been shown in the first experiments of this free thought and free living, because every man's liberty is taking away from his neighbour's liberty. All men are dependent one upon another, and their lives affect one another.

So God has not been doing nothing, because He has been allowing man to try all these various solutions for himself, and learn the lessons inherent in their failure.

But we have to come back to our original question. Letting things carry on seems so pathetic. Why doesn't God do something? A story has been told of Martin Luther. During the Reformation he had his moments of extreme discouragement, because he fought against tremendous odds. On one of these occasions when he came home very discouraged, he found his wife in tears. He asked what was the matter. She said, "Haven't you heard? God died today." The point came across to him, that that was not true, and that while he was attempting to do something by himself, the real solution was that God had planned the final outcome, and he needed to have trust. So every night he would go through the streets thinking, God's in His Heaven and all is right. However, God has a plan;

He is doing something, even if in that plan is a period allowing man to run his own way. That in itself is doing something, permitting a valuable lesson to sink in, which will be the key to man's heart. No man can change his heart until he realises that he, of himself, has no ability to achieve righteousness.. The New Testament was based on one word—REPENT! and be converted, and your sins shall be blotted out. Recognition of a need is there. It is because man has failed to realise that God can be doing something passively, that some theologians have come up with the thought that God is dead.

The Bible, in projecting this time, says in Luke 18:8, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Faith has been replaced by cynicism, blind unbelief, agnosticism, wondering whether God is interested and involved at all. Why has this happened? Why has the Christian religion, centered upon God and Christ, failed to bring that peace of mind that changes men's hearts? Looking at this matter honestly, the answer is simple. It is because the creeds of Christendom have made God an unbelievable Creator. It is for this reason that Higher Criticism and Communism and Modernism have entered religion. The desire to throw off the unbelievable picture of a mighty God who created a race of beings and was not able to save more than a small percentage of them; a God who had a vindictive heart, who would take those He could not save and roast them forever in hell; a God who did not have the ability to so get across to the man He had created the concepts of life. There is a grand purpose stated in 1 Tim. 2:4—God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." But many think that God could not fulfil that purpose, and His plan is a failure. This has made of the Bible an unbelievable proposition, and this is the reason many have thought the Bible itself must be false, and thrown out the entire concept of God. Movements such as the Modernist movement in the Christian church today have this as their background.

But it is not necessary, because that is not the Bible at all. It says very clearly and straightforwardly that there is to be a time when "all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth." The Bible says God will judge all men in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained. It says God does have a plan that provides an educational experience for man to learn. The alternative to discarding the unbelievable God as painted by Christians, is to go back to the Scriptures anew and personally study them, and see what the Bible itself portrays of the character and plan of this Creator.

This will bring us back one more time to our basic question. From man's extremity we still ask, Why doesn't God do something? The answer is, He is not only doing something, but doing many things. First, He is selecting the Bride of Christ; that is the feature of His plan now going on in preparation for the blessing of all mankind. Secondly, He is actively permitting evil to have its full fruitage so man will see the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Third, the Bible indicates that mankind is in a transition period, from the experience of sin into the Kingdom and its experiences of righteousness. Dan. 12:1-4 marks out our time—by the vast increase of knowledge on all subjects; by the tremendous amount of running to and fro by this generation, quite unparalleled in the world's history; and the present time of trouble, laying bare all human society for the erection of a new building, the Kingdom of Christ. We are in the final stages of that period, with the restoration of the homeland of Palestine to the people to whom God promised that land. So many things indicate this transition, and the very nearness of the Kingdom for which we have been praying for so many years.

While God has been doing these many things, the Bible predicts there are many more things He will do. It describes the fact that there will be on the earth one final climax of trouble to prepare men's hearts for the new rule, preparing them to accept Him as they realise their own unwisdom has failed. He will finally complete the Church so He can use that body, with Christ, in blessing all the families of the earth, and giving them the education they need. He will convert the nation of Israel to His plans, as Paul said in Rom. 11:25—"Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." He will resurrect from the dead not only the wonderful men of old, but all mankind, the good and the evil to share in these experiences. They will have an opportunity of trying, in that kingdom of God, to thoroughly learn the lessons He will give. Satan will be restrained for a thousand years. At the end of that period God will let man have a final test called in Revelation a "little season", which will reveal those who will not obey. Then Christ will say to all others, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the earth."

Why doesn't God do something? Because He is first permitting evil to rule on the earth, to give an experience in unrighteousness.

Why doesn't God do something? Each feature of God's plan is for a specific purpose. We are in the final phases of the selection of the Church.

Why doesn't God do something? Because He is allowing man to try everything himself, to fully bring him to the realisation that he cannot do anything himself.

Why doesn't God do something? Because He is waiting to see man resting in the fact that God is working in mankind, even though it can be seen only by the eye of faith.

Why doesn't God do something? He is doing many things, and will do many more. When we look at the structure fully complete, all men will realise the full scope of God's Plan.

Why doesn't God do something? The question is really not, Why doesn't God do something? but Why don't we do something? God has a plan so all-comprehensive as to cover every man.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM *Australia, 3101.*

Convention News

IT is a pleasure to report a very helpful and refreshing season of spiritual fellowship experienced at the Annual Christmas Convention, sponsored by the Melbourne Class. We are grateful indeed to the Lord for His blessings in connection with the gatherings throughout the four days. It was a pleasure and privilege to welcome visiting brethren from Adelaide, Sydney, Perth and Tasmania, as well as quite a group from various parts of U.S.A., also some from nearer localities in Victoria. The presence of each one of these dear friends into our midst and their assistance with the programme, added considerably to the blessings derived from the assemblies under the Lord's providential overruling.

Various sessions made up the four days of Convention, including two Bible Studies on the passages Ephesians 4:1-6, and Revelation 3:14-22. The main thoughts on each portion of Scripture were brought out with benefit to all, our brethren from U.S.A., contributing helpfully,—these studies were of added interest to them, as Bible Studies are not taken at Conventions generally in U.S.A. Brief thoughts on these studies and also notes on all addresses given at the Convention are contained in the Convention Notes, also now available and supplied free to all desiring these copies.

Addresses by the brethren covered a wide range of topics and each one was much appreciated, the subjects being—"Our Covenant Relationship"; "Into His Hands"; "The Prophecy of Micaiah"; "The Spirit of Prayer"; "We Found Jesus"; "The Church's Mission"; "Be strong in the Lord"; "Give ye Them to Eat"; "Zion, the City of God"; Faithfulness of God's Promises"; "Newness of Life"; "Law of Liberty"; "They That Wait Upon the Lord"; "The Great Love of God"; and "The Chastenings of the Lord." It is expected that some of these addresses will be published in full in the "Peoples Paper" from time to time.

The many messages with Christian love and greetings and wishing the Convention God's blessing were very gladly received. Many of these were brought personally by our visiting brethren from various Classes in U.S.A., as well as by our Australian brethren from their groups or individual friends. Other messages came by overseas telegrams from U.S.A. and Canada, also some by air from England and India. All these were a real highlight of the first Fellowship Meeting on the first day of Convention. It was encouraging to know that so many dear friends would be remembering the Convention days in their prayers, many on other continents of the world. To all who remembered the Convention with their greetings, as well as to our brethren in every place, the message from the Convention is contained in the passage of Scripture Eph. 4:1-6, with warm Christian love from all assembled at the gatherings.

Opportunity for praise and testimony was taken by a goodly number of the visiting and local brethren, testifying to the Lord's blessings and favors received at the Convention and throughout the year past, as well as over many years in the Christian way. All agreed that it is the greatest favor and privilege to receive so much of blessing from the Giver of every good thing. At this Fellowship Meeting appreciation was expressed of the service rendered by the Sisters in providing refreshments throughout the Convention days, all undertaken as a labor of love in the service of the Lord. The "Hymns We Love and Why" session was also much enjoyed, as the sentiments of our beautiful hymns were meditated upon while they were sung heartily.

The daily attendance throughout the Convention was of a higher average than for many years, and it was a pleasure to have many members of our Melbourne Polish Class present throughout the gatherings. Quite a few visiting brethren from U.S.A., could speak the Polish language, so this meant extra fellowship for some of our local Polish brethren, who have not yet become fluent with our English language. Altogether, the fellowship throughout was very sweet and precious. Some of our visiting friends were not able to remain for the last day of Convention, but those who did were with us for the Love Feast, when the special hymns "Blest be the tie that binds", and "God be with you till we meet again". were sung with grateful hearts for all the Lord's favors bestowed throughout the Convention. The closing prayer of thanksgiving to God, and requesting His blessing and oversight upon His dear

people everywhere concluded the very profitable Melbourne Convention for 1972.

Passover Memorial 1973

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 15th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "In remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

Melbourne—Sunday, 15th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide—Sunday, 15th April, at 6.15 p.m., at the M.U. Hall, (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Sydney—Sunday, 15th April, at 6 p.m., at 81 James Street, Leichhardt.

Perth—Sunday, 15th April, at 6.30 p.m. Phone secretary 93-1973 for meeting place.

They That Wait Upon the Lord

(Convention Address)

"Nast thou not known? host thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isa. 40:28-31.)

WHEN verse 31 of Isaiah 40 is read, it brings to mind a statement written a while ago by an elderly brother. The years were telling on him, and he wrote--"I am not able to run these days and not be weary, but I can still walk and not faint."

In dwelling upon the thought of **waiting** upon the Lord, there are two Hebrew words used in the Old Testament which bring out the thought beautifully that is in mind. The Hebrew word translated "wait" in our text is spelled QAVAH, and means—"to bind together, that is collect; (figuratively) to expect." This Hebrew word is translated by five English words in various texts; namely gather, look, patiently, tarry and wait. Referring to Isaiah 5, where this Hebrew word is translated "looked", we read—"Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill; and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein; and he LOOKED that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge I pray you betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore when I LOOKED that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof; and it shall be trodden down; and I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned, nor Jigged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he LOOKED for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry." (Isa. 5:1-7). The Lord "looked" upon Israel expectantly that it should have brought forth fruitgrapes--and it brought forth wild grapes.

How clearly this was revealed towards the close of Jesus' ministry, when He declared—"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. 23:37, 38.) This same situation is explained in Luke 19:41-44,—"And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." What a pathetic situation the dear Lord found in Israel! He looked upon them to find fruitage, and there was no fruitage. He wept over the city.

This Hebrew word which refers to the Lord looking expectantly for fruitage in Israel, His chosen people, is also translated in Psa. 40:1 by the words "waited patiently." In prophetic strain the Psalmist writes—"I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the

miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." We realise that this prophecy applied to our Lord Jesus, and since His first advent to all His followers who have walked, and are walking faithfully in His steps; those who **wait patiently** upon God, expectantly, and the Lord inclines towards them and hears their cry.

From the writings of the inspired Psalmist again we read—"Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul, my God, I trust in thee ... Yea, let none that **wait** on thee be ashamed ... Show me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I **wait** (expectantly). all the day". "Hear LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up. I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. **Wait** on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: **wait**, I say, on the Lord." (Psa. 25:1-5; 27:7,8,10,13,14.) (See also Lamentations 3:22-26.)

While we have seen that the Lord **looked** expectantly for good fruitage in Israel prior to and especially at Jesus' first advent, and found none, it is encouraging to see that at the second advent, when Israel is delivered from her oppressors in being saved out of "Jacob's trouble", the words waiting expectantly are used concerning them in the prophecy of Isa. 25:6-9—"And in this mountain (kingdom) shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things; a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have **waited** for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have **waited** for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." What an expectation then, for Israel restored, Israel prepared to bless the other nations who will also fall into line with the laws of the wonderful kingdom operating at that time. Then the expectation, the waiting, will be abundantly fulfilled and realised, and will also be the realisation of all mankind when "the desire of all nations shall have come."

Referring to a second Hebrew word translated "wait" or "waited", it is spelled—CHAKAH—and means mainly "to adhere to; hence to wait." This word is found in the prophecy of Daniel 12:12,—"Blessed is he that **waiteth**, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." This, we know, has reference to the necessity of the Lord's people exercising patience in respect of the blessedness to be experienced in the last century, when the second advent of Christ was about to be revealed. Blessed is he that **waiteth**, that continued to adhere to the fact that the second advent was imminent. This refers to the time of the Millerite movement. Some at that time did not maintain a waiting attitude in respect of Christ's second presence at the completion of the 1335 days—years—which many Bible students agree had their fulfilment about the year 1874. At the time of the Millerite movement many held the thought that Christ's return was imminent, but they expected Him to return as a man, in the flesh. Indeed the date was set for about 1844. When their expectations were not realised at that time, they lost faith in Christ's return. They failed to experience the blessedness of those who waited and came to the 1335 days—the fulfilment of the 1335 years of the prophecy of Daniel.

So we also can lose the blessedness of the Lord if we do not wait sufficiently upon Him to experience the enlightenment of His truth in our hearts and minds, as indicated by our Lord in His message to us in Luke 12:35-38,—"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning: and ye yourselves like unto men that **wait** for their lord that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants." This is a parable illustrating the expectant attitude of God's people who have been experiencing the blessing of the harvest truths from the Lord for upwards of 100 years in particular.

A helpful prophecy respecting the attitude of the Lord's people towards world events in the end of the age, with the passing of the present order, is found in Zephaniah 3:8,9,—"Therefore **wait** ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent." This means to **wait expectantly** for God's plan to work out, in accordance with His Word. The Lord's people are not commissioned to interfere for or against God's "indignation." His plan will

work out for the ultimate blessing of the whole human creation, as depicted in verse 9 of this prophecy.

Returning to Psa. 40: 1, we would like to meditate on this verse,—“I waited patiently for the LORD and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.” We have previously referred to “waiting patiently”, expectantly, for the Lord, and now wish to consider the Lord “inclining” towards us. Have you ever felt the Lord **inclining** unto you? The meaning of the Hebrew word translated “inclined” is “to stretch, or spread out”, and Weymouth’s translation of Heb. 2:16 is most revealing,—“For assuredly it is not to angels that he is continually reaching a helping hand, but it is to the descendants of Abraham.” He is continually stretching or reaching out a hand to the seed of Abraham,—“If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” This compassionate, merciful High Priest stretches out His hand to His faithful followers; He **inclines** towards those who are truly **waiting** upon Him, during this Gospel Age.

It is helpful to us when we realise the Lord really **inclines** unto those who are **waiting** upon Him. Some few years ago one of our young brethren took a visit to various parts of the United States, and on his return explained how smoothly the whole visit had turned out to be. To some extent it surprised him. Another brother said, That was the result of prayer on behalf of the young brother while he travelled in unknown parts of the world. The Lord inclined towards the traveller; any difficulties which may have been in the way were overruled so that the whole visit ran smoothly.

Other experiences could be mentioned which impressed beyond doubt that the Lord **inclined** toward us in connection with the broadcasting of the message of truth in this region. In this matter, the waiting on Him was not for personal advantage but that His cause might be prospered in accord with His good will. Our thanks to the Lord were rendered accordingly. Some may consider these things rather small for the Lord to be concerned about, which brings to mind the lines of the poem—

”If I could Know.”

I wonder if He really shares
In all these little human cares,
This mighty King of Kings
If He who guides through boundless space
Each radiant planet in its place,
Can have the condescending grace
To mind these petty things.

It seems to me, if sure of this,
Sent with each ill would come such bliss
That I might covet pain,
And deem whatever brought to me
The blessed thought of Deity,
And sense of Christ’s sweet sympathy,
Not loss, but richest gain.

Dear Lord, my heart shall no more doubt
That Thou dost compass me about
With sympathy Divine.
The Love for me once crucified
Is not the love to leave my side,
But waiteth ever to divide
Each smallest care of mine.

The words of Isa. 64:4 seem so applicable in this connection—“For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that **waiteth** for him.”

When clouds hang heavy o’er thy way,
And darker grows the weary day,
And thou, oppressed by anxious care,
Art almost tempted to despair,
Still wait upon the Lord.

When friends betray thy loving trust,
And thou art humbled in the dust,
When dearest joys from thee have fled,
And hope within thy heart lies dead,
Still wait upon the Lord.

When Death comes knocking at thy door,
And in thy home are sorrows sore,
Though age comes on and eyes grow dim,
Still look to Christ, still trust in Him,
And wait upon the Lord.

Whate'er thy care, believe His Word;
In joy or grief, trust in the Lord.
Good courage He will give to thee,
And strong, indeed, thy heart shall be,
By waiting on the Lord.

Pilgrim Way Ended

WORD has been received that elderly Sister Holmgren of Perth finished the pilgrim way in her 91st year on the 13th January. Sister Holmgren and her late husband became interested in the truth through the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts in Perth in 1945, and has rejoiced in the truth ever since.

The friends in Perth advise that Sister Holmgren always kept close to the Class there to have Christian fellowship, and only ill health prevented her attendance for several years past. They also feel that our gracious Heavenly Father would have a good inheritance for her on account of her faith, her kindness and holy living. Thanks be to God who gives the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Radio Witness

Responses to the radio witness through 3GL Geelong have been encouraging over recent months, and we are grateful to the Lord that His message, from His Word, is attracting those who are longing for the satisfaction which only His truth can give in these uncertain days throughout the world.

One of our radio listeners who heard the broadcasts for the first time some few weeks ago writes —"I find that the literature you have made available is extremely interesting to me, and in due course I shall be pleased to request more of the "Dawn" books . . . As is the case with most of us these days there just never is sufficient time for reading the right material, or better still for concentrated Bible Study and the correct application of such helpful literature as is now available. May I ask concerning your Frank and Ernest Broadcasts; is it better for me to ask specifically for each series as they are delivered, or can these scripts be sent regularly without periodic request by me? I am always glad to listen to your 3GL discussions but sometimes it happens that I miss one week, or my listening is interrupted.

"Another year has commenced and we may ask ourselves concerning worldly affairs—'what kind of a year will this be'? One thing is certain —there will be further prophetic signs of the times, and undoubtedly there will be shocks and surprises for the uninitiated. Without doubt we have our individual tasks and worldly assignments, but we have the much greater responsibility in discharging our God-given commitments. Each of us must be glad of every opportunity to convey to others the truth of Holy Scripture, and our prayer might well be, that with our Lord's power and guidance, may we help one another while there is yet time. I often debate with myself concerning the most precious material commodity at our disposal—is it time: days, hours and minutes; or is it physical health! Both are so needful, but perhaps time is the more relevant to the task (no, not task, but pleasure!) of spiritual growth for ourselves and for those about us. I must close—sincerely my good wishes to you in the year ahead, and may the Lord help all of us to do His work more efficiently, selflessly and faithfully."

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd in the Manchester Unity Hall, (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street,

Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mrs. R. Jordan, 14 Newark Road, Torrens Park, South Australia, 5062.

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$16.00.

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FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

3GL Geelong, 1350 Kc. Sundays 10 a.m. 2QN Deniliquin 1520 Kc. Sundays 7.15 p.m.



Volume L1V No. 6 MELBOURNE, DECEMBER — JANUARY, 1972

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 east 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. This 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 “**wit**” 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 practise of evil shall be restrained. “Nothing shall hurt nor 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 in 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 final 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 this 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 ban-

ished, 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 a liar.

If this be the right conclusion, the great enemy of man will be busy when his plans, continuing to wage war against ail 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 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.

The Christ — Head and Body

THE philosophy of the sin offering and the Church’s association with it is frequently misunderstood, and must never be confused with the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

Whatever blessing ultimately shall come to every man must result from the death of Jesus however others may be subsequently associated with Him in the work.

The grand truth that none can ever have eternal life except by relationship with Jesus in no way hinders the Lord from using the Church as His assistant and agent in bringing the world into that blessed state.

Truly, our Lord is already the propitiation for the Church’s sins, because He appeared in the presence of God for us. It is also true that the satisfaction of justice which He effects will ultimately be extended to all mankind at the close of this Age, but this does not hinder our Lord from accepting the Church as members of His body and sacrificing them as such during this antitypical atonement day.

Our Lord truly gave Himself a ransom for all nineteen centuries ago, but evidently He has not applied the benefits to any but the household of faith ... By the Father’s Plan our Redeemer reckons to adopt the Church as members of His body, and allows these to participate in the sufferings of Christ in this present time, and thus also to share coming glories.

We believers have no personal standing before God, nor share in the sacrifice of the sin offering. It is only those who are “beheaded,” and thus cease to be themselves and are accepted as members of the Anointed One, of Christ.

All the under priests are represented in the High Priest, The Christ, that participate in the suffering or glory as His members. They all are associated, but the Head is the recognised representative of all.

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At the Feet of Christ

ONE of the most helpful records given in the Scripture in connection with the birth of our Lord is that concerning the wise men of the East, who came seeking the new-born Jesus, the King of the Jews, with presents of myrrh,

frankincense and gold, and we should be able to gather from this incident some valuable suggestions respecting our obligations to the great Messiah, and the propriety of renewing these and increasing them now as we approach the opening of another year.

The wise men—according to tradition, three in number—arrived in Jerusalem and began making inquiries respecting the newly-born Jewish King. The news soon spread, and the holy city was in commotion because, according to the prophets, Messiah, promised for centuries, was due to appear about that time; and we read again, “All men were in expectation of Him.” This expectancy naturally would be heightened by the coming of the wise men or magi from a far country—supposedly Persia—to show homage to Messiah. Furthermore, there were Jews scattered abroad throughout that country who still more or less kept alive the thought of Israel’s hope for the great Messiah so long promised of God, prophesied of as the bringer of blessings not only to Israel but through them to all the families of the earth.

God chose as messengers of His good tidings not only wise men but reverential men, men of faith; and His choice of these messengers from the east to arouse the people of Judea and Jerusalem and to be heralds of the great King was not an exception to the rule. Although heathen men, in the sense of not being of the nation with which God had thus far dealt and to whom He had thus far confined His gracious promises, they were, nevertheless, good men, reverential men, who delighted to know of the coming blessing of peace on earth and good will amongst men through whatever channel or nationality the Lord should be pleased to find His representative and messenger.

In one respect many of Christendom could learn numerous important lessons from these wise Gentiles. No false patriotism stood in their way to hinder their appreciation of any manifestation of divine favour to the children of men. And when they found the Saviour they were nothing daunted by the fact that His home surroundings were of the humbler sort. They worshipped Him in three senses of the word:—(1) They fell before Him, prostrated themselves, thus physically expressing their reverence. (2) They worshipped Him in their hearts and with the tongue gave expression to their rejoicing and confidence. (3) They opened their treasure-box and presented to Him three gifts appropriate to royalty: the myrrh representing submission, frankincense representing praise, gold representing obedience.

The reverent spirit of these noble heathen men who had so little light, so little knowledge respecting the great Messiah and His work, will bring to our cheeks the blush of shame as we reflect that, favoured with still brighter light to guide us to the Lamb of God, having seen His star in a still better and truer sense, having been guided to Him by the prophecies, having found Him not only a babe, but one that in prospect would bear our sorrows and carry our griefs and make His soul an offering for sin, that we by His stripes might be healed, what manner of oblation should we pour at the feet of Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood? With what deep reverence have we bowed the knee, prostrated ourselves, given outward evidence through our bodies of full submission to our great King, of whom we not only know but of whose gracious provisions for us and for the world of mankind we have heard, not uncertainly, but with the voice of Him who speaketh from heaven? Have we offered our myrrh? Have we shown a willingness for service even to the extent of bitterness, a joy to honour the King to the extent of suffering with Him? Have we worshipped Him in heart, not with an outward form of godliness without the power—in other words, have we offered Him the frankincense of heart adoration, appreciation and gratitude?

Have we laid at His feet our earthly substance—our gold? Have we realised that all that we have and all that we are, our offerings far too small to be worthy of acceptance by the great King Emmanuel? Is this our present attitude? And will it be our attitude through coming days even until the end of the present pilgrimage?

The Apostle’s words, “Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, your reasonable service,” apply not only to the primary consecration of our hearts to the Lord, but are, as the Scriptures express it, a covenant of sacrifice, an agreement to die daily to self and to be alive daily more and more in the Lord’s service to glorify Him in our bodies and spirits which are His. If this has not been our attitude in the past, shall it not be our future course? Shall we not in any event continue to grow in knowledge, to grow in love, in service, in worship and in the privilege of having our little all at the feet of Him who is our gracious heavenly King, whose kingdom is so soon to be established, and who has invited us to sit with Him in His throne, to share His glory, to be participants as spiritual Israel in the great work of pouring out blessings upon the world of mankind, every kindred, people, nation and tongue?

When we give our hearts it includes all that we have and are in the highest and noblest and fullest sense—that which was illustrated by the three gifts of the wise men is all represented in the brief statement, “My son, give me thine heart.” Whoever gives his heart to the Lord fully and unreservedly, gives his body, gives his worship and

reverence and praise, and gives his earthly treasure, time, talents, influence, money—all—to be used in joyful service for the glory of the King.

To those who have never taken this step a prompt acceptance is urged upon them, irrespective of the gracious hope we have of a transcendent reward of glory, honour and immortality. As the Apostle declares, it is our reasonable service. Reasonable people ought to be glad of the knowledge that God is willing to accept our service, and of the opportunity to present themselves under the covering of the merit of the dear Redeemer's robe of righteousness.

To those who have already accepted the Lord's favour, who have already presented their bodies living sacrifices, who have already given the Lord their hearts, we urge a remembrance of the fact that the sacrifice once put upon the altar must remain there, and that the longer it remains the more joyful should be the service, the more appreciated every opportunity for sacrifice, the more thankful should be the heart and the more rich should be the experience in the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts and preparing us more and more through the graces of the spirit for the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them that so love Him and so reverence His Son.

“What shall I render unto Thee
What praise sufficient could there be
For all Thy benefits toward me,
O Thou Most Holy?”

“I'll drink Salvation's cup to-day
Which Thou hast poured.
Be Thou my stay!
Assist me as Thy saint to pay
My vows to Thee.

“Remembering Thy Heavenly call,
I'll strive to be sincere to all.
I pray for grace lest I should fall
From Thine own way.

“In thought, in word, in all my ways
Thy holy standard I would raise,
Nor please nor honor self, but praise
My Worthy King.

“Today in matters small or great,
I'll serve with faithfulness and wait
For further joys. Oh, blessed state,
Thus serving Thee!

“I'll strive to 'choose things that excel';
All anxious cares I'll seek to quell,
And all discouragements repel,
And be content.

“I'll neither murmur nor repine!
I'll trust my heart to care Divine
To make of it a sacred shrine
Where Thou canst dwell.”

—V.M.S.

The Divine Nature

IN the August-September 1971 issue of “Peoples Paper” a Convention address entitled “The Divine Nature” was published in the front pages. This address has been appreciated by readers respecting the development of Christian character like unto our Heavenly Father, by the indwelling of His holy spirit, which is essential for all Christians.

However, a mistake was made in using the text in 2 Pet. 1:4, to refer to the divine character. Our friends of the Auckland Class, New Zealand, have made a study of this matter, and the following article which they submit is gladly printed showing the correct meaning of the Greek in the term “divine nature.”

In studying this important subject, let us first see what is the meaning of the word “phusis” “nature”, as used in the Word of God. Strong’s Concordance shows clearly the meaning, as we can see from the derivation of the word, and the Scripture usage can be seen clearly from the texts in which the word occurs. **Phusis** (Greek word)—Growth (by germination or expansion), i.e., (by implication) natural production (lineal descent); **genus or sort**; Figuratively, **native** disposition, constitution or usage. Dictionary meaning of native—“not acquired” etc.

Its use in the Scriptures: The following list includes every case in which the word is used. (The word “phusis” is translated “nature” and “kind” as follows).

Romans 1:26. The meaning is obvious. The reference is to behaviour appropriate and inappropriate to the human “phusis” or genus *or* sort of being. The verse is stating what is “natural” or unnatural to the human being as created by God. Thus, behaviour that is contrary to “nature” is wrong. Such behaviour could be quite in harmony with their fallen characters or dispositions, but that is by no means what is being said here. This conduct is “unnatural.” It is against nature (phusis).

Romans 2:14. The meaning here is also clear. God has so made the human genus or sort of being that he has a conscience, an in-built awareness of the difference between right and wrong, and thus the Gentiles are guilty before God, even though they were never given the set of laws that were given to the Jews. They do “by nature”, “by phusis”, that is, they act according to their human genus, of which the conscience is an integral factor. (Verse 15. Similar verse 27).

Romans 11:24. “Wild olive”—“wild by nature” (by “phusis”), i.e., because of its natural constitution, its genus. See verse 21—the adjective from the same word. “Natural” branches are branches that, by genus, by “phusis”, belong to the root and to the tree.

1 Cor. 11:14. “Doth not nature itself teach . . .” Again it is obvious that the reference is to the essential human genus, the nature, the “phusis” of humankind,—no reference to acquired disposition or character.

James 3:7. Here we have the two cases when “phusis” is not translated by the word “nature” but is translated “kind”,—in the second case in association with “anthropinos”—human. How very clear is the meaning and the usage of “phusis.” “Every kind (phusis) of beasts, and of birds is tamed, and hath been tamed of **mankind** (the human genus or sort of being).” The lower forms of life, the creatures of lower or inferior genus, have been tamed by the members of the human genus. (This is not saying that bad animals are tamed by good men—It is simply saying that the one “genus” has tamed the other “genus”).

2 Pet. 1:4. In this verse it would seem very clear that the reference is to the “nature” of God (phusis = nature; theios = divine). The word “phusis” in this context means the same as elsewhere. It means the genus or sort of being, in this case the genus or sort of being of which God Himself was the only member until the time when, at Jesus’ resurrection, He (God) exalted His beloved Son to the same plane of being as Himself. In the Scripture above cited Peter was expressing a most wonderful truth, harmonious, beautiful, awe-inspiring. The meaning of the passage seems quite clear. We have been given the “great and precious promises” that **by these** (dia = through, by means of) we might be “partakers of the divine nature.” (Partakers koinonos = sharers, associates, partners).

It is clear, then, that the wonderful promises have been given to us to enable us to become “more than conquerors” and in due time to become “partakers of the divine nature.” But something has already been done. By the power of God and through the merit of Christ we have been lifted out of the corruption that is in our world.

Thus we see that in 2 Pet. 1:4, as in other Scriptures, the word “nature” does not mean “disposition” or “character.” We know that the Christian does need to grow in the character-likeness of the Lord, to put on or develop the new “mind”, the “mind of Christ.” But that is another thought. It is not what Peter was saying in verse 4 cited above.

A brief note on the word “divine.” The Greek word “**theios**” is used only **three times** in the Scriptures. It is derived from the word “theos” and is translated “**divine**” twice, in 2 Pet. 1:3. 4. Once it is translated “**godhead**” in Acts 17:29. In the case in Acts 17 it is evident that Paul was contrasting the idol gods worshipped by the Athenians with the true God whose “deity” or divine nature is not of any material kind. Two other allied words are used, once each. These are abstract nouns “theiotes” in Rom 1:20 and “theotes” in Col. 2:9. The word “divinity” conveys the meaning.

This detailed study of the subject satisfied us fully that the expression “partakers of the divine nature” means just what we and other Bible Students have always understood it to mean, and we recommend a careful re-reading of the chapter on “Natures Distinct” from page 173 of “The Divine Plan of the Ages.” (See footnote page 176). There are also helpful references in Vol. 5.

“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.”

The Carpenter’s Shop

IN a carpenter’s shop the tools are overheard to discuss in a critical spirit the greater or less importance of the tasks for which they are respectively fitted.

Dr. Gimlet a philosopher of a penetrative mind, had been speaking in terms of depreciation of the work of

Brother Plane. He continued: I know he is very active, even fussy, and to look at the shavings flying about you really would think that he was doing great things, but I notice his work is all on the surface, whereupon the Rev. Heavy Hammer reminded Dr. Gimlet that although his powers of penetration were indisputably great his influence was confined to a very narrow circle. This remark provoked a quick retort from a sharp pointed nail, who said that Mr. Hammer's preaching was far too controversial; he is never happy unless he is having a knock at somebody. Brother Chisel was roused by this criticism of his friend, and declared that only those who were closely associated with Brother Hammer could duly appreciate his strength and perseverance. He and I have been colleagues more than once, and to his powerful influence I ascribe whatever good I have been able to do. Then a horseshoe that happened to be lying on the workshop floor said, I should have derived little benefit from all Mr. Hammer's vigorous preaching had it not been for the zealous labours of another of his colleagues, I refer to Brother Bellows. It was, as I listened to him, that the fire began to glow in my heart; it seems to me that warmth is the great essential.

As the discussion proceeded, Professor Whetstone, who was busily engaged in sharpening young axes, had been observed to pause in his work. His voice was now heard, "Do not be offended when, in spite of all the confident statements first made, I maintain that neither energy nor fire, nor both together, are sufficient, the tool must have a fine polish and a keen edge if it is to do efficient service." This was too much for Brother Screw who spoke with a strong provincial accent, which betrayed his want of culture. I know that I have precious little polish and I also know that I should object to any of old Whetstone's grinding; my motto is: Lay hold whenever you have a chance, and when once you lay hold never let go. Two close friends are heard conversing in an undertone. Their names are Rule and Square. The latter now ventured to remark that in their estimation all who had previously spoken had the capacity for doing excellent service, if only they would submit to Method and Span. Brother Rule and I have observed with regret that harm is continually being done by those people who will not work within regular lines. Why, replied Brother Hammer, the only rule that I ever had is "Hit hard," and I've driven many a nail home. But he forgot that even he was guided by a Higher hand.

At this moment the carpenter's son entered the workshop. In his presence all sounds of strife are hushed. He is making the model of a Temple; skilfully he takes hold of now, Hammer, then Plane or Gimlet or Screw, the one giving place to the other as the progress of the work required and each finding his special reward as the building grew in beauty and in strength.

(Parable adapted from the German by Professor Tasker)

"Pictures From the Past"

The book of Bible Stories for children—"Pictures From the Past"--mentioned in last issue of "Peoples Paper" was completed in October, and quite a number have been supplied to the brethren. Of 173 large pages, with stiff covers, the price is \$1.20 to cover cost of materials, plus postage, which varies according to distance from 35c within 30 miles of Melbourne, to 75c to Western Australia and Queensland. However, up to 5 copies may be sent for 75c to the distant states.

One of our friends who has had a number of these Story Books writes--"I am giving the Bible Stories to nephews, nieces and friends with children. I have read it right through and find the stories and the way they are told most delightful, and I am sure the children will enjoy them."

"God's Best Gift."

A booklet for children—"God's Best Gift"—of 20 pages, compiled on the Divine Plan of the Ages years ago in U.S.A., has been produced in our office again recently. Written in childish language it is a splendid little book to convey the main outlines of God's Plan to young people. To cover cost of materials it is supplied at 10c per copy, 17c posted, single copies; less postage on a number.

THE FIND.

"Mother, I've found an old dusty thing
High on a 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”

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 most 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!—Selected.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, Victoria, 3167.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

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



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Trusting in God

(Convention Address)

“Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.” (Psa. 37:5.)

THE prominence given in the Scriptures to the quality of trust, confidence in God, seems sufficient reason for giving much consideration to the subject of faith. Let us be reminded that the statement of the prophet in Habakkuk 2:4— “The just shall live by his faith,” is quoted by the apostle in the New Testament no less than three times. (Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38.) Thus by His spirit does the Lord draw attention to this important quality four times in the same phraseology in His Word. It is the lesson of our lives—to take Him at His word. So weak in faith do we find ourselves at times that in circumstances and conditions in which we would have no difficulty in trusting an earthly parent, we hesitate to take refuge (for so this word “trust” is rendered in the Revised Version) in our Heavenly Father.

There is perhaps no way in which we can honor God more than by trusting Him wholly. Our Heavenly Father has given us many proofs of His love for us. We could do nothing to commend ourselves to God, “but God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”, (Rom. 5:8). In return, above all things else, God expects from His children, unreserved, wholehearted, loyal confidence in Him. He would hardly be looking for this kind of faith from those who do not know Him, for faith is based on knowledge; and as the apostle declares, “How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?” (Rom. 10: 14.) But as the Psalmist observes in Psa. 9:10, “They that know thy name will put their trust in thee.” Let us then seek fresh courage, fresh vigour to our faith, by noting the unreserved confidence and trust which the Psalmist displayed in a variety of circumstances.

On one occasion the Psalmist declared “I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about”, (Psa. 3:6). This was a Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom, his son. Could anything look much worse to human sight than that which confronted David? Whichever way he turned an enemy sought his life. Under these desperate conditions the Psalmist proved himself to be a man after God’s own heart by trustful confidence in Him.

And such should be the attitude of the Christian. “God’s counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure.’ The enemy may oppose; but God will ever prove Himself to be above him; and all we need is a spirit of simple, childlike confidence and repose in the Divine purpose. Unbelief will rather look at the enemy’s efforts to counter-vail than at God’s power to accomplish. It is on the latter that faith fixes its eye. Thus it obtains victory, and enjoys abiding peace. It has to do with God and His infallible faithfulness. It rests not upon the ever shifting sands of human affairs and earthly influences, but upon the immovable rock of God’s eternal Word. This is faith’s holy and solid resting-place. Come what may, it abides in that sanctuary of strength.”

The Christian may be called upon to undergo some very trying experience. Ruin may be staring him in the face; unemployment may deprive him of his usual means of support; sickness may attack his health; friends may become his enemies overnight; the blue sky may suddenly, without the least warning, become an ominous black; death may sever the closest earthly tie. How are we meeting these experiences? Are we telling all the world by our attitude in these trying conditions that our trust is complete? Oh, may it be ours to thus honour God in the midst of the difficulties. Shall we not strive to learn to say from the heart, though our lips may tremble as we say it,

“Though he slay me, yet will I trust him”, (Job 13:15). This will require a very high degree of faith indeed, yet we must surely be satisfied with nothing less than this. And relying on Him, reposing in Him, we shall prove the truth of His promise, “As thy days, so shall thy strength be.”

“Eternal confusion shall be inscribed upon all the opposition of men. This gives sweet rest to the heart, in the midst of a scene where all is, apparently, so contrary to God and so contrary to faith. Were it not for the settled assurance that ‘the wrath of man shall praise Thee, the spirit would often be cast down, while contemplating the circumstances and influences which surround one in the world.

“Thank God, ‘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: 18). In the power of this, we may well say, ‘rest in the Lord, and **wait patiently for him**; fret not thyself because of him who bringeth wicked devices to pass’, (Psa. 37:7). Faith brings the heart into the power of Divine and unseen things, and thus enables it to mount above every thing down here, in this place where death and darkness reign. Oh, for that simple child-like faith that sits beside the pure and eternal fountain of truth, there to drink those deep and refreshing draughts, which lift up the fainting spirit, and impart energy to the new man, in its upward and onward course!”

The Psalmist is not only ready to trust in the face of known difficulties, but he is ready also to trust God with the unknown future. “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.” It required great faith to trust the future unreservedly to God’s hands and leave it there. Many a child of God who had learned to lean hard upon the Heavenly Father in all times of known difficulty, trouble, adversity, sickness, has yet to learn how to rest the future, with God. Despite all that can be done, notwithstanding even prayers, doubts will assail the mind as to the uncertain future. All sorts of possible situations suggest themselves, and serious misgivings are entertained that under such and such circumstances their courage may fail. Ah, let us listen to the Lord, speaking through the Psalmist, “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord”, (Psa. 37:23). Let us heed this lesson well, though to understand it fully, we may never be able this side of the veil. The future is in the hand of the Lord. Nothing, **not any thing** is hidden from Him. “In him is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”

The future may be hidden from you, dear child of God, and from me, but it is all plain to our Father. How clearly God is able to read the future may be readily seen by the student of prophecy, and of our Lord’s Revelation. Here, stretched out in panoramic scenery are the events of history, accurately related beforehand, so that, as our Master said, “when it is come to pass, ye may believe.” Dear Lord, we have indeed seen Thy sayings come to pass, and we do indeed believe. Help Thou our unbelief.

But as to those things yet future, what of these? Ah, in respect of these, how beautiful the sentiments of the hymn:

“God holds the key of all unknown,
And I am glad;
If other hands should hold the key,
Or if He trusted it to me,
I might be sad.

Let us, then, as the Psalmist exhorts, “**Roll** our way upon the Lord (marginal reading); trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass”, (Psa. 37:5). The Lord will take care of the future with all its possibilities. Our Master said that in some respects we should become as little children, (Luke 18:17). How little a child concerns itself with the worries of the future, and how completely it rests all this in the hands of its parents. Shall we not, even more, trust our great Heavenly Parent, and take no anxious thought for the morrow, for “sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”

But some one says, “That is all very well, but I am so very weak in faith at times. Sometimes I can trust the Lord, even with the future, and at other times I find my faith wavering and the future seems very terrible.” Surely we can all sympathise with any having such an experience. Many of us have realised the same lack of faith. But what should be our course at such a time? What is the remedy for this doubt and unbelief? Ah, our help cometh from the Lord. Let us go to Him in prayer and seek to have His strength made perfect in our weakness. He has grace to help us in this very time of our need—grace, which He will give us, if, and only if, we ask Him for it. Seeking His counsel in prayer, and calling to mind the promises, waiting patiently for Him, we shall find our minds being turned away by the Lord from the unknown to the known. Thus reflecting on our own experiences, and upon the experiences of others, who with one voice declare that in all known circumstances He has never failed, fresh courage will take hold upon us. Realising that no matter how much we may try, we can make no adequate provision for an unknown contingency, our mind will be gradually turned from the discouraging uncer-

tainty to the Lord. We shall find Him reminding us that nothing can possibly occur in our experience by chance. Reflecting on the supervision which the Lord has promised to give our affairs, we shall find our faith, which was in very truth wavering, become strong again; and we shall have proved the truth of His Word, that “the steps of a good man **are** ordered by the Lord.” Not only so, but we shall be enabled all the better to fulfil in our future experience the words of the Psalmist which immediately follow, —”And he delighteth in his way.” Not only shall we be ready to trust in Him, but we shall delight in the way He leads also. We shall be able to declare to others not only out of the Psalms, but also out of our own experiences—”Though one of the Lord’s people fall, he shall not be utterly cast down for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.”

“Peace! perfect peace! the future all unknown?

Jesus we know, and He is on the throne.”

The Psalmist could trust God when conditions were adverse; he could trust Him also with the future. Looking into the future it was enough for the Psalmist that God would be in it. “I will not fear; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” He now tells us that he will continue to trust even when there is no apparent necessity for so doing. “I will not trust in my bow”, he says, “neither shall my sword save me”, (Psa. 44:6). How easy it is, apparently, for one who is well equipped from this world’s standpoint, to learn to trust in his equipment. Not so the Psalmist. Though fully equipped for conflict, his trust is not in his equipment, but in God. This does not mean that the Psalmist would discard his bow or sword. Being providentially at hand, he would use them should occasion arise; but his trust would be in God to give the victory. Notwithstanding the fact that these weapons had been proved, and had stood him in good stead in times past, his trust remained in God.

Many and various are the temptations which come to the Lord’s people to trust in the means which God graciously sends, instead of continuing their trust in the Great Provider of those means. Many, knowing the power that money still exercises in the world, have a sense of security with respect to the future if they can face its possibilities well equipped with liberal finances, a feeling of comfort which does not exist under contrary conditions. Shall we call that comfortable feeling by its right name? Surely it is nothing less than unbelief. When we have peace of mind in the presence of means that the Lord provides, which peace of mind we fail to possess in the absence of those provisions, is it not an evidence that we are trusting indeed in our bow, and expecting our sword to save us? And what becomes of that comfortable feeling when the bow, without the least warning, is suddenly snapped asunder; when the edge of our sword becomes rusty and blunted? Oh, then it is that the value of the faith in God is seen, for He is not dependent on these at all. Even if He were, “The silver and gold are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills”, and His salvation can be brought to us with or without these means.

It may be that in His gracious arrangements the Lord has been pleased to bless us with the wise and faithful counsel of a tried and true friend. As we grew in Christian grace and knowledge, we found it a great comfort to be able to lean upon the human instrument who tried so patiently, and so courageously to teach us the ways of God. What then? Have we erred in finding comfort and support in the God-given leadership and counsel of a clear-visioned saint of God? By no means. When God brings into our individual lives the comfort and support of earthly friendships that tend to strengthen our character and our faith, would it not be a grievous mistake on our part if we failed to profit by such assistance? Most surely. And what applies to us as individuals in this respect, is equally true of the Church as a whole. When God would give fresh courage and vigor to the Church from time to time in its history, He has done so almost invariably through the leadership of one or more outstanding characters raised up by Him for that purpose. Was it wrong then, for our brethren of Luther’s day to find their hopes growing brighter under his strong and vigorous leadership? Surely not. Did we ourselves err in experiencing a gladness of heart that we had not previously known, as a very dear servant of the Lord in our own day awakened us to the fact that our Lord had returned, and that the brightness of the Millennial Day which He would shortly usher in would shine with such a splendour as we had not hitherto dreamed? Oh, no; therein we made no mistake.

But it is one thing to **lean** upon a staff which God provides for that purpose, and another thing altogether to take that staff, and as it were **plant** it and expect it to grow and spread itself out over our heads that we might take comfort in the shade its leaves will afford. Staffs are for the purpose of assisting us in our feebleness to **walk**, not to **sit down** in shady places; to make progress along the narrow way; to help us develop out of our sickly convalescing condition to strong and vigorous manhood. Let us then learn this lesson from the Psalmist. Let us hold in very precious memory the faithful leaders of the past; let us, if for no other reason, honour for their work’s sake the **faithful** leaders of the present; let us prize very highly those friendships which seem so assistful to us in our pilgrimage along the narrow way, but in and through and above all, let us remember God. In Him let our confidence repose. (See Psa. 146:3.)

“They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever”, (Psa.

125:1).

Many are the lessons of trust that we may learn from the Psalmist. Out of his rich experience he tells of his confidence in God and his determination to trust Him unreservedly at all times. *We* recall that David's whole life was a warfare, and that oftentimes very real dangers were imminent. Yet David's faith rises to the occasion, and he declares, "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety", (Psa. 4:8). To trustfully commit ourselves to God's care while asleep, may not seem to us any great achievement of faith, dwelling as we do in civilized lands, in times of peace and safety; but it was not so with David. Nevertheless, realising that he was God's anointed, and that God had selected him for his high office, he was able to commit himself unreservedly into the care of Him who neither slumbers nor sleeps.

It is no new thing for a child of God to be found in a condition of helplessness. Examples abound in the Scriptures of God's stalwart ones undergoing experiences in which they were quite helpless. Consider Elijah in the presence of 850 prophets of Baal and of the groves. Or take the case of Joseph in Potiphar's prison. What circumstances could we pass through in which we could feel more helpless than the three Hebrew children when they were thrown into the fiery furnace; or Daniel in the lions' den? Concerning His followers, spirit-begotten of the Father, our Master Himself said: "Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves", (Luke 10:3). How pitifully helpless are lambs among wolves! From time to time along life's journey as we meet with an experience in which we feel utterly helpless, let us not lose courage, but let us realise that this is a great occasion for faith. We have the same God of love and of power as did the faithful ones of the past, and the Lord will not permit these experiences to work any real injury to us. Rather He seeks to teach us the lesson which even the great Apostle Paul took time to learn, — "My strength is made perfect in thy weakness", (2 Cor. 12:9).

This lesson is not an easy one. Rarely if ever is it learned in one experience. Even after we have learned to say with the Apostle, "When I am weak then am I strong", certain polishing experiences are required before our wise and loving and patient Instructor sees in us the required results. What makes this lesson so difficult? Ah, it is because it is just the exact opposite from what we would naturally expect. Naturally, that is, as natural men, we would prefer the opposite. Even after we have received the new mind, the mind of the flesh resents this instruction, and fain would have us cry: "Send us not out as lambs among wolves, dear Lord, but rather send us forth with power and strength, so that resting in the consciousness of our ability to take good care of ourselves we shall be afraid of nothing, and shall thus have our minds free from distraction to engage in more efficient service to Thee and Thy cause." We want to have that feeling, so comfortable to natural men, that we are personally able to do this or that—that we are equal in ourselves to meet any emergency. But that is not God's plan for us; and gradually *we* learn that His thoughts are indeed higher and grander far than ours. Presently we become acquainted with the fact taught in His Word, (Isa. 40:29), that it is not to the strong, but "to them that have no might he increaseth strength"; and ere long He confirms in our experience this truth learned from the written page. Let us then press on. Let us learn well the lesson that it is not by might nor by power, but by God's holy spirit that any lasting results will be secured. Thus learning in our weakness to trust in His mighty power, we shall be guided through life's journey, until following our Lord Jesus to the end, we, too, as we approach the utter, complete helplessness of death, shall be enabled as He did, to trustfully commit ourselves to our Father. There in the perfection of our weakness will be manifested the perfection of His strength, as He exerts His power in granting us a share in our Lord's resurrection.

Let us now note a somewhat peculiar expression from the Psalmist found in Psa. 56:3,— "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." At first glance the declaration of the Psalmist seems almost paradoxical. How can he trust God unreservedly, how can he make God his refuge, how can he enjoy the rest of faith, "What time he is afraid"?

It is true that on some rare occasions persons are born whose natural courage is such that with them fear seems to be an unknown quantity. Such persons, however, are rare, and even these have their weaker moments. With the majority, however, this condition is a very real enemy, and one that we cannot afford to ignore. David himself, mighty man of valor, slayer of the lion and the bear in defense of his father's sheep, bold and courageous against the giant Goliath, magnificent warrior-king of Israel, of whom it was said that "Saul hath slain his thousands, but David his tens of thousands", here plainly admits, and elsewhere confesses, that he was far from free from the spirit of natural fear.

Now this condition of natural fear does not necessarily imply sinfulness, although it may frequently be mixed with lack of faith, which of course is sin. But natural fear itself quite often is the result of a weak set of nerves in the physical body, and this distressing infirmity may overtake some just as headache or toothache may overtake others. Now while these things are all the concomitants of the death penalty which came upon father Adam and upon us, his children, because of sin, we know that the presence of these infirmities does not imply sinfulness

on the part of the afflicted ones. We recall *our* Lord's emphatic rejection of this implication when the question was put to Him,—“Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Natural fear may come upon us without our being able to prevent it. It may not be a specific act of unbelief at all. It may be merely the result of our nervous physical condition, but the best remedy for this condition will be found to be in the exercise of a simple faith in God.

Right here is where we need to be very much on our guard. The tempter will supply us with a line of reasoning that would keep us away from our loving Heavenly Father at these times when we need His encouragement most. Thoughts will be suggested to us as follows: “You have no right to be overcome in this unmanly or in this unwomanly fashion. You ought to learn how to control yourself better. There are no promises in God's Word which you can claim in a circumstance of this kind. If this were fear of a spiritual kind, it would alter matters, but this fear is all physical, and has to do with things of earth, present pain, future sufferings. You cannot carry a matter of this kind to God. He expects you to bear that burden alone.” Ah, we are not altogether ignorant of the devices of our wily adversary; but we know, because our Lord Jesus has told us, that he was a liar from the beginning.

What a libel such a line of reasoning would be upon the name of any human being worthy of the name of “father”; how much more upon the name and character of our gracious Heavenly Father! “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that reverence him.” Does an earthly parent find no time for his child's fears? The child's fears may be ill-founded. It may become alarmed at a strange face, a dark room, an unusual noise. From the father's viewpoint, the child's fears may be groundless, but if he is a real parent, he deals with the problem from the child's viewpoint. His child is suffering real fear, and so he acts accordingly, perhaps pointing out the absence of any cause for alarm, but certainly displacing fear by a sense of security as he takes his child in his arms in a tender embrace. Dear friends, it is not manifesting toward our Heavenly Father the trust and confidence due Him, to keep away from His loving arms when fear comes. “He remembereth our frame, he remembereth that *we* are but dust”, and “like as a father” so “He pitieth them that reverence him.”

When Peter “saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid, and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me”, (Matt. 14:30). What did Jesus say? Did he reprimand Peter? Did He offer no assistance? Ah, no. Our great Elder Brother had a heart of compassion. The record reads—“Immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him.” **Jesus has not changed.** “He is the same, yesterday, today, and forever”, and if we are not turning to Him in our moments of weakness and experiencing His strong support, *we* are failing sadly in that which is our privilege.

It is true that after saving Peter from sinking, our Lord said unto him, “O, thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” But these words were not in censure or rebuke, but were reassuring to the apostle; and together they journeyed on the water back to the ship.

Let us then resolve that our times of natural fear and discouragement shall be times of trust also. Thus shall we be able to say with the Psalmist, “What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee”; “I sought the Lord and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears”, (Psa. 34:4).

Few if any of us will be called upon to endure anything worthy to be compared with the trials which the saints of other days successfully endured. It is unlikely that we shall be surrounded by ten thousand men seeking our lives as was David; it is very improbable that we shall be called upon to suffer at the stake, as were our brethren of a few centuries ago. But as the poet has expressed.

“The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

“If on our daily course our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still of countless price
God will provide for sacrifice.”

Let us then in the common walk of life cultivate a living, bright, happy, childlike trust in God. And having learned to trust God in these things that are least, we shall have developed a faith which God, if it please Him, will be able to use in the things that are greater, a faith which will enable us, as was the case with David, to trust God completely even when we cannot trace Him—that will enable us to say with the prophet Job—“Though he slay me, yet will I trust him.”

Our Bad Goodness

The following short article from the “Christian World” was printed some years ago, but it is thought will be helpful and appreciated by many new readers, as well as all other friends again.

THERE are two famous prayers, apparently contradictory but really complementary, which I should like to put side by side that we may learn their lesson.

The first is Augustine’s anguished cry, “Domine, libera me a homine malo—a me ipso,” which may be freely translated, “Lord, save me from that evil man—myself.” The second is the well-known prayer of an early Wesleyan preacher, James Spence, “Lord, save me from that good man, James Spence.” I confess that I do not know which of the two is the greater or betrays the deeper insight. They are both typically Christian prayers, perhaps at different poles of life and thought: but there are moments in our experience in which each must be offered.

Every one can understand Augustine’s prayer. He had passed through the scorching fires of passion, and he was thinking of the downward pull of the lower desires. He knew the evil in himself, the evil that was himself! For he knew that we men and women are our own worst enemies. The things that hurt us are not outside us; the men that wound us are not other men: we are despoiled by the “evil man” within us. God’s best salvation is to save us from ourselves—from the lower dream, the pet passion, the fond indulgence.

But James Spence saw as deeply. He knew that a true Christian must be rescued not only from his sins but also from his virtues—the virtues on which he prides himself, the virtues on which he is too apt to rely. There is no greater moment of spiritual danger for a Christian than when he admires himself, or is complacent about his fine attainments. That good man, James Spence, is actually James Spence’s worst enemy, especially when he is conscious of how very good James Spence is as compared with other men. Thus I think that the Wesleyan’s prayer is the more discriminating of the two, “Save me from that good man, James Spence.”

Two men went up into the Temple to pray. One of them, a Publican, cried out in abandoned shame, “Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.” This is the parallel of Augustine’s cry. “Save me from the evil that is in me—save me from that evil man, myself.” The other, a Pharisee, was a good man, undoubtedly a good man. He attended church, lived correctly, performed all his daily duties to his neighbour and his God, and was unquestionably the best kind of citizen of his own day. But alas, he knew it—and even told Almighty God all about it in his confessions! I think we must admit his virtues: every word he said was strictly true. It is quite nonsense to say he was a hypocrite. He was an ornament of that good class of men, the Puritans of their time, the Pharisees. But this should have been his prayer, “Lord, save me from that good man, James Spence.”

Our Lord never wearied of showing that a good man’s main danger lay in self-satisfaction, which is a milder or disguised form of pride. I imagine that in our human weakness no honest man can be wholly unaware of his own virtues and attainments. We know that we don’t drink, or misbehave, or shirk our duties, or dodge the income tax. A man cannot help knowing his virtues as well as his faults and sins. But the finest Christian prays to be saved both from his virtues and his sins! Our deadliest sin is self-satisfaction and pride, as Jesus showed in His parable: it kills the very virtue it exults in. Let us do anything at all with our hands except pat ourselves on the back. “Lord, save me from that good man, James Spence.”

Is the Second Death a Blessing!

“The wages of sin is death.” “He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”—Rom. 6:23; Rev. 2:11.

ANY are the ingenious devices of our great adversary for overthrowing the faith of the saints in the foundation principles of the Gospel of Christ. Among them is the widely accepted notion that death is really part of an evolution by which mankind must reach perfection. The thought is clearly expressed in the following lines of a popular hymn:

**“Death is the angel God hath sent
To bear us to the sky.”**

Out of this theory, as a starting point, many grievous errors have grown. The fact that death is the penalty of sin is ignored, and the necessity of a ransom is denied by many; and even the second death, notwithstanding the plain Scriptural teachings and warnings with reference to it, is represented as a blessing.

In harmony with this error is the idea now prominently advanced, that the first, or Adamic death, is merely a death to righteousness, and that the second death is a death to sin. Thus it is said, Adam and all mankind died

to righteousness and became alive to sin; and that a man's conversion is the second death—a death to sin and a becoming alive to righteousness.

On this unscriptural hypothesis a theory is built which, to the undiscerning, has an appearance of plausibility; and it is a sad fact that only the few **search** the Scriptures, and still fewer “try the spirits” (doctrines) by comparing Scripture with Scripture, and therefore, error has always found it expedient to quote the Scriptures in its support.

In our Lord's temptation in the wilderness the same deception was attempted: Satan quoted, saying, “It is written . . . ;” but Jesus answered, “It is also written . . .” So should the disciple be as his Lord, and endeavor to rightly divide the Word of God—to apply it as the spirit designed, and not as every wind of doctrine might twist it out of harmony with its context.

Before proceeding to examine any theory the careful student will first inquire, How strong is **the foundation** on which it rests? for if the foundation of the theory be wrong, all that can be built upon it must be wrong. This is a short, sure, and safe test; the theory must stand or fall with its foundation.

In carefully examining the foundation of this view, it will be found first, that it has no Scriptural basis; and secondly, that it is directly opposed to the clearly expressed statements of the Scriptures on the subject. The Scripture quoted above shows that death is always the wages of sin; but this theory would make it sometimes the reward of righteousness, when it claims that to become righteous is to die to sin. This alone is clear proof that the theory is based upon an interpretation of death out of harmony with the Scriptures and hence unworthy of further consideration.

The passage relied on to prove the position, is Rom. 6:10—“In that he (Jesus) died, he died unto sin.” And as He was our example, therefore it is argued, that all mankind must likewise die unto sin and become alive unto God, or become righteous. But let us see if the harmony of the Scriptures will warrant such an interpretation of this passage. First we ask, Can that which is not alive be said to die? Certainly not. Then unless Jesus was **alive to sin**, that is, a person **living in sin**, He could not in that sense **die unto sin**. And just here we call to mind the question of Jesus Himself, “Which of you convinceth me of sin?”

If those Scriptures are true which say that Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and knew no sin, does it not prove that the theory which makes this passage teach that Jesus died unto, or ceased from sin, is a false application of the passage, since He could not cease from that which He never began, never knew, but was always separate from?

That this is a misapplication of this Scripture is made positive by a glance at the preceding verse, which refers clearly and pointedly to the actual death of Jesus, and His actual resurrection—“Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.”

But let us see how this text may be interpreted in harmony with the context. In this verse the word **unto** expresses the idea much less clearly than the word “by”, as given in the Diaglott translation. The thought is that Jesus died by or on account of sin once. His death was “the wages of sin” as all death is, but not by reason of, nor on account of, nor as the wages of sin which **He committed**; but as elsewhere stated, “Christ died for **our** sins according to the scriptures” and “Jehovah hath laid upon him the iniquity **of us all**.” (1 Cor. 15:3; Isa. 53:6.)

The Apostle's reasoning in verse 11, can only be grasped by one who has clearly in mind his reasoning preceding, as presented in the fore part of the Epistle. Chapter 1 begins the subject away back before the Deluge, when men knew God but glorified Him not, but yielded to their own vain imaginings and their foolish heart became darkened, (verse 21). Chapter 2:1 shows that all men have come into some measure of the same darkness, and that the Jews as well as the Gentiles, are all **worthy** of condemnation, and **are all condemned**, because “There is none righteous, no not one.” (Rom. 3:9, 10, 19, 20.)

Having thus proved that “**all the world**” has “become guilty before God”, Paul introduces the work of Christ as the **remedy** for all this guilt; for though “**all** have sinned and come short of the glory of God”, He has justified them freely by His favor, **through the redemption** that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood (the life He gave to **redeem** ours), to manifest God's righteousness in condemning to death, and to accomplish a **remission** of sins. Verses 24, 26.

In chapter 4, the Apostle continues to further emphasize the justification from sin and death, to life and a condition of righteousness, accomplished as he has shown by Jesus' death, saying, “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin” (verses 7, 8), and repeats his testimony that the forgiveness and covering of our sins was through Him “who was **delivered**

for our offences and raised again for our justification” (verse 25). Chapter 5 carries the topic further and shows the result of **justification**, that it brings the condemned sinners back to a standing where they can have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (verse 1). And yet more, not only are we justified, but through Christ and through the justification which He accomplished for us, we have **access** into a still further favor of God— access into **this favor** wherein we stand and rejoice, in hope of the glory of God, (verses 1, 2). Not only then was our **human** nature justified and a right to the **glory of manhood** restored, but a door was **thereby** opened to us by which we may have a hope of reaching the **glory of God**—the Divine nature.

And not only have we obtained a hope of future glory, which causes rejoicing, but as we realise that that “glory of God” is promised as a reward for the sacrifice of the justified human nature, it enables us to rejoice in the tribulations by which alone that heavenly glory can be obtained, (verse 3).

After showing that the sacrifice of Christ was a full settlement of all condemnation and imperfection resulting directly and indirectly from Adam’s transgression (verses 15-21), he inquires (chapter 6:1) What shall we say then? If the sin of Adam has brought forth so much favor from God, shall we continue to sin in hope that still further favor would be manifested on our behalf? — and answers: God forbid. How shall **we** who have **died by sin** live any longer therein?

The **we** here mentioned is the same class mentioned in Chap. 5:2, 3, and 1:7, a class of saints who not only have been **justified** by faith in Jesus, the Redeemer, but have obtained by consecration, **sacrifice**, access into “THIS GRACE”—the begetting and promises of the **divine nature**—“the glory of God.” This class had **died**, that is, had consecrated to death, and now reckoned themselves dead indeed. This was as a payment for sin, as death always is the wages of sin. But in this case it was not a payment of the wages of their **own** sin. No; they had been justified from their own sin by the death of Jesus, and had afterward consecrated to death, and that death was to apply for the **sin of others** just as Jesus had died, not for sin of His own, for He had none, but “for our sins”. So these **saints** consecrated to die, not for **their own** sins, for they **had none**, since justified from all sin by Jesus’ death.

But, says some one, does not the death of **Jesus alone** constitute the redemption price for the sins of the whole world?

We answer, The **merit of Jesus** is the only merit which cancels the sin of the whole world; but whether that merit is applied directly to the world, **or** indirectly **through “the church**, which is his body”, is the question. This is the **favor** which is specially offered to the Gospel Church; namely, to share with Jesus in making the **sacrifice for sins**, being first ourselves **justified** through HIS SACRIFICE. This is the Apostle’s teaching when he speaks of **filling up** that which is BEHIND of the afflictions of Christ (Col. 1:24), and it was the teaching of Jesus when He said to the disciples: “Ye shall drink indeed of my cup (suffering) and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with” (death), Matt. 20:23. And that the Apostle is carrying out this same line of thought in the epistle we are now considering, is evident. How (with what consistency) can we that have died (consecrated to death) by sin (on account of or as sin sacrifices), consistently live any longer in sin, or have any fellowship with that which we are dying to destroy or remove? “Know ye not that **so many** of us were baptized INTO Jesus Christ (**into** membership in that body of which He is the head) were baptized (plunged, swallowed up, buried) into HIS DEATH?” His death was not Adamic death, but a ransom or substitution for it, and we share in **His death**, and hence share in the results of His death—the putting away of the sins of the whole world.

“We have therefore been entombed with him by the immersion into **that DEATH (in order)**, that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we should walk in a new life.” Our condition is a **reckoned** one, and if we reckon ourselves justified **by** Christ and then dead **with** Christ, we should go yet further and reckon ourselves **as though** we had been resurrected and were now actually spiritual beings, as Jesus now is, and we should act accordingly, abstaining from sin and rejoicing in communion and glory, **as though** we had been made already perfect as spiritual beings. “For (this is the reason why we should so reckon) if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death (or, in the like kind of **death—sacrificial**), certainly we shall be also in that of his resurrection” (we shall share a like resurrection; that is, a resurrection to spiritual perfection). “Knowing this (remembering in this connection), that our old man (our departed, sin-inclined selves, when under condemnation) was crucified with (more properly **‘in**) him (that is, was **represented** in Jesus when He was crucified), so that the body of sin might be destroyed (Jesus in His own person represented sin as a whole, and as such He was ‘made a curse for sin’), that we may no longer be enslaved to sin; for he who died (and only he who died **thus** representatively in Jesus’ death, that is, who accepts of the divine statement that Christ died for **his sins**, only such an one) has been **justified** from sin” (verses 6, 7).

“And if (after being thus as sinners represented in Jesus’ sacrifice, and justified thereby) we (as justified persons) died **with** him, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead,

dies no more; death no longer lords it over him. For the death which he died, he died by sin (our sin imputed to Him), but the life which he lives he lives by (the favor and reward of) God. Thus do you **account** yourselves dead indeed unto sin (as sharers with Jesus of the world's sin), but (as) living by (the favor or reward of) God in the anointed Jesus", (verses 8-11—Diaglott).

In view of these facts, "Let not sin therefore **reign** in your mortal body, that ye should obey its desires; neither present your members to sin as instruments of iniquity; but (according to your consecration, and in carrying out of that **death** which you already **reckon** accomplished) present yourselves to God as if alive from the dead (just as though you were risen actually, and possessed your promised immortal, spiritual body complete), and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness" that you may be used of Him as His agents and mouthpieces. (From "Reprints".)

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 23rd, 24th, 25th and 26th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, Victoria, 3167.

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$16.00.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at \$10.50.

"The Creator's Grand Design" is the title of a 240 page cloth bound book, from the "Dawn" brethren. It is a helpful study covering the plan of God as a whole. Supplied at \$1.25, post paid.

Little Foxes and Little Lambs, a humorous, yet thought-provoking, illustrated book of clever poetry. The first poems call attention to the "little foxes" in people's lives—common faults and failures such as lying, evil-speaking, pride, laziness, anger. Next, attention is given to the "little lambs", such as truth, humility, patience, courtesy. Children will enjoy coloring the pictures that go with the poems. Paperback, 63 pages, price 70c post paid.

OUR BIBLE TRANSLATED

A new print has been made recently of the very interesting and informative booklet, "Our Bible Translated", compiled some time ago by the brethren of "The Dawn". To cover cost of materials this booklet is supplied at 10c per copy, post paid.

'Be still my heart, these foolish fears,
These constant grumbles, and these tears,
All cast dishonour on thy Lord,
And contradict His gracious word,
Brought safely by His hand thus far,
He'll pilot thee across the bar.
How can you want, if He provide,
Or lose the way with such a Guide?"

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Does the Bible Approve of Cremation—What About the Resurrection?

THE subject of the resurrection of the dead is surely one of the most vital and important in the whole Bible. That being so, it is surely necessary for us, as the Lord's people, to endeavour to understand God's plan concerning the hereafter; and not only the hereafter for true Christians, but also the hereafter for all the families of the earth.

At each Easter season we have the anniversary of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is fitting to examine this wonderful event, the resurrection of Christ, first of all, because only on the basis of Christ's resurrection can any hope be established for the resurrection of Christians and for the world of mankind at large. The future hope of life for Christians and the world is based on the resurrection of Christ.

How important, then, is the Apostle Paul's presentation of the resurrection of our Lord, in his masterly 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. From verse 12 in this chapter we note how helpfully this vital matter is presented to some who claimed —"that there is no resurrection of the dead."

. . . For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (verses 16-20). It will be noted that those mentioned as "fallen asleep in Christ" would be Christians fully devoted to the Lord, and that Christ, between His death and resurrection, also "slept"; He became "the firstfruits of them that slept."

Before investigating the wonderful outcome of Christ's resurrection respecting the benefits to be gained by mankind, let us note some of the details concerning our Lord's resurrection body in comparison with His earthly body which was nailed to the cross. We are aware that our Lord's fleshly body was taken down from the cross and placed in a new sepulchre by Joseph of Arimathaea, as described in John 19:38-42. It is very plain that Jesus' body was placed in the sepulchre and the stone was rolled to the door, sealing it from outside as the sabbath approached. Some people are perplexed as to whether the actual body of Jesus which was laid in the sepulchre was again used by our Lord in His resurrection appearances, and also went up to heaven at the time of His ascension. Some Scriptures help us in this matter, such as John 6:51. Our Lord speaking, says,—"I am the living bread which came down from heaven . . . and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Obviously, when Jesus gave His flesh, His humanity, to redeem the world, it was not taken back again. It was a complete and full offering of our Lord's humanity, His earthly body sacrificed on the cross. Also in 1 Pet. 3:18 the Apostle Peter explains this to us helpfully. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit." In other words, Jesus had been put to death a human being, and raised from the dead a spirit being. Further, in 2 Cor. 5:16, the latter part of the verse from the Amplified Version reads,—"Even though we once did estimate Christ from a human viewpoint and as a man, yet now (we have such knowledge of him that) we know him no longer (in terms of the flesh)." That is very plain. We do not know Christ after the flesh because He is risen spirit, at the right hand of God.

Seeing the Scriptures clearly state the Lord's fleshly body did not ascend to heaven at the time of His ascension, the reasonable question is, What became of His earthly body after it was placed in the new sepulchre? *We*

should be helped in this matter by observing how the Lord appeared to His disciples between His resurrection and ascension. A passage of Scripture in Luke 24 is most helpful. Two of our Lord's disciples were walking to Emmaus on the third day after Jesus' crucifixion. A man caught up with them along the road, whom they thought was a stranger. They were very sad, and the Lord, whom they did not recognise, asked them why they were so sad. They explained that Jesus was a wonderful prophet, and what He had done, and how He had been taken and crucified and laid in the tomb, and they said "this is the third day." After the Lord had explained the Scriptures to them—"Ought not Christ to have suffered and to enter into his glory?"—they invited Him in for the evening meal, constraining Him to stay. Verses 30 and 31 show the outcome. "As he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight." He disappeared from their sight, as though his fleshly body disintegrated. What had happened? The Lord had the power to materialise in human form, as angels had in previous times and in the time of our Lord. He vanished out of their sight by dematerialising the human body and resuming His spirit body. How do we know? See John 20:19, 26. ". . . when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." It is very obvious that Jesus could not come through the bolted doors with a fleshly body. No, He came in as the spirit being which He was since His resurrection, and created the human body inside, so that He could be seen by the disciples. Reversing the procedure, when His mission was accomplished He would dematerialise the fleshly body and leave the presence of the disciples as a spirit being, thus leaving the building without opening the doors. Does this seem hard to believe? Angels appeared as men and were seen on certain occasions, then dematerialised back into spirit form when their mission was accomplished. Could not the risen Lord do likewise? Yes, indeed! That procedure helps us to understand how Jesus' earthly body could easily be removed from the sepulchre, so that when He was raised in spirit, no earthly body would remain to be seen to hinder acceptance of the fact that Jesus was really risen from the dead.

In Psalm 16:10 we have a prophecy in respect of our Lord. This is written as though Christ is speaking to His Heavenly Father.—"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (sheol, the condition of death); neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Had our Lord's body remained in the grave to corrupt, it would have hindered the belief that He was risen from the dead, so our Lord's body did not corrupt, it was removed supernaturally. Christ was in the spirit until, as occasion required, He appeared in human form to demonstrate to the disciples that He was really risen from the dead. So it seems God used means to remove Christ's fleshly body that had been crucified and placed in the sepulchre, so even if His fleshly body had been cremated it would not have interfered with his spiritual resurrection.

What about the followers of Christ and the world of mankind? Does the Bible approve cremation for any of the human family? Inasmuch as the word "cremation" does not appear in the Bible at all, we must conclude that it does not **approve** cremation. The first time the word "buried" is found is in Gen. 15:15, where the Lord said to Abram—"Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age."

Right throughout the Bible the word "buried" is used at the death of the prominent Biblical persons mentioned. In Acts 2:29 the Apostle Peter referred to David,—"that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." Verse 34 states—"For David is not ascended into the heavens." The apostle in these verses was making a contrast between David and Christ. David was dead and buried in Peter's day, but Christ was risen. David was still in the death condition, awaiting a resurrection in due time; Christ had ascended to heaven, after appearing to the disciples at various times over the forty days between His resurrection and ascension. Right throughout the Bible then, all the patriarchs were buried, according to the records of God's Word.

We may wonder why cremation was ever used, in view of the clear statements of the Bible that burial of the departed was the custom from earliest times. Investigating this matter from the Encyclopaedia Britannica, we find that cremation started with the heathen races of the eastern world. The Romans copied it from the Greeks. And the Indians and the Japanese have always been cremationists, as have the Burmese. The Chinese, however, have never adopted cremation since it is the desire of every Chinese to be buried in the soil of his country, no matter where he may die. The modern development of cremation dates from about 1874 when the Queen's surgeon, Sir Henry Thompson, published a book entitled—"Cremation: the Treatment of the Body After Death." In this book he said that the proposal to adopt cremation in recent times originally proceeded from Italy. Even then, there was much opposition of the church in England and the Home Secretary, with the result that progress with cremation was slow until the close of World War 2. Progress in Australia and New Zealand with cremation has also been more marked since the 2nd World War. In Britain cremation is controlled by Acts of Parliament which require certificates from two medical practitioners as to the cause of death. Although the law is not so rigid in most countries, the general principle is to ensure that cremation shall not be a means of concealing crime, and that proper safeguards shall be established in the public interest.

Examining the Scriptures in regard to Christians and the world at large we have the words of Jesus in John 5:28, 29,—“All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.” It is very evident that Jesus was speaking here of two main classes of mankind in the resurrection day, those that have done good and those that have done evil. But a very important point to note is that both classes are to “come forth” from the death condition, being awakened from the sleep of death. The words of the Apostle Paul in Acts 24:15 agree with our Lord’s statement, as we would expect. The apostle says—“There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.” As with Jesus statement, so here Paul refers to two main classes of mankind. Let us consider each class separately, keeping in mind that the resurrection of Christ Himself is the one and only basis or hope of resurrection for any of the human family.

Returning to 1 Cor. 15:20, we see that Christ at His resurrection became “the firstfruits of them that slept”, impressing that our Lord was asleep in death until the third day—until the morning of His resurrection. In this connection two important texts come to mind with reference to the term “firstfruits.” In James 1:18 referring to the Lord’s people, James says,—“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.” In other words, God is taking out a class of firstfruits, begotten of the holy spirit by the word of truth.

Again in Rev.14:4, referring to the true Church of the Gospel Age, we read,—“These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.” Inasmuch as we saw in 1 Cor. 15:20 that Christ was the “firstfruits of them that slept”, it means Christ was the first of the firstfruits class. In other words, there are others also to be associated with Christ in this wonderful firstfruits class. The remainder of the firstfruits unto God, and also the after-fruits of God, are well explained in Eph. 4:8. “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” More clearly, as the margin of our Bible reads—“He led a multitude of captives.” He preceded the whole human family, which was in captivity to death, and is leading them out of death. And what a multitude requires to be led out of captivity! First of all He leads out of death the Church of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven, (Heb. 12:23).

This great multitude our Lord is leading out of captivity is so well explained in 1 Cor. 15:21, 22—“For since by man (Adam) came death, by man (Christ Jesus) came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” What a wonderful promise we have here. The apostle is really saying that as many of mankind as have a dying life through Adam are to have a living existence through Christ’s sacrifice, upon the terms of obedience, as we find from other Scriptures. It may be asked, Are all those who are to be made alive through Christ to be made alive at the same time during the resurrection? The apostle answers this question in verse 23, of 1 Cor. 15,—“But every man in his own order.” The resurrection is going to be very orderly. “Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming”,—rather His presence. In this verse 23 “Christ the firstfruits” refers to the church, the body of Christ, the anointed firstfruits unto God of His creatures. As the Apostle declares in 1 Cor. 12:12, “As the body is one and hath many members (our human body), and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.” What about these anointed firstfruits unto God of His creatures, who are the first of the multitude of captives to be released from captivity in death? Is there anything that could interfere with their resurrection to life, to live and reign with Christ a thousand years, such as cremation of their earthly bodies? Certainly not. The apostle helps us in 2 Cor. 5:1-5,—“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” This is a lovely passage, telling us that true Christians who are really devoted to God and begotten of the holy spirit, when their earthly house be dissolved they have a building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; in other words, a spiritual body to possess in the first resurrection.

The Apostle Paul is not saying that the faithful followers of Christ in his day would immediately receive their heavenly house not made with hands when they died, but rather at the time of the first resurrection this would be so, and Paul quotes his own case to Timothy in support of this truth in 2 Tim. 4:6-8. “I am now ready to be offered . . . Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” Paul did not expect to receive his crown immediately he finished his course. It was “laid up”, reserved in heaven, as Peter also says of those who are kept by the power of God (1 Pet. 1:4-5).

This agrees with Paul’s further statement in 1 Cor. 15, this lovely chapter on the resurrection, in verses 49 and 50. “As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” In other words, they that attain to the heavenly kingdom will be spirit beings. Even the Apostle John did not know what a spirit being is like, and we do well to accept the Word of God. In 1 John 3:2, we read—“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." Not Christ being changed back to be like us humans, but faithful Christians will be changed to be like Him, the risen Christ. He could go into the room to His disciples when the doors were locked. When the Lord led His disciples out to the Mount of Olives at the time of His ascension, it appeared to them that His fleshly body went up to heaven; but in fact it was dematerialised, and He went up a spirit being, to be at the Father's right hand. "As we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him so no more." "Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more; but ye (disciples) see me (shall see me); because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). Should we not reason, then, respecting the firstfruits unto God, that as they are not to be fleshly beings with fleshly bodies, but rather spiritual beings with spiritual bodies, there would be no hindrance to their resurrection if their bodies were cremated, seeing the earthly house or tabernacle will not be used again in any case. This does not mean the Bible approves cremation, but it means the bodies laid in the grave are not the bodies raised in the resurrection.

We have seen that those who have done good come forth to a resurrection of life—life with Christ in the heavenly kingdom. What of those who come forth to a resurrection of judgment? In Isa. 26:9 we have the assurance that when God's judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. This will be a teaching and training time, a trial time for all humanity. We have the answer clearly presented again in 1 Cor. 15:35, 37 and 38. "But some one will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." In other words, those who have been true Christians, proving faithful unto death, will have a spiritual body as it pleases God. Those of mankind who have not become Christians, millions of them very good people, will have an earthly, fleshly body in the resurrection, as it pleases God. "To every seed his own body." How do we know? Because we read the earth is to be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and this is for the majority of mankind who will be subjects of the kingdom. There will be Garden of Eden conditions throughout this wide world. "God giveth it a body." God has the personality of every being in His keeping, and surely can implant the very life principle, the personality, of every being into a body fitting for each individual—a spiritual body for each of the Church of the firstborn, and a fleshly body for the personality and mind of each human being who has ever lived. "Thou sowest not that body which shall be"—in each case, either spiritual or earthly.

While we see that cremation of the earthly body will in no way interfere with the resurrection of the dead, yet the Scriptural accounts of burial show that the Bible does not approve cremation. Burial appeals to us as being more in keeping with the Lord's desire for us as Christians. Our rejoicing, however, is in the fact that the resurrection of all mankind will take place in new bodies fitting for their sphere in life for Christ's Kingdom, both heavenly and earthly. The Church, in the first resurrection will be joint-heirs with Christ in the spiritual phase of that kingdom; and all the remainder of mankind in the earthly resurrection will be subjects of that Kingdom. And all this great salvation from death is based upon Christ's loving sacrifice for all, and His resurrection to the Father's right hand of power, to bring about the blessing of all the families of the earth. For all who have yielded their lives to the service of the Lord the words of the Apostle Paul have special appeal, as found in Phil. 3:10-11. "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

Israel Today

THE following extracts from a report by one of our brethren living in Israel, sent to a Convention in U.S.A., have been received recently. Our readers will no doubt appreciate this interesting review of events connected with the ingathering to Israel of many Jews from Russia.

If one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, then it was about two and a half days ago that the Lord said He would bring up the Children of Israel from the land of the North and bring them back into their land. Now that word is prospering in the thing whereto He sent it, (Isa. 55:11).

You will recall that two years ago I mentioned that the Jews in Russia were beginning to stir and demand the right to return to Israel. A year ago, their insistent demands had begun to bear some fruit. Now the Jews from Russia are arriving in Israel at the rate of about five thousand a month. This emigration is not to the liking of the Russian authorities. They thought that by letting out a few ring-leaders of the Jewish repatriation movement they could take the steam out of the movement and more easily control those who remained. But the granting of exit visas to the leaders showed their assistants that the iron door could be forced open, at least a crack; so they, too, applied for visas and, after the inevitable difficulties, received them. More and more followed suit. Applicants

for visas immediately lose their jobs. Quite a number have been arrested on trumped-up charges and imprisoned in work camps after sham trials. All the red tape of bureaucracy is brought into play to delay proceedings. But in spite of all the efforts of the Russians to discourage and obstruct it, the movement to return to Zion is gathering momentum.

Why do the Russian officials yield to the pressure of this movement? If they don't want to issue visas, why don't they simply refuse to issue them? The answer is that the Achilles' heel of Soviet policy is ideology—words, ideas, doctrines. Their power is based on their ability to get people to believe in Moscow-centered communism, whether that belief is accomplished by persuasion, indoctrination, or brain-washing. The chances of realising their ambition to control the world depend on their ability to convince a large number of people in every nation that the salvation of the world comes from the Kremlin. Now there exists in the Soviet Union an underground information service that is composed largely of intellectuals and is far from being exclusively Jewish. Through its activities, the names of newcomers to the camps and the condition of sick prisoners are known not only throughout the U.S.S.R., but also outside. This knowledge in itself would not be very troublesome if it did not spread. But Jews all over the free world are in contact with each other and can apply very telling pressure. If Sylvia Zalmondson and Ruth Alexandrovich are seriously sick in Russian prison camps, their only crime being that they want to go to Israel, and only a few people know about them, then they can stay where they are. If, on the other hand, their pictures are carried in street demonstrations in the major cities of the world, so that even the communist parties in western countries start inquiring about them, then the Soviet authorities seriously consider releasing them (as they have already released Sylvia) rather than answer too many questions. Widely publicised documented evidence of inhumane treatment of its citizens by the Russian government is a pressure the Soviet leaders find very difficult to resist, because it lowers their stature in the eyes of their adherents and prospective adherents in countries outside the Soviet block. Rather than face such adverse publicity, they are inclined to correct the situation, however reluctantly.

When the Amalekites tried to prevent the Exodus from Egypt to the promised land, the Children of Israel gained ground as long as Moses held his hands up and lost ground when he let them down. So now, the Jewish nation all over the world can help their brethren win their battle for release from Russia if they will continue in prayer for their release and in actions corresponding to that prayer. But Moses' arms got tired. Instead of giving him super-human strength to hold his hands up as long as necessary, God gave him Aaron the high priest and Hur, the son of Caleb, to help hold his hands up. In the present situation, Aaron could picture the members of the royal priesthood still in the flesh, while young Hur could represent other sympathisers, both inside and outside the U.S.S.R., who encourage the Jews in this effort. It would seem that one way in which we can help to hold up the hands of Moses at the present time, and thereby actually participate in the exodus from Russia (the land of the north), would be to proclaim publicly the current beginnings of the fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah 16:14-15, along with the assurance that when God starts to do something He sees it through to a successful conclusion, (Isa. 66:9-10).

Another example of Aaron's assistance to Moses took place in Egypt. When Moses, with stammering lips, proclaimed God's words, "Let my people go", Aaron repeated them in clear tones that rang in the ears of Pharaoh. Now the Jews of the free world are directing toward the rulers of Russia that same demand; and it is the privilege of those whose understanding of present Truth enables them to discern the Lord's times and seasons to point out

to the public at large that in our day God is fulfilling His promise by the mouth of Jeremiah. This is not a one-time matter. Moses and Aaron appeared before Pharaoh repeatedly before he finally let the Israelites go, under the pressure of the tenth plague.

There may be an interesting parallel between the destruction of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea and the destruction of the armies of Gog and Magog after the deliverance of the Jews from the land of the north.

In our Memorial Service here in Arad, we again included a reading of Jeremiah 16:14-15 and a prayer for the fulfilment of this prophecy. We are happy that tens of thousands of Jews have already come from the Soviet Union.

Several years ago, I mentioned the possibility of a Convention in Jerusalem in 1974. I don't know whether it is the Lord's will or not to hold such a Convention. Perhaps it would involve many Truth friends in spending money that could be put to use in better ways in His service. I know of no reason for objection, legal or otherwise, as long as it is a Convention of Bible Students and not a public witness effort. Those attending would have to realise that they are guests in Israel and that any effort to make converts is extremely distasteful to Israelis and is particularly repugnant if it appears to be disguised as something else. Friends who would be willing to restrain for these few days the laudable urge to spread the Truth would find this an opportunity to meet with some of like precious faith from other lands and to compare notes on our understanding of the Scriptures. They would see the land where

our Master walked as a man and the City of Jerusalem, from which the Word of the Lord will go forth to bless all nations. Some might sense with us the presence of the King of Israel on the holy hill of Zion and rejoice with us in seeing our Master's brethren restored to their land and blessed here. The time for this commemorative gathering would be in the fall of the year 1974. It could start with Rosh Hashana (the Jewish new year's day); or it could quite appropriately take place during Succoth (the feast of Tabernacles), a festival which the prophet Zechariah 14:16-17 says will be celebrated annually at Jerusalem. If a considerable number of the Lord's people are enthusiastic about this idea, I will take that as an indication that it is the Lord's will for the Convention to be held; if not, I will understand that this was just a pleasant dream of my own.

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It is nothing for a man to hold up his head in a calm; but to maintain his post when all others have quitted theirs, and there to stand upright when other men are beaten down—this is praiseworthy.—Seneca.

Lessons from the Great Teacher

THE childhood home of Jesus was Nazareth, although He was born in Bethlehem. The people of Nazareth would of course feel a certain sense of pride in their fellow-citizen whose fame was spreading throughout all Galilee and Judea. Hearing of the mighty works and wonderful teachings given at Capernaum, they not unnaturally said to themselves, Well, of course He will soon return to His own town and give us a sight of His wonderful power. And *yet*, they reflected, Is not this Jesus, whose mother and brethren we know, and who has for a long time been identified with Joseph's carpenter shop?

They could scarcely believe what they had heard. How could it be that so soon after leaving home He had become so famous and so powerful? He never did such miracles in all the years that we knew Him, said they. They did not, of course, understand as we do that He received His power as a special benediction when He was thirty years of age, as a result of His full consecration of His life to the Divine service, that devotion being symbolized by His immersion in Jordan.

The Synagogue At Nazareth.

At length He came to Nazareth. It was on a Sabbath day. For long years He had been recognised as one of the few able to read, and had done the congregational reading of the Holy Scriptures. This was therefore just what they wished and expected Him to do on the Sabbath day of His return. He went into the synagogue and received from the custodian the scroll bearing the lesson, and read the lesson for the day.

Thus far all went well; but when Jesus began to comment upon passages of Scripture there was a commotion; first whisperings of disapproval, and finally an outburst of wrath against Him. Ay! they thought, this young man has quite lost His head since He left us! We know indeed that His people of Nazareth have a mean name throughout the country, that ours is reputed to be a mean city of little learning; but who would expect that one of our own citizens would return to our midst and tell us to our faces that we are not worthy of having an exhibition of His power—such as He has given to other cities and to their people!

Their pride and patriotism made them wild. They drove Him out of the synagogue with angry demonstrations. They insulted and jostled Him and led the way toward the rear of their city, not daring to lay hands on Him, but merely as a mob gnashing upon Him and pushing onward in a direction in which they desired that they might lead Him to the brow of a hill, and then push Him over.

For a little way Jesus went, but then He turned and passed through their midst, overawing them by the dignity of His presence, and perhaps realizing that their course towards Him was merely a corroboration of what He had said respecting their unworthiness to have a share of the blessing of God which He was distributing.

The Truth That Angered.

What were the words that thus angered them? At first we read, "All bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth." What, then, made the change? It was the plain declaration that because they did not appreciate Him enough, because they did not believe in Him fully, therefore it would not be God's will that He should perform any miracles for them. He backed up His statement with illustrations from the

past which angered them still more. He said that in Elijah's day there was a famine in the land, and that Elijah was not sent to the widows of Israel, but to a widow across the border, in a Gentile city.

Again, Elisha was not sent to cleanse the lepers of Israel, but did cleanse a Gentile, Naaman. Alas, for the power of pride! "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Instead of the people of Nazareth getting angry and resenting these things, they should have said, Tell us, then, of our faults and help us to overcome them. If God has blessings, surely we, as Israelites, may have our share, if we will but come into the right attitude of heart. Instruct and pray for us. But the proud cannot see their difficulties, hence the Scriptural declaration of the special favor and blessing to the humble.

The Lesson From Isaiah.

The lesson for that Sabbath was from Isaiah 61:1-3. It was an excellent text, and the sermon on it was from the very ablest of all teachers. The whole difficulty was with the heart condition of the hearers; and this is true of many a sermon and many a lesson. How His hearers should have rejoiced to know that they were living in the day of the fulfilment of these words! He had been anointed by the Father with the holy spirit, that He might declare good tidings to the poor. Surely many of them were poor and needy!

We read further that Jehovah sent Jesus to heal the broken-hearted. Oh, how those words ought to have appealed to all in that audience! How they **would** have appealed to any that were brokenhearted! The difficulty probably was that they were hard-hearted. Satan has hardened the hearts of mankind in general. God's promise is that under Messiah's glorious reign He will take away the "stony hearts" and give them "hearts of flesh."

The declaration further was that the blind would receive their sight, that liberty would be granted to the captives, that the bruised and injured would be healed, and that "the acceptable year of the Lord" would be proclaimed. These were indeed wonderful words of life! No wonder we read that "they wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth."

"Deliverance To The Captives."

This part of the message might have been applied in part to themselves. Were they not captives, bound by the fetters of sin, bound also by the fetters and chains of heredity, sickness, imperfection and death? Were not some of them actually blind also, as respects the eyes of their understanding? Evidently the time for them to see had not arrived—they were not in the condition to receive the blessing of the anointing of their eyes of understanding. Were they not all bruised by the fall, imperfect, blemished, wounded, sore—mentally, morally and physically—and was not the Great Deliverer there to set them at liberty, in part at least, from these difficulties? Surely that was a favorable moment, and they were a favored people!

But the work that Jesus was doing was merely the proclamation of these things, with a few illustrations or examples of healing, etc. The real time for Him to accomplish the deliverance of the captives, the liberating of the sin-bruised, and the giving of sight to the blind, that all might sing the praises of God and appreciate His favor—these actual blessings belonged to the Messianic Kingdom time. What Jesus was doing was merely a foreshadowing of the great things to be accomplished future—"In the Times of Restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His Holy Prophets."—Acts 3:21.

Proclaiming "The Acceptable Year."

This brief expression, so little understood, pointed out the special work of Jesus, far more important than the miracles. The term, "acceptable year," or acceptable time, refers to this entire Gospel Age of more than nineteen centuries. It is "the acceptable time" in the sense that during this period God is willing, through the merit of Christ's sacrifice, to accept from amongst the sinners a Little Flock of joint-sacrificers to share with their Redeemer in His Kingdom.

No opportunity had been granted in the past to become dead with Jesus, to present their bodies living sacrifices, to walk in His footsteps, to fill up the afflictions of Christ, to suffer with Him. The proclamation of this opportunity waited until Jesus had made His own consecration, and all who accepted His Message and became His followers did so under this invitation or proclamation. It was the privilege of becoming the sons of God by a begetting of the holy spirit. (John 1:13.) The acceptance of these sacrifices began at Pentecost and still continues. Who can say how soon the door of privilege to offer acceptable sacrifices may close? Then the door to the High Calling, to the Bride class, will **be** shut—forever. Other blessings God has, but not other privileges than those of this Age for suffering with Christ and for participating with Him in His reign of glory.

Question Box

Question:—What is the understanding of Matt. 27:52, 53?

Answer.—That these verses do not teach that some of the saints were resurrected at the time of the earthquake, etc., at our Lord's crucifixion, is evident from other Scriptures, such as Acts 26:23—"That Christ should suffer and that he should be the **first** that should rise from the dead." Also Col. 1:18—"The first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." The one or two who, like Lazarus, were brought back from death, were not resurrected to life, but merely brought back to this dying condition and in course of time again passed away, and were buried to await the resurrection.

This passage in Matthew seems quite out of accord with other Scriptures. The oldest M.S.S., the Sinaitic, omits the words "and the graves were opened", in verse 52, also "and went", in verse 53. It seems likely that when the earthquake occurred at the time of our Lord's death that the rocks being rent some bodies were thrown up and came to view, and yet were not noticed until after the resurrection of Jesus. The day following our Lord's death being the Jewish Sabbath, when all would be quiet, and Jesus being raised early the next morning, would seem to support this view of the matter.

Question:—Why did our Lord say to His disciples, "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one" (Luke 22:36, 38), and then afterward say to St. Peter: "Put up thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword"?—Matthew 26:51, 52.

Answer:—We should note the circumstances. Jesus knew that His hour was come in which He would be betrayed, made prisoner, and the next day be crucified. It was necessary to show that His capture was not made by force, but that He voluntarily permitted Himself to be taken and crucified. The Father might know, the angels might know, and His disciples might know that He had powers to ask of the Father legions of angels for His defence and protection from the hands of His enemies: but others could not know this. It was desirable that it should be clearly manifested that Jesus and His disciples could have defended themselves, as St. Peter, indeed, started out to do when he drew his sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. Jesus promptly healed the ear and instructed Peter to be non-resistant, and surrendered Himself, merely requesting that His disciples be not molested.

The circumstances demonstrated that our Lord surrendered Himself voluntarily, and therein was the lesson. Had there been no swords in the company of His disciples, it might have been claimed that no defence could have been made. The having of the swords made possible the exhibition of the courage of the disciples, and the willingness of Jesus to submit Himself.

When Jesus said that if necessary their garments should be sold to purchase a sword, the Apostles responded that they had in their company two swords; and Jesus answered, "It is enough." They were intended merely for a demonstration, and not for defence.

Nothing in this Scripture seems to give any warrant to warfare, nor to the implication of some that Jesus desired His followers to take the sword. True, not all who have taken to the sword have perished by the sword, and not all who have avoided the sword have preserved their lives, but it is a general principle which the Lord discusses. He who prepares himself for warfare and trouble will be pretty sure to get plenty of it, according to the general course of the fallen human nature. On the other hand, the Lord's disciples are enjoined to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."—Hebrews 12:14.

The Key to Living is Giving

A very favourite story of mine is about two **seas** in Palestine.

One is a sparkling sapphire jewel,
Its waters are clean and clear and cool,
Along its shores the children play
And travellers seek it on their way,
And **Nature** gives so lavishly Her choicest gems to the Galilee:

But on to the south the Jordan flows
Into a sea where nothing grows,
No splash of fish, no singing bird,
No children's laughter is ever heard,

The air hangs heavy all around
And Nature shuns this barren ground:

Both seas receive the Jordan's flow,
The water is just the same, we know,
But one of the seas, like liquid sun,
Can warm the hearts of everyone,
While farther south another sea
Is dead and dark and miserly—
It takes each drop the Jordan brings
And to each drop it fiercely clings,
It hoards and holds the Jordan's waves
Until like shackled, captured slaves
The fresh, clear Jordan turns to salt
And dies within the Dead Sea's vault:

But the Jordan flows on rapturously
As it enters and leaves the Galilee,
For every drop that the Jordan gives
Becomes a laughing wave that lives—
For the Galilee gives back each drop,
Its waters flow and never stop,
And in this laughing, living sea
That takes and gives so generously
We find the way to life and **living**
Is not in keeping, but in **giving!**

Yes, there are two Palestinian seas
And mankind is fashioned after these!

Helen Steiner Rice.

EVIL.

Keep clear of personalities in conversation. Talk of things, objects, thoughts. The smallest minds occupy themselves with persons. Do not needlessly report ill of others. As far as possible, dwell on the good side of human beings. There are family boards where a constant process of depreciating, assigning motives, and cutting up character goes forward. They are not pleasant places. One who is healthy does not wish to dine at a dissecting table. There is evil enough in man, God knows. But it is not the mission of every young man and woman to detail and report it all. Keep the atmosphere as pure as possible, and fragrant with gentleness and charity. —John Hall.

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Volume LV No. 3 MELBOURNE, JUNE—JULY, 1972 Selecting a Bride

(Convention Address)

THE work of the Gospel Age is beautifully symbolised in the 24th chapter of Genesis. Many have thought that there is no spiritual food for the Christian in the Old Testament Scriptures, but this is a great mistake. The more fully we understand the spiritual teachings of the Lord and the apostles, the more we are able to discern those things written of old for our admonition. (1 Cor. 10: 11; 1 Pet. 1:12.) In this instance Isaac represents Christ, as also in chapter 22, where he had been offered on the altar as a figure of God's only begotten Son being sacrificed as the world's ransom price. Abraham's servant (Eliezer) represents the holy spirit which has been sent forth since Pentecost selecting the Bride of Christ, and Rebekah symbolises the Church "espoused as a chaste virgin to Christ." (2 Cor. 11:2.) As Isaac stayed with his father while the selection of his bride was made, so Christ is with the Father while the church is being chosen. (Heb. 1:3, 13; Acts 3:21.) The instruction was quite emphatic, thou shalt not take a wife unto my **son** of the Canaanites, so sinners have not been invited to be members in the Bride of Christ. All are called to repentance and to "as many as received him he gave the power (privilege) to become sons of God." "No man can come unto me except the Father, which sent me draw him." (John 6:44.) "No man taketh this honour unto himself but he that is called of God as was Aaron." As Eliezer went to the house of Bethuel, which word means "the house of God", so it is only to the "household of faith"—believers "justified by faith and at peace with God"—that this wonderful privilege of consecrating themselves to God and becoming "joint-heirs with Christ" comes (Rom. 8:17).

It was at the "well of water" that the servant met Rebekah, so it is through the "word of truth" that we receive our hope towards God. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." - - James 1:18.

Then there was the betrothal, the gift of golden earring, or, as the marginal reading states, "adornment for the forehead." Either emblem would be beautiful. Gold always speaks of Divine things, a golden earring would indicate an "ear to hear" the Divine promises. The golden ornament on the forehead would signify "sealed with the holy spirit of promise." (Eph. 1:13.) The golden bracelets (10 shekels weight) being placed upon her hands would mean that all her works would henceforth be for Isaac, (Col. 3:17), ten shekels intimating how completely this would be, as the number ten appears in the Scripture to denote completeness.

So it is with the consecrated. What wonderful hopes are ours! Surely "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, the things which God hath reserved for them that love him",

"We stand all astonished with wonder -

And gaze on the ocean of love."

We realise that the invitation is so wonderful and that all we have or can hope for in this life is so small in comparison that the apostle's exhortation of Rom. 12:1 to "present our bodies living sacrifices", holy and acceptable to God (on account of the imputed righteousness of Christ), is indeed the only reasonable service we can offer. We come into His courts with praise and enter His gates with thanksgiving, and say

"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.

Let my hands perform His bidding,
Let my feet run in His ways,
Let my eyes see Jesus only,
Let my lips speak forth His praise.

Since my eyes were fixed on Jesus
I've lost sight of all beside—
So enchained my spirit's vision
Looking at the Crucified.”

The story continues. The contract is arranged, and further gifts are made—”jewels of silver, jewels of gold.” Not until consecration is made to the Lord can we begin to understand the deep spiritual truths of God's Word. When, however, we have been begotten of the spirit we can discern spiritual things, so “still new beauties do we see and still increasing light. “Silver represents truth and the gold symbolises the “exceeding great and precious promises that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature.” (2 Pet. 1:4.) The raiment provided (verse 53) would indicate change of nature,—”If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things have passed away and behold all things have become new.”-2 Cor. 5:17.

The king's daughter is all glorious within. Her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle work. (Psa.45:13, 14.) This would show that while the wedding garment is provided by the great Bridegroom, the Bride class “must work out their own salvation” by weaving into the robe the character, the various graces of the holy spirit until the heart and mind have been transformed into the likeness of God's dear Son—the great Bridegroom.

Peter speaks of this process of adding to faith by which we are justified. (2 Pet. 1:5-11.) Virtue, fortitude, Christian character, consecration, then knowledge, which apart from consecration might puff up the mind, but received into a humble heart will nourish and sustain. Then moderation, control, the spirit of a sound mind is necessary to make proper use of the knowledge attained, and patience or the cheerful endurance of hardship, that we may be properly exercised by our experiences, and further developed in piety, godliness, sterling character, justness, a clear perception and determination to carry out that which is right—pleasing to God. Brotherly love must also grow, a love that loves God, must love also him that is begotten of God. “He that saith he loves God and hateth his brother is a liar.” (1 John 4:20.) But while it is easy to love the brethren in Christ, to love them that love us, there is a further step into the likeness of Christ, for “while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.”

We must love all men, yes, even our enemies. “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray (that is, not formally, but with desire for their good) for them which despitefully use you and persecute you that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven.”--Matt. 5:44, 45.

In the story we are considering, there is still another point to notice. The mother and brother desire to delay the departure of Rebekah, and she was allowed to decide the matter. How definite is the decision, “I will go with this man.” So should it be with us, if we come to realise the “hope of our calling”, “the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Does the narrow way seem long, does the long journey over the desert of the Gospel Age seem hard and dreary, then surely we have not realised all the joy that awaits the called in Christ Jesus at the other side.

No doubt Rebekah had heard of her uncle Abraham and that God had made selection of him for ultimately blessing all the families of the earth through his seed. She had faith in God's promise, and saw the opportunity of coming into line with it by becoming joint-heir with Isaac. Just so with the Christian of the Gospel Age, it is only by becoming “joint-heir” with Christ that he can rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Rebekah had never seen Isaac, and yet here she was ready to go and be his wife, because of what she had heard of him, and all that the union meant of God's blessing. Just so with the Church, the prospective Bride of Christ; she can say of her Lord in the words of 1 Pet. 1:8,—”Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

So Rebekah was willing to “forget her father's house” (Psa. 45:10), as the Church is willing to leave the human nature, the Adamic family, and journey over the desert, the Gospel Age, on the ten camels, the complete promises of God. Then the end of the journey is reached. There is a “man in the field.” Rebekah enquires of “the servant”, so the Church enquires of the holy spirit concerning the signs in the world, and learns of the presence of the Son of Man. While the world is not aware, for He comes “as a thief in the night”, “ye brethren are not in darkness that

that day should overtake you as a thief.” And while there is the sound of a trumpet, a proclamation of His presence, it is only those who have “ears to hear” that can catch the sound. Rebekah’s nurse is not shown in the picture as noticing the man in the field; no, she evidently represents those who have not the full, deep interest of the Bride class, but are shown elsewhere as “the virgins, her companions” (Psa. 45:14), or the five foolish virgins in the parable of Matt. 25, or “the great company that serves before the throne” (Rev. 7:9, 14, 15), instead of being in the throne as “the queen in gold of Ophir,”—Psa. 45:9.

Then shall it be true that “the marriage of the Lamb is come” (Rev. 19:7), and not only the “Bride class” will be gathered around the wells of water of truth, for “then the spirit and the bride shall say, Come. And let him that heareth say come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely.”—Rev. 22:17.

That will be the day when Christ will be “the everlasting Father”, when He will give life to all the willing and obedient, for He has “the keys of death and of hell.” First He will take hold of those still alive, but in whom death still reigns, and teach them how to live.

The obedient will soon find that as a result they are growing stronger mentally and physically, and gradually death will be vanquished; not, however, until sin is overcome. “Death is the last enemy to be destroyed.” Then, too, there are those in the tomb, and Messiah has also the “keys of hell” (grave) and will unlock the great prison-house of death and all that are in their graves shall come forth. (John 5:25; Acts 24:15.) The great work will not be accomplished in confusion or hurry. God’s great plan proceeds with majestic surety, and the Scriptures show clearly that the ancient people of Israel are to have the first privileges of that time, and that then the blessings will gradually flow through them to all the world.

In that day when sin, sorrow, trouble and death have been stamped out, and when victory over the grave is complete, when the earth is made a glorious happy home for the human family, and filled with a perfect race, when there is not a stain of sin, not an unkind word or look to mar the peace and goodwill among men, Christ shall see (the result) of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. He shall see His seed, for He as the second Adam with the Church, His Bride, will be the everlasting Father of the race redeemed by His death. From our first parents we receive a dying existence, but all the willing and obedient in that time will receive everlasting life from the great Life-giver, of whom it is written, “Who shall declare his generation?” The matter is shown also in the blessing pronounced upon Rebekah as the type of the “Lamb’s wife.” “Be thou the mother of thousands of millions”, which is in harmony with the Abrahamic blessing. “I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven (the spiritual seed, the heavenly calling, the Church, Gal. 3:29), and as the sand which is upon the seashore” (Gen. 22:17, the earthly seed).

As in the distance the various peaks of the mountain are blended so as to be indiscernible, so in the distance the various features of the Second Advent of our Lord were indistinct. But now is our salvation near—“nearer than when we first believed”; and we should expect that the holy spirit, which we were assured would bring truth to the attention of the Lord’s people as “meat in due season”, would continue to “show them things to come” as they would be due to be understood. And thus we have found it, praise the Lord! God’s Word is as a shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day. In its light we can now see that our Master is present for a time, in the harvest time of this age—invisibly present doing a work in His Church, before any outward sign or revealing to the world takes place. His work in His Church is the separating of the true from the merely nominal—the “wheat” from the “tares.” His revealing will be in the “flaming fire” the great time of trouble with which this age will close, and in which the “tares” shall cease to be “tares”; but before that fire comes, as the parable was given to show, He would be present in His wheat field gathering the wheat into the garner and bundling the tares for the burning.

Another parable also shows that before revealing Himself in any manner to the world, He calls first His own servants and reckons with them. (Luke 19:15-27.) Ah! dear brethren, what a holy awe it brings to our hearts to know that we are now living in the presence of the Son of Man; that now, the “wheat” is being gathered and the “tares” being bundled;—that now the servants are reporting their use of the pounds and talents entrusted to them, while the world sees nothing and enquires, “Where is the promise of his presence, while all things continue as they were from the beginning?” Nor can any but the few hear and appreciate the evidences, or understand the Master’s words that as the world knew not in the days of Noah, even thus shall it be in the presence of the Son of Man (Matt. 24:37)—they shall know not, and the ordinary avocations of daily life shall continue,—until disturbed by the commotion and trouble of the Epiphaneia, the Apokalupsis of the King in the pouring out of the seven last plagues—when the judgments of the Lord shall be abroad in the earth and the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness, and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord’s house. He shall teach us of

his ways and we shall walk in his paths.”—Isa. 2:3.

CORRECTION IN CONVENTION NOTES.

Friends who have the Easter Convention Notes are advised that a mistake was made on page 19. In the 22nd line from the top, the sentence beginning —While in the flesh ..., should read—While in the flesh we will never know perfection in the full sense of the word, but we must progress towards perfection in the sense of maturity and this should evidence itself to ourselves as well as to others. Copies of these Notes are also available to others on application.

“We sometimes tend to think and speak of our ‘fellowship’ as a mere social contact and the enjoyment of a pleasant time together. The New Testament writers knew of no such thing. To them the ‘fellowship’ of the brethren was a deep-rooted matter—vital association together in Christ, young and old sharing in all the obligations, all the endurance and all the joys of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Acts 2:42; 4:32; Gal. 6:6.

Rebecca F. Doney.

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PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM *Australia, 3101.*

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

The Institute’s Work

WITH thankfulness to the Lord this brief report on the work of the Berean Bible Institute is presented again at this time. Over the year past, ending with April, the privilege of serving the cause of truth has been fully realised again in co-operation with the dear friends throughout this continent and overseas. The efforts in the work have been along similar lines as for many years past, and the blessings from the Lord have been equally encouraging, for which gratitude is expressed.

It has been a pleasure to maintain regular contact with many brethren and friends throughout Australasia and overseas through the distribution of our bi-monthly “Peoples Paper.” Some additional subscribers have been added to the mailing list in U.S.A., as well as in Australia, and it is encouraging to hear that the contents of the “Paper” have been appreciated over the twelve months again. Sincere thanks is extended to all who have contributed to the columns of the “Peoples Paper”; the assistance in this way being much appreciated.

While the publishing costs have remained steady throughout the year, an increase in postage has had to be met, and while the subscriptions to “Peoples Paper” do not cover the cost of production, the increase to 75c for the annual subscription has been of help toward that end. Having all subscriptions expiring in December of each year

is also helpful. As mentioned in these reports from year to year, considerable numbers of the "Paper" are supplied free to all enquirers for some months, to encourage their interest. The witness for the truth in this way is considered fully compensating for the assistance received from the Tract Fund in the production of the "Peoples Paper." A number of each issue of the "Paper" is also gladly supplied to India for distribution among the brethren there who read English. Assistance by some of our Melbourne friends in the proof reading and other work connected with the "Paper" has been greatly appreciated again over the year past.

Distribution of free tracts has continued to various parts of this land, as well as to our brethren in India for general use amongst English speaking people there. The article appearing in the last issue of "Peoples Paper"—"Knowing the Unknown God"—will also be available in tract form shortly. Our brethren are invited to have a supply of tracts on hand for use, as opportunities for witnessing to the kingdom message while the present days of world-wide unrest are continually with us. The small "Do You Know?" slips are also useful to have on hand as a means of witnessing for the Lord's cause. The cost of all tracts and the deficiency in publishing the "Peoples Paper" are covered by the General Tract Fund.

The message of the kingdom has been proclaimed throughout the year again over the radio through 3GL Geelong, and the response to the broadcasts generally has been encouraging. The year ahead will be the 30th since this opportunity has been available through 3GL. We are thankful for this privilege of proclaiming the glad tidings of Christ's Kingdom which multitudes of people have heard with varying degrees of appreciation. The same broadcasts were also heard for some years in all other Australian states and it is encouraging to know that the Lord has said His Word shall not return to Him void, but will accomplish the mission on which it is sent. We are happy that some friends have accepted the Lord's truth after hearing His plan of salvation through Christ over the air, and have given their hearts to the Lord. We are also thankful that so many more will also appreciate the glad tidings in the "day of visitation" when what has been heard in the present life will, contribute towards their gaining lasting life in the Lord's Millennial Kingdom.

Recently, the opportunity to extend the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts to 2QN Deniliquin on Sunday evenings at 7.15 became available. As this radio station covers quite an area of southern N.S. Wales and northern Victoria, it has been thought well to give the witness in that area. *We* ask the Lord's blessing and overruling in this matter as He sees good. These broadcasts commenced on Sunday 7th May, and any of our friends living within hearing of 2QN are invited to co-operate in making the broadcasts known, as in the case of 3GL as well. Slips are available advertising 2QN as well as 3GL. 2QN broadcasts on 1520 Kc., and 3GL on 1350 Kc., as will be seen on page 8 of this issue of "Peoples Paper."

The General Tract Fund and Radio Fund balance sheets reveal the financial position of these funds for the work over the year past. In the Lord's providence we are grateful that the voluntary contributions of the friends who rejoice in the service of the Lord and His truth have provided the means for the work to continue. Included in the above mentioned funds and also an amount in a Reserve Fund are some legacies to assist in the work, as unto the Lord. On behalf of the Lord's work, sincere thanks are expressed to all brethren and friends who have sacrificed the good things of the present life to assist so well, as unto the Lord Himself. Request is also made to all our dear friends that they remember the efforts to serve the cause of truth before the Lord in prayer, that all may be done in faith and humility.

Reviewing world events over the year past, there has certainly been further deterioration in the law and order observed in most countries of the world, to say nothing about the wars and threatened wars looming, which of course means that fulfilment of Bible prophecy continues in accord with the expectations of the Lord's people for many years past. That being so, the privileges of service are still very great in these days, to encourage and stimulate the faith and hope of those already walking in the steps of the Master, and assist all others who are seeking after the Lord and His truth, while the opportunity to do so is still available.

The passing of the present "heavens and earth", requiring terrible experiences for all who dwell on the face of the earth while the pulling down process is in operation, will give way to the greatest blessings ever imagined for the benefit of all mankind. How favored are the Lord's people to be able to communicate this wonderful information to those who are fearful of events coming to pass in the earth, while at the same time dwelling in the secret place of the Most High as respects their own spiritual life, and proving faithful unto death in their high calling of God in Christ Jesus. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26:3), is a wonderful comfort and assurance to all the Lord's dear people in these days.

General Tract Fund

To Credit Balance 1/5/71

\$250.50

„Donations 2,416.15
 \$2,666.65

By Free Tracts and Deficiency “Peoples Paper” „ Advertisements, Convention Notes etc. . . „ General Expenses (Office, Telephone, etc.)

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\$2,666.65

Radio Fund

To Credit Balance 1/5/71 \$145.50

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Convention News

THE Easter Convention at Adelaide was a refreshing season of spiritual fellowship, by the Lord’s grace. On every hand one heard expressions of grateful thanks to our Heavenly Father for the blessings bestowed during the four days of happy fellowship. We were favoured in having a number of brethren from the Melbourne Class, and a brother from the Geelong Class. Also a sister attended from Nhill, Victoria, and a brother from a country district in South Australia.

We were privileged to have a Bible Study on each of the four Convention days. The portions of Scripture chosen for study were— Luke 21:25-33; Eph. 2:1-10; 1 Pet. 1:3-12, and John 15:1-10. Each of these Bible Studies proved to be helpful to us all, and we continue to pray that the Lord will assist us to put into our lives the directions of His Word that we may be “doers of the Word and not hearers only” (James 1:22).

The addresses by the brethren were much appreciated, the topics being—”Comfort ye My People”; “Truth”; “Selecting a Bride”; “Reward”; “Wait on the Lord”; “The Laodicean Church”; “Jesus the Life”; “The Narrow Way; Signs and Counter-Signs”; “Of Whom the World was not Worthy”; “Any Old Tune”; and “Even Your Perfection.”

It was a pleasure to receive many messages of Christian love and greetings from several Bible Classes and individual brethren throughout Australia, and also from brethren in U.S.A. These messages and prayers of the brethren are much appreciated. Christian love and greetings with the Scripture message 1 Pet. 1:3-5 are sent from the Convention to all brethren who remembered the gatherings, and to all brethren everywhere.

The Fellowship Meetings gave opportunity for praise and testimony to the Lord’s goodness and blessing. The “Hymns we Love and Why” session was also much appreciated. We thank the Lord for the provision of the lovely hymns available for our use, enabling us to praise Him with heart and voice.

As our Class in Adelaide is now small we were thankful to have the help of some of our interstate brethren who acted as chairmen for the Bible Studies. We appreciated also the loving service of the sisters who attended so helpfully to our needs by supplying refreshments. We are assured that all these services are done as unto the Lord, and we give all thanks and praise to Him from whom all blessings flow.

The Convention concluded with the Love Feast and singing of the hymns “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts

in Christian love”, and “God be with you till we meet again.” Then followed the closing prayer of praise and thanks to God for a very helpful Convention, and asking His grace to enable us to serve Him faithfully in the coming days, and requesting His blessing upon the Israel of God in every place.

Conventton Address of Welcome

IN extenaing a very warm welcome to all our guests, we are very pleased that you have been able to make the effort—indeed much effort is necessary for most people just in the preparation for the journeys and the journeys themselves, not to mention preparation for the activities of the Convention. We do rejoice in the opportunity of fellowship, yet recognise that there is nothing in us to attract others to travel hundreds of miles to share a few days with kindred thoughts. All the drawing, all the attraction must have come from above. We know the real rendezvous here is really an appointment with the Most High. We can be sure that God’s holy spirit is with us and to bless. Additionally our Lord Himself told the disciples that where two or three are gathered together in His name, there is He in the midst of them. Therefore we should not see here merely a convenient room, but rather the precincts of the Throne of Grace itself. We sincerely believe that God recognises the effort and intent of every heart seeking to serve Him and does in fact bless proportionately to what is given.

Let us think for a moment about the reasons for such a Convention—the purposes for which we are met. Foremost in our desires would be to honor God. Our private praises and expressions of love cannot be replaced, yet there is a sense in which union in prayer brings extra blessings. Perhaps this is related to our Lord’s prayer that they who believe on Him may all be one, as the Father was in Him and He was in the Father. The other reasons could be grouped under the expression for our edification. But we would see such a building up in our most holy faith to come from several directions.

In this would be fellowship with the brethren. In this way we learn something in true religious knowledge but more in love. We learn from the examples of love we see in lives spent in serving God and ministering in various ways to His people. We learn from the exercise of love to the brethren. Truly did a brother write—Friendship is a discipline in love, we should avoid any hurt; by love serve one another. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. We anticipate much benefit to our development from the addresses of our brethren in topics that cover a wide field of Christian thought.

Then again we have building up of a different kind from participation in the Bible Studies. Many here today will no doubt be recalling similar occasions in years past and note by contrast the smaller attendance. There are just a few aspects of this which might bear mention. The largeness of a gathering does tend to make it somewhat of an event. Further, a larger number of brethren does increase the number of right hands to be shaken in fellowship. It could increase the breadth, of our fellowship but not the total volume for wont of time. A progrcimrne has been prepared whereby we can partake of about five hours of nutrition each day. No matter how large a gathering of this kind might be, it would hardly be thought wise to add to such a cup of blessing. Time tor tour Bible Studies did seem to fall into place when our speakers’ topics were received. But this is not new. The programme in 1961 included four Bible Studies and indeed in a Convention or coming together such as this there is probably no better way of drawing us together than studying the Word as it were around a round table. Yet our moderate number increases the drawing effect, as indeed it increases the need for all to contribute to a maximum. At the same time it should encourage any who might feel timid to speak up.

One of the chief contributing factors to our being able to hold a four day Convention is the secular holidays adopted by society and releasing some of our number from duties of employment. These Easter holidays have long since lost any association with the Goddess of the East. Throughout Christendom this day (Good Friday) is used to commemorate the culmination of our Lord’s sacrifice. Although all or most of us have partaken of the Memorial in our Lord’s appointed way a few days ago we must be ever mindful of all that He did for us, and the very fact that many thousands recognise this day as the anniversary of the cross must make this a day when we particularly remember that event. It saddens us to think of the suffering of the sinless Man. Part of the burden He carried all the way to the cross was as it were our own individual sins (mine were a load in themselves). The realisation of this fact only grieves us the more. Yet we must remind ourselves that it was for the joy that was set before Him that He endured the cross, despising the shame. This would be the joy in which He delights, that of doing His Father’s will and of redeeming mankind—making possible their rescue from sin and death in accordance with the Divine Plan by which all the families of the earth will be blessed.

We would all agree that God’s plan could not be improved upon. This being so we should try to think more of the glory which Jesus brought to the Father and to Himself in being faithful and obedient even unto death, than the natural sadness for the pain and humiliation He bore. When we think of the events commemorated by

Christendom at this time of the year we must see the shadows of Good Friday replaced by rejoicing at our Lord's resurrection. This was an event so important that it is commemorated weekly on the first day of every week, yet the anniversary makes fitting even extra rejoicing in His glory and in our blessings flowing from His being raised. How we should rejoice in the resurrection of our Lord as proof of all our hopes in Him. Indeed our Lord mildly rebuked those on the road to Emmaus for their sadness,—”Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his, glory?”

Mentioning two or three points of difference with: beliefs generically accepted- by those calling themselves Christians, has some implication that we gathered here have some creed of our own. So far as creeds are concerned we have the inspired example of Paul when he came to the Corinthians. —”For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified.” (Cor. 2:2.) We ought not put our faith in doctrines. We should have the faith of God—faith in Christ. This is our Most Holy Faith. This is our Like Precious Faith.

However, going beyond any question of creeds, that is beyond any thought of binding any other to beliefs held by some or all of us, it must be acknowledged that in this gathering are many whose beliefs—the doctrines they see taught in the Scriptures —have a great deal in common. This is of course the reason we are able to be helped by each other. When the general pictures are harmonious we can learn much from another's difference in emphasis —as it were a slightly different hue on a portion of the landscape. Seeking then to approach our deliberations as Bible Students our best attitude is that of the Bereans,—”These were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” (Acts 17:11.) If then we so open our minds as well as our hearts what a wealth becomes available to us.

Memorial Observances

Melbourne

THE Memorial of our Lord's death was observed by the brethren in Melbourne once again with great thankfulness to our Heavenly Father and Lord Jesus Christ. Previous studies on the institution of the Memorial in Luke's Gospel and the very expressive words of the Apostle in Heb. 12:2-4 impressed again the great love of our Heavenly Father in providing our dear Saviour who also so willingly and lovingly sacrificed His life to provide the ransom for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world.

The singing of the appropriate hymns 42, 180, 437, 2, 414, from “Bible Students Hymnal”, with prayers of gratitude for the gift of our dear Redeemer and on behalf of our brethren everywhere likewise keeping the Memorial were offered throughout the service. The Scripture readings were from the Gospel of Mark 14:12-72; 15:1-39, and brought home to us again the great “contradiction of sinners” endured by our dear Lord, particularly in the closing hours of His earthly life. An address brought to mind the importance of the blood of the Passover lamb bringing deliverance to Israel from Egyptian bondage as being typical of Christ our Passover Lamb. The passing over of the firstborns of Israel in Egypt also pictured Christ's followers of this Gospel Age who are privileged to walk in His steps, that they may also partake of the joys of the Kingdom to assist in the deliverance of all mankind from sin and death, in due time. Praying the Lord's blessing upon the emblems these were partaken of with grateful hearts, expressive of our desire to follow faithfully in the steps of Christ, by His grace.

Geelong

Once again a small group of Bible Students in Geelong met together to remember our Lord's death as He requested us to do at the Memorial season. A previous Sunday study in Luke 22:14-20 proved very helpful as we noted again how our Lord, by His sacrificial death, fulfilled the Jewish Passover type. After partaking of it for the last time He instituted instead the Memorial of His own death, requesting that His followers observe this until the work of the Gospel Age be completed and His Kingdom has come.

Our simple service consisted of four hymns (219, 186, 437, 42 from “B. S. Hymnal”), prayer, Scripture readings—Exod. 12:1-17; 13:8-10; Matt. 26:17-30; 27:1, 2, 11-31; 1 Cor. 11:18-32, an address by one of the brethren, and concluded with the partaking of the emblems.

Adelaide

In preparation for the Memorial Service our small Adelaide Class spent three Sunday afternoons on the study of Isaiah 53rd chapter, and we found this helpful together with Class readings of the four Gospel records of our Lord's last hours. We are thankful to our Heavenly Father, and to our blessed Lord Jesus for the help that comes to us by means of the annual Memorial Service. It serves to refresh our minds again regarding the costly sacrifice—”the unspeakable Gift”—of God's only begotten Son, to be our Saviour from the curse of sin and death.

Also it gives us the opportunity to revive and renew our consecration vows to follow our Lord in the narrow way by the sacrifice of our humanity. The Apostle says in Phil. 1:29—"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."

We do thank our Heavenly Father for bringing us "into Christ", in this "acceptable day", covering us with His robe of righteousness, and imparting His spirit to our hearts, inclining us to follow in the steps of the Great Master. We do pray for grace to help us each one to be faithful, as day by day we seek to do His will, laying down our lives in humble, loving service, "doing good to all men as we have opportunity, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Gal. 6:9, 10.) How thankful we are that soon the number of God's elect will be completed, the Church will be glorified with her Lord, and the time for the blessing of all mankind will have arrived. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Perth

Our Lord's sacrificial death was remembered by our brethren at Passover time. Reverently we listened to the Scriptures relating to His life given as a sin-offering for the sins of the whole world.

The emblems so well represent His body and blood given for us. With heartfelt thanks we partook of the bread representing His flesh or humanity that He gave for the life of the world, and His blood shed for many so well depicted in the cup. By partaking of the sacred emblems we again pledged our continued sacrifice with Christ, to follow Him into the same death that we should be raised to be with Him in the resurrection. Praise the Lord for this yearly Memorial of our Lord, till He come in His glory, and we with Him. (Matt. 25:31.)

Sydney

Christ's death was once again remembered in the manner in which He requested by the Sydney Ecclesia, together with other brethren from other parts of N.S.W. Knowing that Christ is our Passover Lamb, we all prepared ourselves for His Memorial in which we have the honor to partake up to the present and until the Kingdom comes.

An address was given which reminded us of the sufferings of Jesus, and that His death nullified Adam's sin. Unlike the blood of bullocks which cleansed sin typically, His blood was shed once, and the benefit lasts forever. We were all cautioned to strive and be a copy of our dear Saviour, and always look up to Him; by so doing our Heavenly Father will be sanctified. At this time of history it was a real blessing to meet with those who share the same faith, and the same hope of glory, and together eat of the bread of life and drink of the cup, with the surety that we will drink it anew in the kingdom, if faithful unto death.

From the country of N.S. Wales, where two Sisters kept the Memorial the following is to hand—Great was my joy on the Memorial evening when Sister drove up bringing the emblems with her. We retired to my lounge room, and with suitable recorded music we commenced the solemn service, offering simple prayers for our Lord's blessing on us and all fellow pilgrims in the narrow way, near and far. Sister read an account of the original from Matthew 26 and on. We then read the very appropriate article from the February-March "Peoples Paper", "The Memorial Supper", and asking God's blessing on the wafer and the cup respectively, we thoughtfully partook of these emblems.

Queensland

With humbleness of heart three of us listened to a very fine talk on a tape on the Memorial, and the Passover in Egypt was shown as a type of the Church gaining life now through faith in the merit of Christ and also how the world will benefit in due time. With thankfulness we partook of the emblems as the Master asked. Three hymns were part of a very fine service. May our hearts and minds keep trusting in our Passover Lamb as time goes on.

Little Foxes and Little Lambs, a humorous, yet thought-provoking, illustrated book of clever poetry. The first poems call attention to the "little foxes" in people's lives—common faults and failures such as lying, evil-speaking, pride, laziness, anger. Next, attention is given to the "little lambs", such as truth, humility, patience, courtesy. Children will enjoy coloring the pictures that go with the poems. Paperback, 63 pages, price 70c post paid.

Is Satan Bound?

Question: "No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house."— Mark 3:27. From this statement of Scripture, do you believe that Satan has, as yet, been bound?

Answer: NO, we do not believe that Satan is bound. The truth of the kingdom and its proclamation is gradually

destroying Satan's systems of error, and will continue to do so, but this does not result in the personal binding of Satan. If it did, how then could he be loosed from the binding influence of the truth at the end of the one thousand years; for then the truth will be completely dominant, covering the earth as the "waters cover the sea."—Isa. 11:9.

Another reason for not believing that Satan is bound, is that the church has not yet finished her earthly course. The Apostle Peter admonishes the church, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith." (1 Pet. 5:8, 9.) This is one of the many Scriptures reminding us to "resist the devil" that he might flee from us. (James 4:7.) We believe that these texts apply to all the church class, and that each member must be subjected to the test of resisting Satan, which could not be done if Satan were now bound.

There is nothing in the text of our question to imply that Satan is bound; although all about us, in the experiences of the church and the world alike, there is plenty of evidence that he is active as a "roaring lion" seeking whom he may devour. Satan is spoken of as the "god of this world." (2 Cor. 4:4; John 14:30.) But we know that he will not exercise this power always. The time is near when his house will be spoiled, and the sin, sickness, and death will give way to the righteousness and blessings of eternal life which will mark the reign of earth's new King, "The Prince of Peace." —Isa. 9:6.

It would appear from a study of the Book of Revelation, that the binding of Satan will not be accomplished piece-meal, but that he will be bound by a definite exercise of divine power—represented by a chain which binds him—and then cast into the bottomless pit, in the dawn of the Millennial Age, at a time immediately following the completion of the spiritual "seed", Jesus and His faithful followers.—Rev. 20:1-3; Gal. 3:16, 29. (From "The Dawn")

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

3GL Geelong, 1350 Kc. Sundays 10 a.m. 2QN Deniliquin 1520 Kc. Sundays 7.15 p.m.



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Knowing the Unknown God

“For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, to the unknown God. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.” (Acts 17:23.)

THE very helpful passage from the Apostle Paul in Acts 17, will be considered from two main standpoints. Firstly, from the apostle’s words as he visited Athens, and along with his instructions and good advice, from the standpoint of our imperfect knowledge of God, and how we may know Him more intimately, more completely, as devoted children of our loving Heavenly Father.

From verse 16 we read—“Now while Paul waited for them (his two companions) at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry”,—margin, “full of idols.” We can well understand the feelings of Paul in his zealous service for the Lord when he found this city given over to the worship of idols. “His spirit was stirred in him,” which means he was exasperated.

Verse 17—“Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.” Apparently Paul took every possible opportunity, with zeal and activity, to show that the inhabitants of Athens were in a very sad state indeed with their idol worship. With the result, as verse 18 states—“Certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him.” These philosophers held that the world came by chance; that there is no providence, no resurrection, and no immortality, and that pleasure was the chief aim in life. No wonder, then, that they declared of Paul—“What will this babbling say?” Others thought he seemed to be “a setter forth of strange gods; because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.” This was Paul’s wonderful message since he was apprehended by the risen Christ on the way to Damascus.

Verse 19—“And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?” They wanted to know about this new doctrine, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection. Verse 20—“For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears; we would know therefore what these things mean.” A note from the dictionary regarding this place or court in which the celebrated and supreme judges of Athens assembled reads—“It was on an eminence, formerly almost in the middle of the city, but nothing remains by which we can determine its form or construction . . . It is said, that before any person could be elected a judge of the Areopagus, he must have discharged the office of chief magistrate of the city; but this was not attended to in later ages. However, it probably gives a character to Dionysius, who was converted by Paul . . . It was, therefore, with the greatest propriety, that Paul was questioned before this tribunal. Having preached at Athens against the plurality of gods, and declared that he came to reveal to the Athenians **that God** whom they adored without knowing Him, the Apostle was carried before the Areopagites, as the introducer of new deities, where he spoke with so much wisdom, that he converted Dionysius, one of the judges, and was dismissed, without any interference on their part.” Thus we see that the apostle was brought before the highest authorities of the day in that city, and verse 21 throws additional light on the disposition of those Athenians and strangers before whom Paul had been brought, “For all the Athenians and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.” That sounds rather descriptive of some of our modern theologians, seeking after something new. However, we see that the apostle had rather a difficult audience, for those who were looking for some new thing at that time, and others down to our own day, are usually not those who can appreciate and hold to the truth. Such are generally carried away sooner or later by some new claims of additional or advanced light.

From verse 22 we have Paul's discourse to this assembly of judges, the learned men of Athens of that day,—
"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill." The dictionary reference to Mars' Hill says—"Our translators have entirely spoiled the narrative of the historian, by rendering, 'they took Paul, and brought him unto Areopagus . . . then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill.' As Mars' Hill is Areopagus translated, and as both signify the same place, the same name ought to have been preserved in both verses." Returning to Paul's words in verse 22, he said—"Ye men of Athens, I perceive that ye are altogether too superstitious." The meaning of the Greek word translated "too superstitious" is "more religious than others", so our English word "superstitious" is not a good translation in this connection. The apostle continued, verse 23—"For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, **to the unknown God.**" Paul was not slow to use this inscription on the altar—"to the unknown God"—as a wonderful sling for the truth—"Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

It is worthy of note that the apostle completely ignored the idols erected to the many heathen gods: Paul saw no reason to draw attention to the monuments to heathen deities, and that is a good example for us. The one true God and His truth is sufficient for all followers of the Master. We should not waste time investigating any teaching not based on the ransom sacrifice of Christ.

So Paul proceeded, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands." What a sweeping statement, and how it reminds us of the opening verse of John's Gospel, where we read of the time the Logos was with the Almighty God in the beginning of creation. "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with the God, and the Logos was a God . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." There at Athens was darkness in the extreme, but Paul was shedding some light about the Unknown God. We may be sure that as the apostle preached about "God that made the world and all things therein", he would have made known that Jesus, who had been crucified and was raised from the dead, had previously, as the great Logos in His pre-human existence, been God's honored Agent in the creation of all things. The same apostle declared along this line in Col. 1:15_17—"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. For by him were all things created . . . all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." That is a very enlightening statement. As the Logos, Christ was the firstborn of every creature. In Revelation we read that He was the only direct creation of Jehovah. (Rev. 3:14.) So the few words in verse 18 of our chapter,—"he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection", mean so much as we examine this discourse of Paul's to the judges of Athens.

When thinking of Jesus and His resurrection to the Father's right hand, how the words of 1 Cor. 8:5, 6 impress the truth respecting our Heavenly Father and our risen Lord Jesus. The apostle says—"For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many, and lords many", as was the case with the many idols at Athens, "but to us (Christians) there is but one God, the Father . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ." How clearly Paul presents the great Eternal Jehovah and the Lord Jesus as the One sent of God, the Saviour of humanity. If there was any truth in the doctrine of the Trinity in the Bible, that would have been the very place for the apostle to have stated it. But the reference to one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, beautifully expresses the relationship between our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Continuing from verse 24, Paul says—"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands." How understandable! How small are the minds of humans when they build elaborate temples, cathedrals or churches and feel that God especially dwells with them in such places because of their grandeur. The very grandeur of any place does not entice the Almighty to dwell there. "God dwells not in temples made with hands",—obviously He dwells in the hearts of His people, wherever they are. We remember the teachings of our Lord were mostly by the wayside, on the hills, by the Sea of Galilee. Many of His lovely messages were given in the surroundings of nature; there were no temples erected for the Lord's wonderful ministry.

The words of Jesus in Matt. 11:25-26 help us to see with whom God dwells. This is really our Lord's prayer to the Father—"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." God hides His truth from those who feel sufficient in themselves, the wise and prudent, but reveals it to the lowly, humble disciples in whose hearts He dwells by His spirit. See also John 4:20-24.

Verse 25—"Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all

life, and breath, and all things.” The very existence of life was brought into being and is sustained with all things necessary by this mighty Unknown God whom Paul preached. This is well described in James 1:17—”Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variable-ness, neither shadow of turning”. How helpful it is to remember this, to know that all the precious things we receive day by day come down from the Almighty God; we should be thankful receivers from the hand of God.

From verse 26 the apostle continues—”And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.” What a lesson is here presented for all to learn. Possibly the Athenians thought they were far superior to the Apostle Paul. “What will this babbler say” was their reflection of Paul. This verse 26 does not imply that all nations of men are destined to be taken to heaven—that all are equal in this respect. No, but it means just what it says. All have an equal right to earth’s bounties, and until this truth is learned and accepted by mankind there can be no true peace and happiness. Christ’s kingdom alone can bring about this happy condition.

Paul continues in verse 26—”God hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.” God has set the times, ages and dispensations before appointed in His plan for the benefit of His human creation. Paul was speaking at the beginning of the Gospel Age, during which time the gospel message is preached for the taking out of a people for God’s name, not for the conversion of mankind. Christ, with His perfect message and perfect preaching, selected comparatively few—a handful. “Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom,” He said. In the words—”God hath set the bounds of their habitation”, we are further enlightened. Man is of the earth, earthy. There is no promise that the human family will live anywhere else, the Church class being the exception, as they have part in the First resurrection, receiving the holy spirit to develop a new life in them for the heavenly kingdom.

In verse 27 God also determined 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.” How favoured are those who have a nature that desires to seek after the Lord in sincerity, if haply they might feel after Him, yearn after Him, and find Him! This indicates that humility of heart is required. So our Lord’s words in Matt. 7:7-11 agree,—”Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you ... If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” This may seem very simple and easy, but verses 13 and 14 follow—”Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait (difficult) is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” What does our Lord mean here? He is telling us in verse 13 of the great opportunity we now have, for generation after generation have gone down the broad road to destruction—death, through Adam’s disobedience. None could escape this death condition except by the Lord’s grace they are able to enter the narrow way to life described in verse 14. What kind of life is the Lord talking about here? He is speaking about the call for the heavenly kingdom, for those who would walk in the steps of their Master.

“Narrow is the way and few there be that find it.” Why? Doesn’t God want everybody that He can get to gain this heavenly life? Apparently not. He has not invited everyone. The message of truth goes out over the lengths and breadths of the wide world, and what does it do? It finds one here and there, so to speak, and they are brought to the Lord to be His disciples indeed. Jesus preached to multitudes. The Perfect Preacher, with a perfect message, and how few responded! But “to as many as received him gave he power to become the sons of God.” Whoever gave heed to the message and saw He was the Messiah sent of God, that He was their personal Saviour when they accepted Him and responded to His invitation, “Take up thy cross and follow me”, to lay down their lives as He was doing, then they became His disciples indeed. “Narrow is the way that leads to life (spiritual life), and few there be that find it.” The Gospel Age is the age for the narrow way to heavenly spiritual life.

What about the multitudes of humanity who have gone down the broad road to destruction before our Lord’s first advent and since? Though our Heavenly Father is the “Unknown God” to all these, when they are brought again from “the land of the enemy”, death, in the wonderful resurrection day they also will learn to know Him, as they benefit from the blessings of Christ’s kingdom. Of this time Isaiah declares—”When the Lord’s judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” (Isa. 26:9.)

With reference to entering the “narrow way” during this Gospel Age, the words of Jesus in John 6:37 are revealing and encouraging—”All that the Father **giveth me** shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” How does the Father give these to Jesus? Verse 44 in this same chapter of John 6 is revealing—”No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” How does the Father draw disciples to Jesus? He sees the longing, the yearning, the desire in some hearts for salvation from the present dying existence, so these are prompted to know and learn about Jesus and acknowledge Him as their Saviour indeed. Again

in John 17:6, we read part of our Lord's lovely prayer to His Father,—“I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.” God gave these worthy ones to Christ; they were true-hearted disciples, and they proved their loyalty and obedience to Him by laying down their lives in His service.

From verse 28 we read—“For in him (God) we live, and move, and have our being; . . . we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.” Before this time of Paul's preaching, at the beginning of the Gospel Age, God “winked” at the ignorance and worshipping of idols, such as they had at Athens. But from this time onward, Paul says, “God commands all men every where to repent”, adding, verse 31—“Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” Is this “day” still the Gospel Age? No, it is the wonderful Millennial Age. From the time of Paul's preaching, throughout the Gospel Age and Millennial Age, all mankind are required to repent, to gain lasting life. This covers 2,000 years of the Gospel Age, for the selection of the Church, or Bride of Christ, and 1,000 years of the Millennial Age for the enlightenment and blessing of all the obedient of mankind in Christ's earthly kingdom.

How favored and happy we are if we are able to repent now, and be drawn of God to Jesus, accepting Him as our Saviour and presenting our lives in consecration to the Father through the merit of Christ. In Gal. 4:9 the apostle says—“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements.” It is lovely to **know God**, and to be **known of God**, to be treated as His children, thus receiving the begetting of the holy spirit, as described in 2 Cor. 1:21-22. What a happy position it is to receive the earnest (foretaste) of the spirit!

In Rom. 8:14 we read—“For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” God does not use any compulsion. These are **led**, drawn, constrained by God's spirit which bears witness with our spirit that we are His children, His sons. Thus, what a privilege it is to know God, the Unknown God to the Athenians. See also Rom. 5:8-10,—“. . . 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”,—Christ's life within us, “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

To read the lovely prayer of Jesus to the Father in John 17 gives us a thrill. In verse 3 our Lord said—“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” In other words, life eternal results from really knowing God as our Father. It is the outcome of our lives fully committed to Him, so that we have intimate communion with Him along the pilgrim way. Of these Jesus said in John 14:23—“If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” This surely is a lovely thought, and such a relationship reveals a true knowledge of God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. When we are able to grasp the depth of meaning in this lovely 17th chapter of John we come more and more to know God as we really wish to know Him, and to be at one with Him and our Lord Jesus Christ, just as our Lord expressed in His prayer—“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe (in due time) that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.” (John 17:21-22.)

“Walk while ye have the light.” John 7:35.

Just as fast as we will let it, the day will dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts. By living out all the goodness we know, in the daily beauty of holiness, we shall behold life's grand proportions. By walking with Christ you shall wear His likeness. Nay,—for He is a living Christ,—you shall have Him formed within you, not only the hope, but the present possession of glory. And because you know Him spiritually, in the purity and love of His life and cross, men will take knowledge of you, that you have been with Him, and are with Him now, and shall be His people forever.

F. D. Huntington.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM *Australia*, 3101.

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

“The Lord is Risen Indeed”

The story of our Lord's resurrection is one of exquisite pathos and beauty. The crucifixion had smitten the Shepherd and scattered the sheep. In grief and silence the faithful few had removed the body from the cross and laid it in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

It was Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joses and Salome who brought the spices to anoint the body. In the dim dawn of the day following the Sabbath they stole to the tomb. The thought of the resurrection did not occur to them. They thought only that the grave had been rifled. One of them, Mary Magdalene, fled away, blind to everything but her own loss, saying, “They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.” The angels in the tomb gave to the other two the glad truth, “He is not here, He is risen, as He said.” Before this truth was brought home to them they were in despair, their hopes were buried. They had entertained high hopes, but now since Jesus had died, their hopes were withered. How different when the fact of the resurrection was made known—what joy replaced their despondency! It became true to them, “We are begotten to a lively hope by His resurrection.” Because He lives, we have ground for hoping that we shall live also. In His resurrection lies our assurance.

It is an interesting study to trace the harmony on this subject between the various writers of the Bible. Matthew, Mark and Luke, Peter, John and Paul, all make mention of His resurrection. Each account is different, depending on the point of view of the writer, but they are unanimous in affirming the fact that Jesus died and rose from the dead. Remarkably, it is not difficult to combine these various accounts and arrange them into one connected and complete picture. By so doing, we perceive our Lord's first work was of consoling and encouraging.

He first appeared to the women, turning their sorrow to joy. This was early in the morning, the same day He arose. Then He appeared, the same day in the afternoon, to the two disciples going to Emmaus. As a stranger He talked with them, and finally revealed Himself to them, by the familiar way in which He broke bread with them. Unable to contain themselves, they hastened back to Jerusalem to tell the good news. But the Lord was travelling faster than they knew. He had appeared to another. What passed between our Lord and the Apostle Peter we do not know; but we know something of His mercy and grace, and may well understand the peace and comfort which possessed Peter after that meeting. At all events, Peter had not been slow to tell the good news, for when the two came and told their story, the others said, “The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon.” Later on while recounting their own experiences, they remembered how Jesus had been known by His habit of breaking bread, and He appeared in their midst, saying, “Peace be unto you.” So on the very day of His resurrection, He appeared first to the women, next to Peter, then to the two disciples, and lastly to the ten, each time bringing a sense of comfort, hope and joy. What a day, to be remembered for all time!

A week later He appeared to the disciples again, this time for the special benefit of Thomas, who had been absent on the previous occasion. Later on He appeared to more than 500 brethren. The next appearing was to James. This is mentioned by Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians. Another occasion is recounted by John in the last chapter of his Gospel. Several of the disciples had gone fishing. They toiled all night and caught nothing. Jesus revealed Himself by telling them where to cast their net. Finally, He took His last leave of them, leading them out as far as Bethany.

They were witnesses not only of all the wonderful things He had done; they were witnesses not only of the fact that He was crucified and buried, but witnesses especially of His resurrection. We are thankful that these records have been preserved for the Church. It is strengthening indeed to faith to trace in the Acts of the Apostles how they who were witnesses of His resurrection proceeded to carry out this commission, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.”

But first they were to receive power. “Tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.” So they waited in prayer and supplication until they received the promise, and then began the work of witnessing. One cannot but be impressed by the prominence given in the Scriptures to the resurrection of Jesus.

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His Loving Care

(Convention Address)

“Host thou not known? host thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint”. Isaiah 40: 28-31.

HOW re-assuring are the many texts of Scripture which affirm the fact that our loving Heavenly Father, the Creator of heaven and earth, is abundantly able to care for His people. He is all powerful, and never weary. He watches over us, and His ear is ever open to our cries for help in time of need — He will not withhold any good thing from those who love Him sincerely and who have devoted themselves wholly to His service.

Man was created in the image of God, but we do not understand this to refer to a bodily image. However, to grasp to some extent the unlimited capabilities of the Creator, the Scriptures refer to His various senses of sight, hearing, smelling etc. By the use of language we are able to understand that our loving Heavenly Father enters into our feelings, and is sympathetic to all our needs, and will, through His unlimited agencies, care for us.

The Psalmist enquires, “He that planteth the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?” Psalm 94:9. And He does **see** and **hear** His people. Psalm 34:15 tells us, “The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry”, and again, “The righteous cry and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all”, Psalm 34:19. In the 7th verse of this Psalm it is written that “the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them.” This indicates the means the Lord uses in the care of His people. Jesus spoke of these angels and said that “they do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven”, Matt. 18:10. Thus they have an accurate knowledge of the Heavenly Father’s will for each of His people, and can shape the divine providences in their lives in exactly the right manner for the accomplishment of His will.

The Lord in His wisdom may see that certain hardships, mental, physical or both are among the experiences we need in order that we might be more fully developed as new creatures in Christ Jesus. But while He may not deliver us from our trials, we are assured that He will provide strength to bear them. Psalm 101:6 reads—”Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.” Here again we are reminded that it is only those who faithfully love and serve the Lord to the best of their ability, who are the objects of His special watch care — these, He declares “may dwell with me.” How precious is the thought that if we are endeavouring with all our might to the best of our ability to know and do the Lord’s will, it means we are to dwell with Him in the secret of His presence, and that after all is where we delight to be—”in the secret place of the Most High” as the Psalmist says, in Psalm 91:1.

God’s love for His people and His watchcare over them can be seen in a better way when we understand that He knows the end of a thing before its beginning. Psalm 139:16 tells us “Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect, and in thy book all my members are written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.” Here David declares that he was “fearfully and wonderfully made”, and it is possible that here David represents Jesus, the Head of the church, and that the “members” known in advance, even before they were “fashioned” are the members of Christ’s body. Whether this refers to the natural body, or to Christ and His body members, the lesson is the same, in that it reveals the infinite wisdom of the Creator in being able to know in advance the outcome of the mighty works which He sets out to accomplish. Our finite minds could not determine what another would do tomorrow unless we controlled his actions, but God is able to know what we will do without controlling our actions. This is because His “eye” is able to discern that which goes beyond our comprehension! We are able to look back and to note the Lord’s overruling experiences in our lives, and know that His providences are surely working them out for our own good, for the Lord knows all about us since we have dedicated ourselves to the doing of His will. To realise this is to strengthen our faith, for we should find it easy to see that He who led and blessed us in the past, will continue to do so, and that the darkness which may surround us today will in His due time be dispelled, and once again the sweet smile of His presence will be revealed.

Proverbs 15:3 reads — “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.” This is a great comfort to us, for it assures us that no matter where we are, or what the circumstances might be, the Lord sees both the “good and the evil”, that is, He knows the circumstances which are favorable to us as new creatures, and sees the evil influences which are arrayed against us. This means that the Lord is always aware of the difficulties which confront us, and of any effort which might be made by the Adversary to hinder our progress in the

narrow way and will use His power to prevent any evil befalling us.

How wonderful this is! In those moments when our faith might not be as strong as it should be, we may temporarily wonder if the Lord really knows about the complexities of our trials and is actually caring for us in every situation. But we have the assurance of His Word that He sees in every place, understands every situation and is abundantly able to care for us regardless of what the circumstances may be, and will continue to do so if we continue faithfully to walk in the narrow way and trust Him fully. David, the man after God's own heart, was assured that the Lord was with him in every experience of life. He wrote:—"O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me, thou knowest my downsitting and uprising, thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down and art acquainted with all my ways", Psalm 139:1-3.

No matter where we may be, even if we fear that our mistakes may have taken us away from the Lord and His care, we can still be assured that He leads us and sustains us, that He is never confused by the complex situation which may baffle and perplex us. And when we remember that God's design for us is that we might attain "glory and honor and immortality", and a place of joint-heirship with Christ in His kingdom, we will realise that the trials of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glories of the future, and since the Lord is using them to test our fidelity to Him, and to work out in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness, we will rejoice in His love and wisdom which permits them, and continue to believe that He is caring for us in every circumstance of life. Romans 2:7.

But our loving Heavenly Father watches over our every interest and makes every necessary provision to keep us from the evil one and his subtleties. He provides meat in due season in His Word. He provides the fellowship and comfort of His people. He provides just such experiences as will best serve to accomplish His divine purpose. He can turn unfavorable circumstances into assets for the new creature if we but put our trust in Him, and continue to allow Him to work in us to will and to do His good pleasure.

The fact that we feel weak and inadequate for the tasks before us, gives our Heavenly Father the opportunity to use His mighty power on our behalf. As our text declares "He giveth power to the faint and to them that have no might He increaseth strength". There are too many opposing forces arrayed against the children of God for them to suppose they can win in the struggle except as they "wait upon the Lord", looking to Him at all times for grace to help.

Paul, the Apostle, admonishes us to "Consider Jesus who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." We know that Jesus never displeased His Father, yet He did suffer. He died as a malefactor on Calvary's cross for our sakes, and not ours only. The Father did not deliver Him from these experiences, but did give Him strength to bear them. And we are to think of Him, and remember His prayer in which He affirmed that the Father loves us even as He loved Him—John 17:23-26. Let us then rejoice in the richness of the Father's love, and not faint when His love permits trials which are difficult for the flesh to bear, for He knows just what is best for us. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Jesus asked of Peter when he became fearful of the storm which was raging about him. How quickly the storm ceased when Jesus put His arm around him and drew him to safety, Matt. 14:22-33. So with us as with Peter, as the storms of life rage about us, they cannot harm us when Jesus is near, but should only increase our faith, as we see the way the Lord uses His great power to bring us safely through these trials now. Let us then trust in Him fully in the knowledge that He knows all about us and loves and cares for us always.

How strong and sweet my Father's care
The words like music in the air,
Come answering to my whispered prayer—
He cares for thee.

The thought great wonder with it brings—
My cares are all such little things;
But to this truth my glad faith clings
He cares for me.

Yea, keep me ever in Thy love,
Dear Father, watching from above,

And let me still Thy mercy prove,
And care for me.

Cast me not off because of sin,
But make me pure and true within,
And teach me how Thy smile to win,
Who cares for me.

O—Still in summer's golden glow,
Or wintry storms of wind and snow,
Love me, my Father; let me know
Thy care for me.

And I will learn to cast the care
Which like a heavy load I bear,
Down *at* Thy feet in lowly prayer
And trust in Thee.

For nought can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me or mine,
Since Thou with tenderness
Divine Dost care for me.

The Ransom and Its Application to Mankind

THE word "Ransom" is used in respect of the purchase-price of humanity and also in connection with the deliverance of mankind after having been purchased by that price. As an illustration of the two uses of the word, we give two texts of Scripture:—(1) Who gave Himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. 2:6) (2) "I will Ransom them from the power of the grave." (Hos. 13:14.) In these texts we see the two uses of the word "Ransom." The word Ransom in the Scripture is often used in a similar manner to the word "redeem." The two words, indeed, have the thought of purchase connected with them, To redeem is to buy back; to ransom, as used in 1 Tim. 2:6, is to buy back, by giving a price to correspond.

The Bible sometimes speaks of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ as the giving of the price. The Scripture says that our Lord Jesus gave Himself to be a Ransom-price. (Matt. 20:28, Mark 10:45.) He gave Himself at Jordan; He completed the giving of Himself at Calvary. In His death He laid down the ransom-price, the price necessary for redeeming Adam and all of his race from the sentence of death.

But there is a difference to be observed between the laying down of the Ransom-price and the application of that Ransom-price. The price was in our Lord Jesus Himself, but He must lay it down sacrificially before the benefits of it could be given to others. The Scriptures show us that after He had laid down that price, God empowered Him to make use of it, permitting Him to enter the Most Holy, even heaven itself, to do so. He makes use of that price, as outlined in the Scriptures, in a two-fold offering to God:

First, He appropriated of that life which He had laid down—the merits of that Ransom price—to those who would constitute His Body, the Church. He Himself had no sins to cleanse, but those who, according to God's arrangement, were to be the members of His Body, had sins; and for these He applies His blood as a redemption price or merit on their behalf, securing for them, not only release from condemnation, but also the opportunity of becoming sharers with Him in the Ransom work. He has not applied the merit of that sacrifice as yet to Adam or his children, but merely to those who, in the type, were represented by the under-priests, and to the Levities, the brethren and servants of the priestly family.

Secondly, Christ will make use of His sacrifice on behalf of all the people. As was shown in the type, the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy-seat at the close of the Day of Atonement, which was the second sprinkling, was for all the people. The anti-type of this act will constitute a full offset to the Adamic condemnation. Another

Scripture, however, shows us that while all the people are to come under the direct control of the great Messiah, they are not to be turned over perfect, but as they are found—in a dying condition, the wrath of God, because of imperfection, still being upon them, Then, under the New Covenant, of which our Lord is made the responsible Mediator, the Great Messiah will take charge of “all the people”, even while they are still subject to the weaknesses resulting from the sentence of death. Under this New Covenant, as many of them as will become obedient to the laws of Messiah’s Kingdom, will come into relationship to the Life-Giver, in harmony with the text, which says, “He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son shall not see life.” (1 John 5:12; John 3:36.) All of Adam’s posterity will have an opportunity to accept Jesus, either as His brethren at the present time, or as His children in the next Age.

Coming back, then, to the words Ransom and Ransomed: They are used in respect of our Lord, to indicate, not that He completed the Ransom work when He died, but that He there provided the Ransom-price. During His Mediatorial reign the whole work of Christ will be that of delivering those for whom He gave the Ransom-price. In this last use of the word, it would be right to say that the Church shares with Christ in this Ransom work of delivering the world. This is the thought everywhere set before us in the Scriptures. But it would be wrong to say that the Church participates in the Ransom-price. The Ransom-price was the perfect Man, Jesus, who gave Himself to be a Ransom-price for all. In that sacrifice there is a sufficiency of merit for all of Adam’s posterity. The Church, therefore, has no participation in the work of giving the Ransom-price, though it is to participate in the work of Ransoming or recovering those for whom the Ransom-price is to be applied.

The sentence of death, passed upon father Adam, was transmitted in a natural way to all of his children. At the end of this Gospel Age, the Great High Priest will have finished His atoning work. Then, by applying the Ransom-price on behalf of the world, He will become invested with all the rights and titles to humanity and to the earth. The full price having been paid over in behalf of mankind and their home, and having been accepted by the Almighty, the “world and the fulness thereof” will all be turned over to Christ, who will then be King of kings and Lord of lords. Justice will then have no further claim upon mankind, all of whom will have been turned over to Christ. But He will not recognise those who are in a rebellious attitude toward God’s arrangements.

Such, however, will be held in restraint and will still be under Divine Justice, for the Great Mediator will be a representative of Divine Justice, as well as of Divine Mercy. During His reign it will be His duty and privilege to teach mankind a great lesson. In one of the prophecies we read, “Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” (Isa. 2:3, Micah 4:2.) And it shall come to pass that the nation that will not go up to Jerusalem will have no blessing.— Zech. 14:17-19.

In other words, while the Millennial Kingdom will be fully established, its blessings will be operative only toward those who will seek to keep the Divine Law. But as the nations perceive that there is no blessing apart from the keeping of the Divine Law, they will doubtless be influenced to do so. In due time, the light of the knowledge of the Lord will fill the whole earth, and ignorance and superstition will be supplanted by Divine enlightenment. The Scriptures assure us that this New Covenant will be made with Israel, and with all mankind, who will become Israelites; for God will also give the heathen to Messiah, who will be Ruler of all the earth, not merely of those who accept His Government. “Ask of Me and I will give thee the heathen for an inheritance.” He will rule with the iron rod, to the intent that all mankind may learn the Divine Law and have the Divine blessing.—Psalm 2:6-12.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Matt. 5:3.

Contemplating the work of redemption, we become more and more impressed with the sense of our natural darkness, and helplessness, and misery; more and more conscious that we are utterly unworthy of all the amazing condescension and love which have been manifested towards us. Considerations like these, abating our pride, and reducing our opinion of ourselves, naturally moderate our pretensions towards others. We less sensibly feel a slight, are less prone to be dissatisfied, more soft and meek, and courteous, and placable, and condescending.

William Wilberforce.



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The Memorial Supper

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

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

Probably one reason why He specially desired to eat this Passover with them was that He there designed breaking the truth of its significance to them, to the extent that they could receive it; for, "As they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is My body." "This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me." "And He took the cup and gave thanks, and said, Drink ye all of it; This cup is the new testament in My blood which is shed for you." We cannot doubt that the design of the Master was to call their minds from the typical lamb to Himself, the Antitype, and to show them that it would be no longer proper to observe a feature of the Law which He was about to fulfil. And the bread and wine were to be to them, there-after, elements which, as a remembrancer of Him, would take the place of the typical lamb. Thus considered there is force in the words, "This do in remembrance of Me"—no longer kill the literal lamb in remembrance of a typical deliverance, but instead, use the bread and wine, representative of My flesh and life, the basis of the real deliverance, the real passing over. Hence, let as many as receive Me and My words henceforth— "Do this in remembrance of Me."

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

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

The Lord's disciples must, by faith, partake of, "appropriate", both the "bread" and the "cup", or they cannot be one with Him. More than this: the Apostle shows that there is another subsequent view of this Memorial. We who thus eat and drink—who thus partake of our Saviour's merits—are reckoned in with Him as His "members", as His "Body", being broken and our lives sacrificed in His service, under His direction are counted as a part of His sacrifice. The Apostle's words are: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (common union)

of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the common union of the Body of Christ? For we, being many are one loaf, and one Body, because we are all partakers of that one loaf (Christ).”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Let us also at this time take warning as well as encouragement, not only from our dear Lord's life of sacrifice, but also from the lives of the Apostles who were with Him for the greater part of His earthly sojourn. We might particularly think of three; in the first place how sad is the case of Judas; we all know the terrible result of the secret, selfish desire of the natural heart which allowed Satan to fully enter, as exhibited finally in the betrayal of his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and that with a kiss. We may be sure that the details of Judas' act in this

way, being recorded by the four Evangelists, are so arranged as a lasting lesson for all the Lord's people. Oh, how we each need to keep our hearts with great diligence, to preserve our first love for the Lord, for if our hearts are right and we make mistakes, which we are all prone to do, we shall soon be restored to the Lord's favour and find grace and strength to be on guard against any weaknesses in the future. Such was the case with Peter; his heart was right, and after the acknowledgment of his denial of his Master and receiving necessary admonitions, we find that he was recovered and re-established in the Lord's favour and confidence. The recording of Peter's denials and subsequent forgiveness by the Lord has undoubtedly been a very great help to many Christians who have been overtaken in a fault, and then sought the Lord's forgiveness with the result that, as with Peter, they have realised much strengthening of character, with greater determination to serve the Lord faithfully in all the days ahead.

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

“Saviour, Thy dying love Thou gayest me,
Nor would I aught withhold
Dear Lord from Thee.

In love my soul would bow,
My heart fulfil its vow,
Myself an off'ring now
I bring to Thee.

Lord, I would follow
Thee In all the way
Thy weary feet have trod; Yes, if I may.”

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

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

The hour is late—the end is drawing nigh
As we gather here,
Brethren beloved, to share this holy feast,
We know the time is near
When all His loved ones shall be gathered home,
Our tears all wiped away,
And all the shadows that oppress us here
Shall yield to perfect day.
Then with rejoicing let us now partake;

Our journey's almost o'er;
The light is breaking o'er the heav'nly hills!
Our King is at the door.

Convention News

THE Annual Christmas Convention sponsored by the Melbourne Class once again proved a very refreshing season of spiritual fellowship. Our grateful thanks ascend to the Lord, the Giver of every good thing, for His blessings throughout the gatherings. It was a pleasure and privilege to welcome visiting brethren from Adelaide, Sydney, Tasmania, as well as two from Canada, and one from U.S.A., also some from nearer parts of Victoria. The presence of these dear friends from other parts, and their contributions to the programme, added greatly to the benefits derived from the assemblies in the Lord's name.

The four days of Convention were filled with various sessions, including two Bible studies on Revelation 3:7-13, and Ephesians 3:14-21. These studies were particularly appreciated by our brethren from overseas, who do not enjoy similar studies at their Conventions; also remarks on the helpfulness of the studies were expressed by friends from interstate. Brief thoughts on these studies and all the addresses given at the Convention are contained in the Convention Notes, now also available and supplied free to all desiring these.

The addresses by the brethren were greatly appreciated, the subjects being—"God's Unspeakable Gift"; "Jeremiah"; "Explanation, Demonstration, Execution"; "The Typical and Antitypical Elijah"; "Trusting in God"; "The Covenants"; "The Value of Vanity"; "In the Master's Steps"; "The Privileges of Discipleship"; "God Set the Date"; "The Sabbath"; "Obedience to the Truth"; "His Loving Care"; "To Whom Shall We Go?"; "Controlling Our Thoughts" and "The Old Paths—The Good Way." It is expected that some of these addresses will be published in later issues of "Peoples Paper", in addition to the first one which appears in this issue.

Many messages were received from brethren with Christian love and greetings and wishing the Convention God's blessing. These came from Classes and individuals throughout Australia, also from brethren in U.S.A., and Canada and were much appreciated. Just after the Convention a very warm greeting with Christian love came also from the Indian brethren at Bangalore, and was equally appreciated. Warm greetings and Christian love with the Scriptural passage Eph. 3:14-21 are sent as a Convention message to all brethren who remembered the gatherings, and to all other members of the Israel of God in every place.

The Fellowship Meetings provided opportunity for praise and testimony to the Lord's overruling providence and blessings expressed by the brethren, many giving helpful witness along this line. The "Hymns We Love and Why" session was also greatly enjoyed; many of our beautiful hymns were selected and sung heartily.

The attendance throughout the Convention was of a higher average than on many previous occasions, and on the last evening the number for the Love Feast completely encircled the hall. The lovely hymns "Blest be the tie that binds", and "God be with you till we meet again", were sung with hearts full of gratitude to the Lord and appreciation of His people seeking to walk in the steps of the Master. The closing prayer of thanksgiving to God, and asking His guidance and blessing upon all His dear people concluded the happy and profitable Melbourne Convention for 1971.

Making the New Year Beautiful

A young girl was hanging up a new calendar on New Year's Day, and as she did so she remarked in a confident voice: "It is going to be a beautiful year."

A friend who overheard her remark was curious to know what was passing in her mind, and asked:

"How do you know that it is going to be a beautiful year? A year is a long time."

"Well," she said, "a day isn't a long time, and I know it is going to be beautiful because I am going to take a day at a time to make it so. Years are only days, when you get right down to it, and I am going to see that every one of these three hundred and sixty-five days gets at least one beautiful thing into it."

We have a New Year given to us, and it can be a beautiful year, a year of abundant success, if we live each day at our best and serve at our highest to help others who are needing our help and comfort.

Passover Memorial 1972

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 28th March. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "In remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

Melbourne—**Sunday**, 26th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide—**Sunday**, 26th March, at 6.15 p.m., at M.U. Hall, (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Sydney—**Tuesday**, 28th March, at 7 p.m., at 81 James Street, Leichhardt.

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on March 31st, and April 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the Manchester Unity Hall, (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mrs. R. Jordan, 14 Newark Road, Torrens Park, South Australia, 5062.

To Whom Shall We Go?

(Convention Address)

Our subject refers to one of our elder brothers, Simon Peter. I like Peter, because he has some of the faults I think that I have. When we look at others we want to learn from them, so I try to learn from impetuous Peter. So many things he wanted to do in the service of the Lord, and yet he found himself so weak in his own doings. In John 6:68 we read, "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

Speaking of the conditions of today, there are many voices of inducement in the world, calling to mankind to follow the pursuits of pleasure, riches, wisdom, and I am sure we have all been affected to a degree by them. Bitter experiences have proved that as human beings we are quite unreliable, we are fallen and our ways are so depraved that we crave the things that tend to do us injury, and reject the things best for us.

In 2 Pet. 3:17 we are given a warning about this,—"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness." The Lord's consecrated people today find themselves in much the same position as Peter. Those same conditions are with us today. In the early ministry of the Truth movement we found in America that there were many zealous followers, and I am sure there were in Australia too, but as the time of trials and siftings came upon them, many fell by the wayside. They were tempted back into the world, and this happened to many of the Lord's followers at His first advent. At first the people hung upon every word He said. "Never man spoke like this man", and great multitudes followed Him, but close to the end of His ministry, as the jealousy of His enemies overtook Him, He became less popular. It is terrible that jealousy should creep in and manifest itself even towards the words He spoke. Such siftings and testings have been in process throughout the Gospel Age, and will still continue to the end. Many have, directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, repudiated the Great Shepherd and His leadings and instructions. Some listened to the priests and scribes and Pharisees, who said, He has a devil and is mad. Maybe some of you have been told you are mad because of your religious beliefs. Others cast His teachings aside because they drew the line too sharply between righteousness and sin. Haven't some of your neighbours said that you are trying to live too narrow a life? You can absorb some of the pleasures that are available. But between God and mammon there is this thin line which we try to keep. Some, because they cannot understand His teachings, say "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" Our Lord's statement was literally true, that only a little flock would be worthy (Luke 12:32).

Now it may sound harsh to some without the proper conception of the subject when we say that the Lord's ministry and leadings were as much intended to shake off and repel one class as they have been to attract and help another class. There is nothing to say that the ones shaken off were to be shaken off into eternal torment, but on the contrary, the attraction and the drawing was to the Kingdom and the repulsion was from the Kingdom, so the sifting and separation of our Lord's day and since and at the present time is to find the true followers, those who are seeking a share with Him in His Kingdom, and to separate all unworthy of these blessings. We are assured by Scripture that none who are fit for the Kingdom will be sifted out. See 2 Pet. 1:10, and John 10:26. So it is like the magnet that attracts the iron filings; and mixed with these iron filings there is sawdust—some of the sawdust

sticks to the iron, and we see this among the brethren; some do come along but are sifted away by the trials of life. The Truth attracts us as individual filings to the magnet, and if the winds and trials of life blow upon us there is no disruption, we are held firmly.

It is important to have our minds thoroughly made up as to the voices we should obey. "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." "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." (Matt. 6:24; James 1:8.) We cannot hear and obey the voices of sin and Satan and the world and self and the flesh and at the same time hear and obey the voice of the Good Shepherd, of peace and truth and love. There are many voices operating upon our minds. In order to take a proper position from which we will not have to turn, it is well we should know the different voices, and to what they lead. We have heard the Word of Truth. The flesh and the Adversary and the world work upon our mind by trying to persuade us that we can be at harmony with them and still be faithful to our Shepherd; but we are warned that this will not be the case. I use examples at random, to emphasize the co-operation which the New Creation and the flesh would like to harmonise to. Wealth is one of the voices, holding out its golden dreams and great promises. It suggests our religious zeal is right enough, it does not want us to depart from pursuing the Truth, but just to leave the Lord in a temporary sense and after we have acquired enough wealth we could pursue after Him with renewed energy and help the brethren. Alas, how elusive; but how many are attracted. The Bible says "the love of money is the root of all evil." I was told of a brother in America, who during the war-time thought he could take leave from his studies of the Scriptures by going into the interior and buying a hotel and making a great deal of money by working night and day, and at a certain time he would go back to the brethren and spread this wealth he had accumulated. That brother has about 10-15 hotels now, and is still working night and day, but the brethren have not seen him since. How few who pursue wealth ever find it! But how it draws our heart affections away from the Truth and its service!

Fame is another example. Not many look for fame, but many look for prominence. It may affect you and me greatly. This is one voice one might pursue in hope of becoming famous, highly esteemed among men. This is a false voice, for how many could gain fame or worldly renown, or attain to fame in any considerable measure? It leads to false hopes. It is soon destroyed in death, if not before, and should not entice us to turn aside from Divine service. The Word of God promises glory, honour and immortality at God's right hand, and not as a statue in a city for the birds to rest upon.

Others hear the voice of worldly pleasure, and see the millions seeking for any gratification of the flesh, and there is a great drawing to go with the multitude, seeking pleasures for our perverted natural tastes. Efforts are made to blend or mix the pleasures of the world with the heavenly joys, only to find that they will not blend. Those who would abide in Christ must reject all pleasures which cannot be harmonised and enjoyed in fellowship with our Lord and Saviour. "We should always bear in mind that the Lord is beside us, and the pleasures we enjoy should be in harmony with His instructions and in line with our consecration vow. When we resist the false voices, this will establish for us a strong character, rooted, grounded and fixed in righteousness and love, that will resist the weaknesses of our own flesh as well as the influences of Satan and the world. Only such developed characters can possibly be overcomers of the world and share in the Kingdom.

The Lord is seeking to prove His people by disciplines and testings, He wants those who will completely transform their wills to His will. (Rom. 12: 2). We are proving ourselves to ourselves—not to our Heavenly Father, for He already knows us better than we do ourselves. This is what life's experiences are to each one of us. It is only through the experiences that we can prove to ourselves whether we are worthy or not. Throughout the Gospel Age He has been testing us, warning us that many will fail in their covenant, allowing selfwill to reign in their hearts, loving God in a secondary manner. To become as the Lord Jesus, and love the Lord with all our hearts, is the only condition that will be acceptable. So it is not possible for a person to repent on his death-bed and accept Jesus as his personal Saviour, and be ushered completely into the realms of the heavenly hosts. Staunch characters are not developed in this way. They have not passed through the tests of faith and love and zeal to the Lord, to class them as over-comers. They may be encouraged to hope for His blessing on the earth in the Millennial Age, as our Lord pointed out to the dying thief on the cross. If we can keep in our memory that every trial and persecution and difficulty is intended to prove us, and if we diligently use them as favourable opportunities to demonstrate to the Lord the fulness of our love and devotion to Him and His cause, every trial and difficulty will prove to be a blessing. In James 1:2, 12, we read, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

We read in 1 Pet. 1:7,—"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

Thus we are again assured that those who love the Lord and who will receive the Kingdom will be those whose love will have been tested by trials and temptations on the way to it. The others, who put some idol in the place of God, will be influenced by the world, the flesh and the devil. Their theories and plans will be analysed and found to be based on selfishness or the other ambitions or upon an evil spirit, envy, hatred, jealousy, etc. Those who overcome will have the character of Christ, and when these various voices call away from the narrow way of sacrifice and humiliation and self-denial, in answer to the Lord's query, "Will ye also go away?" they will answer, "Lord, to whom shall we go?"

If you look back for a moment, can you imagine anything in the world today that would induce you back from your consecration vow? The most beautiful and gratifying things of the world, in comparison to what is ahead of us—there is no comparison! We have nothing to look back upon. So, to whom shall we go? We know nowhere else to go, and we cannot turn back. We have heard the calls of the world, the flesh and the devil, and seen the emptiness there. There is no other hope we want to embrace but the hope of obtaining this prize of the high calling, eternal life. We have no thought of turning aside or listening to the voices calling to us. As we progress in the way towards the close of the harvest, the way becomes narrower and more difficult and the tendencies to stumble more frequent. We should be more and more on guard against the wiles of the Adversary and allow the perfect will of God in our heart to bring us the promised joy, rest and peace. Let us abide in Him, fruitful branches, responding to prunings with the abundant fruitage we can produce.

If deceptions come to us, let us say, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." At this late hour some of the brethren are falling by the wayside. They are being confused in measure by conditions which are happening, and some who walked in the way for 50 years or more are at this time losing their faith in the promises. If it can happen to strong characters, as I have seen it happen, then I want to be always looking to the Lord for His direction, and if He should ever ask me if I too will desert Him, may I only answer, "Lord, to whom can I possibly go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Blameless and Harmless

To be blameless is to be devoid of any disposition to do evil; not controlled by anger, malice, hatred, strife; but, on the contrary, to be disposed to do all the good possible to all with whom we have contact. We should be harmless, not merely so far as God would see, or so far as the brethren would see, but, so far as possible, harmless in the sight of the world before whom we are to shine.

Blameless does not necessarily mean perfection. One might be blameless and yet imperfect on account of natural weaknesses. To be blameless in the sight of God is to live so that He may see one's intentions always to be just, loving, kind. The world will speak evil of us even as they spoke evil of our Lord, and will hate us; for the darkness always hates the light. If we have the friendship of the world, we are not in accord with God. The Apostle James asks, "Know ye not that 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.) But if we are friends of God, the world will seek to do us injury as evildoers—"as deceivers, and yet true." While not "friends of the world," we must endeavour to be at peace with them, so far as lies in us.

We cannot, however, expect to please everybody. We are to be blameless in the sight of those of mankind who are recognised as having the best judgment amongst the people. Thus it was with our Lord. While the world blamed Him, yet in their private councils they recognised the fact that He was harmless. Pilate, who put Him to death, was honest enough to state, "what evil hath He done? I find no cause of death in this man"; "I am innocent of the blood of this **just** person."—Luke 23:22; Matt. 27:24.

The thought of the Apostle is that whatever charges may be made against us, our course of conduct before the world should be such that only the perverse of mind will think wrongly of us; that the better minds would think justly and note that the lives of the Lord's people are indeed blameless, not blameworthy.

The disciples were dwelling in the midst of a perverse generation, their own Jewish nation, among whom they were so to conduct themselves that their lives would be a light to their fellowmen. **Perverseness** implies unwillingness to be guided by the Lord; **crookedness** seems to apply to their course of life, not always a way of open wickedness, but a crookedness, doing both right and wrong. On the one hand was an evil heart of unbelief; on the other were forms and ceremonies.

For more than nineteen hundred years these conditions have followed the Lord's people. Everywhere there is a great deal of crookedness and self-will. Many things are done which are known to be contrary to the will of the

Lord. Amidst these conditions the Lord's people are to shine as lights; they are to seek to walk in the Lord's ways, that they may "show forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvellous light."

Dwelling in the Lord

TO dwell in Christ means to be in the closest relationship with Him; there must be agreement, harmony, and a unity of purpose, producing a feeling of confidence and goodwill. The closeness of this relationship is shown clearly in that 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." [so. 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.

"The Creator's Grand Design" is the title of a 240 page cloth bound book, from the "Dawn" brethren. It is a helpful study covering the plan of God as a whole. Supplied at \$1.25, post paid.

Poems of **Dawn**, 320 pages of original poems with additional choice Christian poems are now in stock. Excellent as gifts. Black simulated leather, handy size, price \$2.20, plus postage 25c." **Pictures From the Past**"

The book of Bible Stories for children—"Pictures. From the Past"—mentioned in last issue of "Peoples Paper" was completed in October, and quite a number have been supplied to the brethren. Of 173 large pages, with stiff covers, the price is \$1.20 to cover cost of materials, plus postage, which varies according to distance from 35c within 30 miles of Melbourne, to 75c to Western Australia and Queensland. However, up to 5 copies may be sent for 75c to the distant states.

One of our friends who has had a number of these Story Books writes—"I am giving the Bible Stories to nephews, nieces and friends with children. I have read it right through and find the stories and the way they are told most delightful, and I am sure the children will enjoy them."

"God's Best Gift."

A booklet for children—"God's Best Gift"—of 20 pages, compiled on the Divine Plan of the Ages years ago in U.S.A., has been produced in our office again recently. Written in childish language it is a splendid little book to convey the main outlines of God's Plan to young people. To cover cost of materials it is supplied at 10c per copy, 17c posted, single copies; less postage on a number.

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$16.00.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at \$10.50.

Books Available

“God’s Promises Come True”—\$2.00, plus postage.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages,” Cloth bound—\$1.00, including

24c postage. Paper covers-75c, including 24c postage. “Emphatic Diaglott,” New Testament—\$2.00, plus postage. “Daily Heavenly Manna”, birthday pages—\$1.25, post paid. “Tabernacle Shadows”-75c, post paid.

“The Book of Books,” Reviewing the Bible as a whole—\$1.25,
post paid.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy”-16c post paid. “Manner of Christ’s Return”-16c, post paid. “Christ’s Return-16c, post paid.

“Some of the Parables”-16c, post paid. “Hope Beyond the Grave”-16c, post paid. “God and Reason”-16c, post paid. “Where are the Dead?”-12c, post paid.

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Christmas and the Golden Age of Prophecy

STUDENTS of God's Word realise that the word "Christmas" does not appear in the Bible. The dictionary leaning of "Christmas" is, "An annual church festival, December 25th, in memory of the birth of Christ."

It does- not take any great knowledge to determine that December 25th would not be the correct date for the birth of Jesus, for the simple reason He was born at the opposite six months of the year to the time at which He died. As He died at the Passover season, at the end of March or early April, after 33/ years of life here on earth, His birth would have been towards the end of September or early October. However, we are not vitally concerned with the date of Christmas, but what Christmas stands for in the Word of God, and in the minds of people who think sincerely and seriously about the birth of Jesus and what that glorious event will yet mean to every human being who has ever lived.

The relationship between the birth of Jesus and the Golden Age of Prophecy is most marked in the Scriptures, and understandably so, for all hope for the fulfilment of the Golden Age of the Bible depends upon the birth, the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In Rev. 13: 8 we read respecting our Lord that His great sacrifice was as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." This means that in God's great Plan He had already provided a Saviour, a great One who would provide the sacrifice as the Lamb of God, even before the human race was created. This helps us to see what a loving Heavenly Father we have, for there in God's plan was set the seal for the assurance that there would be fulfilled a Golden Age which would be pro- claimed in prophecy right from the creation and fall of man in the Garden of Eden, even as we have the assurance that "the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head"—in due time.

Then in Gal 4: 4, 5 the Apostle Paul reveals that there was a set time for the birth of Jesus as the world's Redeemer. God is an exact time keeper, so we read, "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law; to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the, adoption of sons." In other words, become sons of God; not by adoption, but real sons of God.

The fact that God allowed about 4,000 years of human history to pass before sending the Lord Jesus to become the world's Redeemer shows God's time table for events is most orderly and perfect. It is very fitting that Jesus' first advent, "in the fulness of time", was arranged sufficiently early in the history of mankind to allow about 2,000 years before His second advent. That means that between our Lord's first and second advents God set aside a period of 2,000 years, for a very special work, in addition to allowing 4,000 years to pass before our Lord came at His first advent.

It is evident also that our Lord's disciples mistook His first advent for the time for fulfilling many prophecies concerning His second advent, not knowing of God's important plan in the Gospel Age, between the two advents of Christ. We remember the conversation of the two disciples with our Lord on the way to Emmaus, as recorded in Luke 24. After the Lord had been crucified and raised the third day, two of His disciples were on their way to Emmaus, and they thought a stranger had caught up with them. These disciples were very sad indeed at the turn of events which ended with the death of their Master. They expressed their concern to the stranger in verse 21—"We trusted it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done." Apparently their minds had gone back to the time when the Lord referred to His resurrection on the third day. Hazy though it was in their minds, they expected something to happen on the third day. Some-

thing had happened of which they were unaware. Our Lord's words in verses 25-27 are most revealing, in explanation of the disciples' deep concern. "Then said he unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." What a wonderful outline the Lord must have given, as they walked along the way to Emmaus, beginning at Moses—that is, with the first five books of the Bible! How much is contained in those five books of Moses respecting the wonderful time when the Lord's glory would be manifested throughout the lengths and breadths of the whole world! God is going to bless all the families of the earth through the Seed of Abraham. These promises were passed on from Abraham to Isaac and Jacob, and to the twelve tribes of Israel. Our Lord must have gone through a number of the prophecies, explaining to these disciples what was to happen to the Lord as Messiah before He would enter into His glory. All this had to transpire before any glorious Golden Age of Prophecy could be fulfilled. Probably He would have referred to the Passover in Egypt, and the slaying of the Passover lamb, which pictured His own sacrifice as God's Passover Lamb to take away the sin of the world.

Verse 32 reveals the effect of Jesus' words on the disciples—"And they said one to another (after the Lord had been revealed to them by His familiar words and act of breaking bread), Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" What a thrill He must have given them when He outlined the wonderful records respecting Himself, from Moses and all the prophets respecting His necessary sacrifice, and then the glory of His coming kingdom! And doesn't the truth of God's Word have the same effect upon us? Doesn't it give us a thrill when we grasp the full meaning of the wonderful words of life, because of the death of God's Passover Lamb? Those early disciples were soon to learn that they were in the same position as their Master. All the followers of Christ suffer similar things before entering into their glory; in other words, before the Golden Age of Prophecy can be fulfilled.

Our Lord clearly indicated that His true followers must all be proved worthy of the inheritance with Him in glory before the Golden Age of Prophecy could begin, when He declared in Matt. 10: 24, 25—"The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" "It is enough"—it is fitting—it is just what we would expect, that the disciples be as their Master, in being prepared for the glory with Him.

How clearly does the Apostle Paul show the preparation of the Body of Christ throughout the 2,000 years of the Gospel Age, before the Golden Age of Prophecy in the Millennial Age, in Heb. 2: 10, 11. "For it became him (God; it was just like God), for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." In verse 11 the Captain and the "many sons" are "all of one"—one spirit, one ambition—all receiving the same experiences to fit all members—Head and Body—for the reign of glory. It pleased God, therefore, to bring many sons to glory, and our Lord Jesus is not ashamed to call His followers His brethren. That is a lovely thought!

In Rom. 6: 5 we are shown how the followers of the Master are linked together in their experiences with their Lord, if they are to be united with Him in the glory of the kingdom. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." The qualifying statement there is, if we are planted together; otherwise we could not expect to be in the likeness of His resurrection.

The Apostle states further in respect of the followers of the Master, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8: 17, 18.) What an amazing thought this is! This glory shall be revealed in the Church with Christ, if we suffer with Him. Then verse 19 reads—"For the earnest expectation of the creature (creation of mankind) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." For the complete uncovering or revealing of these sons of God with their Lord on high, the whole creation is waiting, unwittingly, unknowingly. Christ and His church will be unveiled, and the glory of the Lord will come down upon all humanity. That is the time for which the "whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" is waiting in expectation. God has decreed that these many sons, with Christ their Head, shall inherit the heavenly glory, even as Jesus assured His disciples in Luke 12: 32—"Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." God delights to give the heavenly kingdom to this little flock, followers of the Master, who gladly walk in His steps, and have assurance of being associated with Him in the Golden Age of Prophecy.

Previously reference was made to the Passover in Egypt, when Israel was delivered through the sacrifice of the

Passover lamb, which pictured our Lord Jesus. God also gave Israel the Atonement Day sacrifices, which were typical of Christ and His followers. This typical significance is important in pointing forward to the real and lasting sacrifice for sins, as shown in Heb. 10: 1, and from verse 3. In this chapter we have a contrast between the typical sacrifices under the Law, and the real and lasting sacrifices of The Christ. “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offer year by year continually make the corners thereunto perfect.... For in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.” Paul is saying that the typical sacrifices were not efficacious; the very fact of the repetition taking place every year showed that the cleansing was not real, but pointed forward to the better sacrifices of the Gospel Age. “Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.” Previously God had accepted the typical animal sacrifices, but when His Lamb had come and paid the sacrifice, God had no more pleasure in the former offerings for sin.

In the typical animal sacrifices on the Day of Atonement for Israel, we have pictured the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus and His truly consecrated followers, whose justified humanity is on the altar of sacrifice, as was Jesus’ perfect humanity. After the typical sacrifices were completed on that 24-hour day, which pictured the whole of this Gospel Age, we find what happened with Israel pictured the Golden Age of Prophecy, for the Millennial Age, as shown in Lev. 9: 22-24—”And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them. . . . And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.” Here we have in type a picture of what will happen to the world of mankind when the great sacrifice of Christ and His Church is complete. The glory of the Lord will appear to all mankind. All mankind will know that Satan is bound and Christ is reigning, and the blessings will be for every human being who has ever lived, as they are obedient to the laws of the kingdom at that time. The resurrection will take place in an orderly fashion; each generation will come forth until all mankind are brought back from the death condition because of the sacrifice of Christ, and all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. What a wonderful picture we have here in type, depicting the glorious outcome of the antitypical Day of Atonement!

How beautifully also did the prophet Isaiah speak of God’s returning favour to Israel in Isa. 40, and the glorious outcome for all people in verse 5—”The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Again in Hab. 2: 14, we have the Golden Age of Prophecy depicted in the words—”For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” We notice the particular reference to the “knowledge of the glory of the Lord”, implying that all mankind will truly know and understand the laws of the kingdom, and will be able to keep those laws as they walk up the Highway of Holiness back to perfection of life as in the Garden of Eden.

Many other prophecies reveal the Golden Age in unmistakable terms, such as Zech. 8, where we are told that Israel will be the leading nation in the new age, from which other nations will learn also to obey the Lord, and enjoy His blessings by obedience to His precepts, as indicated in verses 22 and 23. “Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.” The ten men apparently represent the nations at large. “We will go with you”—they will adopt the same attitude Israel has adopted at that time, in the worship of the true God.

No wonder the Apostle Peter, in comparing the vision on the Mount of Transfiguration with his knowledge of the wonderful prophecies of the Old Testament, declared—”We 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, and the day star arise in your hearts. . . . For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the holy spirit.” (2 Pet. 1: 19, 21.) All those prophecies are God’s prophecies, given by those moved to write, by God’s holy spirit, messages which they themselves did not understand. That is why Peter says, “we have a more sure word of prophecy”, more revealing and important than that which was pictured in the vision on the Mount of Transfiguration. In the vision, Moses pictured the earthly phase of the kingdom, Elias pictured the spiritual phase of the kingdom, and with the Lord transfigured before them it was a beautiful representation of the establishment of Christ’s kingdom. But, says Peter, the “sure word of prophecy” is of greater value and importance, whereunto we do well to take heed.

The prophets of whom Peter speaks give us the same record as the angel who proclaimed the thrilling message

to the shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem, at the birth of our Saviour. We can well understand the fear of the shepherds when the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around about them. However, their fear would be calmed by the message of the angel—"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." That wonderful message was given nearly two thousand years ago, and it is understandable that people, *not* acquainted with God's plan of the ages, wonder when the fulfilment will be accomplished. Down through the centuries there has hardly been a time when there has not been war of some kind raging, yet the multitude of the heavenly host proclaimed—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This announcement of the angels is just as much a prophecy as are all the other wonderful pronouncements, prior to and since the birth of our Saviour, all of which confirm the surety of the Golden Age of Prophecy being established and accomplishing the foretold blessings upon all the families of the earth.

What a wonderful salvation is revealed in the Word of God, made possible through the sacrifice of Christ Jesus. Surely it thrills our hearts to know humanity is to inherit the wonderful earthly kingdom of God, and live lastingly to God's praise! But what shall we say about those who are to be associated with Christ in dispensing the blessings from on high, who are planted together in the likeness of our Lord's death, that they may share in the likeness of His resurrection? That is indeed the glory that excelleth! No wonder the Apostle speaks of this inheritance as "so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." What a condescension on the part of our Heavenly Father to provide such a plan of redemption, to sacrifice such a beloved Son, and for that Son to delight to do the Father's will to taste death for all mankind, so that humanity may live again, to the praise of God, for all time.

ALABASTER BOXES

Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them and while their hearts can be thrilled and made happier by them; the kind things you mean to say when they are gone, say them before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffins, send to brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them. If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them when I need them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without an eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand. Post-mortem kindnesses do not cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward over the weary way—Matthew 26: 6-13. (Selected.)

WATCH AND WAIT AND PRAY

It is much easier to trust the Lord while busy in His work and, may be, able to comprehend the why, the wherefore, the purpose of what we are engaged in and able to see how it is all working out. It is easier to be faithful even unto death in the company of others who are fighting the same great fight of faith. Sometimes, however, the King requires a service apart from others, a special message perhaps unappreciated by those around us; we are to stand alone, maybe as a sentry on watch. It is then that we shall be proved, it is then that our faith will be tested. Have we been leaning on others for our courage, or has our faith been trusting implicitly in the Lord? Nansen, when waiting in the Polar region for the current to carry him along on his way to the Pole, said: "It wants ten times more strength of mind to sit still and trust in your theories and let Nature work, without your being able to lay as much as one stick across another to help, than it does to trust in working them out by your own energy." It all depends upon the quality of our faith, whether in the times of crisis, which are sure to be permitted, we shall with perfect trust be able to resign our all to the Good Shepherd, and enjoy the "peace amidst the commotion" which is the privilege of footstep followers of the Master.

"There is an arm that never tires
When human strength gives way;
There is a love that never fails
When earthly loves decay."

Russian War Implements

THIS article by Mr. John Weston, is printed for the second time by permission of the editor of "The Mount Zion Reporter", P.O. Box 568, Jerusalem, Israel.

No Wood or Coal for Seven Years

In Ezek. 38: 1-16, we have a remarkable prediction concerning the last days of this world's struggle. In chapters 38 and 39 of Ezek., we read that in the "latter days", or the "last days", or the "end" as it is variously translated, a great northern power will seek to overrun Israel. Now when you read in the Bible of northern power you have to look at the north of Israel. God's eye is always upon His own land—Israel. It belongs to God; and in a special way He is keeping it for His own purpose; so if you read in the Bible, south or east or west or north, it is always of Israel. It seems certain that we are now in the "last days", and there should be some great northern power preparing to make war with Israel. According to what we read in Ezek. 38: 5, 6, it will be a confederacy of nations, a great northern power taking the lead.

In verse 6 the names of the satellite countries are given—Persia, Ethiopia, Libya, Gomer, Togarmah. The last two have been identified by scholars as Germany and Turkey.

Well, twenty-five centuries have passed since all this was written in Ezekiel concerning Russia's might, and her ambitions in the "last days." Now Russia has developed into a gigantic power and is falling in line with the prediction in Ezek. 38. Now let me read further extracts from this remarkable chapter, from verse 8—"In the latter years (or the last days), thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel. . . . Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou and all thy bands and many people with thee", that is the people of the countries Named earlier in the chapter. Verse 12—"To take a spoil and to take a prey, to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations."

Within the last thirty years the Jews have returned to Israel from over 80 countries. That is what God is referring to here: "that are gathered out of the nations which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land." Verse 14—"In that day when my people of Israel—(You see how clearly God states it)—when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it?" Of course, Russia knows it! "And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou and many people with thee."

It has been revealed that Russia plans to put 6,000,000 men into the battle of Israel; but when Russia does make war with Israel she is doomed to meet with crushing defeat, to be almost, if not entirely destroyed. This will not be by Israel nor by any other nation; she will be broken, says God: "Without hands." That is, no human hand will have anything to do with her defeat.

He says to the Russians, "Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou and all thy bands and the people that is with thee." He puts His signet to it. "For I have spoken it, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. 39: 4, 5.) Verses 9, 10—"And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons . . . and they shall burn them with fire seven years: so they shall take no wood out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire" (or make fire with weapons). What an extraordinary prediction! I hear a man over there saying: "That is not true, and it is foolish talk; what do you mean? Who ever heard today of burning weapons?"

I was speaking in Holland on this subject, and when I had finished I walked down the hall and shook hands with one or two. A gentleman speaking fairly good English said to me, "Have you not got a difficulty?" and I said, "Yes, I have many difficulties, to what do you refer?" "I refer to what you said, to what you read in that particular passage of Ezekiel, 'burning the weapons with fire'." "Yes", I said, "I have a difficulty." He said, "But I believe it anyway, because God said it."

Well, the responsible people came to me after the service, and said, "Would you give this address in Delft tomorrow, what you have said here?" I said, "Yes, God willing." So I gave the address in Delft, and when I came to this verse, "they shall set on fire and burn the weapons and they shall burn them with fire seven years", a gentleman walked up the middle aisle, and he had a slip of paper in his hand. When he got near the platform he handed it to me, and I looked, but alas, it was in Dutch, so I turned to the chairman and said, "Will you kindly read this, and if it has to do with our subject tonight, would you interpret it to me and let the people know what it says?" So he wrote on the back this interpretation—"This wood is stronger than steel, and more elastic than springs, the name is Lignostone, and is a Dutch invention which the Russians are using for their implements of war. It was invented by in Ter Apel; I am superintendent of the! Dejft, Gas Works." Well, I thought that very interesting; it was throwing light on this passage.

I returned to Apeldoorn and my host said to me: "How did you get on?" (He had met with a motoring accident and was unable to be present). I said, "Oh, all right, but one or two raised the difficulty about burning the weapons with fire in Ezekiel 39; and then the manager of the Delft Gas Works handed me this note. It was most interesting." He said, "Oh, my Brother, I wish I had known what you were going to speak about, because I have a pamphlet, if you have patience to hear me read it. The Russians are using that Dutch invention for their weapons of war", and he read me the pamphlet. I thanked him very much, for that threw a flood of light upon the passage.

In England I was later speaking on the same subject and when I had finished a gentleman came to me and said, "Have you ever seen that material?" and I said, "No, I have not." "Well", he said, "We are interested in it, you know, since we are making the cogs of our wheels of it; and if you would like some they always let me have a few sacks to burn on my fire instead of coal. I will send you some." I only wish he had sent me more; he sent me several blocks and they burnt better than coal. I was delighted with them, and I just kept a little piece to show people when I give an address on the subject. I do not know what it is; it looks like twenty or thirty pieces of plywood pressed together by terrific steam pressure. This English gentleman said, "We are using it for the cogs of our wheels in the great lorries; and the Dutch are using it in their Gas Works, and the Russians are using it for their weapons of war."

How true Scripture is. Just think of it; the Jews will be burning these weapons (and there are now over 2,000,000 Jews in Israel and there will be more when this takes place). They will be burning these weapons on their fires and will not need to go to the forests to cut down any wood for seven years. There again I say, this is fantastic, God is true, every WORD of God is true, and every WORD of God is pure; you can trust this Book, whoever you are, you can trust it to the last letter. Every word of God is inspired; let the critics say what they like, it proves their ignorance of the Scriptures if they deny it. Then in verse 12 we are told that it will take Israel seven months to bury the Russian dead.

TRACTS AVAILABLE

The article "The Destiny of Israel and Egypt in' Bible Prophecy" which appeared in the last issue of "Peoples Paper" is now available in tract form. Friends are invited to procure these free tracts, which are provided from the Tract Fund of the Institute. Please state the number that can be wisely used when ordering..

Transforming the Mind

(Contributed Address.)
(Rom. 12: 2; Phil. 2: 5)

THERE is much we do not know about the functions of the human mind. However, some information has been discovered in this day of increased enlightenment, and since we are living in a very eventful period of the history of the human race, when so many minds are being subjected to so much propaganda or brain washing, so often of a subtle nature, which has such far-reaching effects in its influence on the minds of men, women and children of all ages, it may be helpful to review some important things which are known about the human mind. Then we can consider some scriptures which will help us to nurture and to cultivate our renewed minds, "the mind of Christ" which is in all who have fully consecrated their lives to the service of God, and who have been begotten by the holy spirit to the new nature, the spiritual nature.

The dictionary defines "mind" as "the seat of consciousness, thought, volition and emotional, intellectual powers; memory; opinion." Rom. 12: 2 states—"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind"—Greek "nooce." Dr. Strong gives the meaning—"the intellect, i.e., mind (divine or human; in thought, feeling, or will); by implication meaning." In Phil. 2: 5, Paul says, "Let this **mind** be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Dr. Strong defines the word here from the Greek "froneh'-o" meaning "to exercise the mind, i.e., entertain or have a sentiment or opinion; by implication to be (mentally) disposed (more or less earnestly in a certain direction); intensively to interest oneself in (with concern or obedience)."

Having before us these definitions of the word "mind", we wish to analyze some further details in this connection; namely, Why must this human mind be renewed? Let us think of the mind as that **something** which man has above all others of the animal creation--the capacity to think, to reason, to plan—the power to translate thoughts into actions. The scope for reaching out after new horizons, and the power to visualize the thinking and planning of today, put into actual effect tomorrow. That something, if in tune with the Master Mind of the universe, can be capable of the greatest good, and rise to the greatest heights, even on the human plane of being. After all man was created in the image of God—in His moral likeness, a reasoning sentient being, Gen. 1: 26, 27. Even today when

so much evil is in the world, there are many noble examples which show up the finer qualities in man's make-up as being of divine origin.

Yet, if the mind is given over to the influence of the Adversary, the Satanic forces of evil, spiritual wickedness in high places, this same mind can be capable of: the most diabolical evil and *cruelty*, and the greatest power for the destruction of things good and pure, almost beyond words to describe.

This **thing** called the mind is that which directs man's everyday thoughts and actions and has some influence for good, bad, or indifference not only upon himself, but also upon all those with whom he associates each day. Should not we then, as Christians, seek to know something of not only what man has learned, but more importantly what God's Word has to say in respect of such an important part of every one of His creatures, and more especially in respect of those who are His New Creation, His peculiar people, 1 Pet. 2: 9—those whom He has drawn by the holy spirit to Jesus Christ—John 6: 44.

Volumes have been written by men who have studied the human mind and its behaviour. A knowledge of some of the basic findings in this connection is helpful in enabling us to appreciate what a remarkable piece of electronic mechanism is the human mind. It has been called "man's automatic steering mechanism", and when we expand this thought and relate it to what God's Word has to say on the same subject, we see just how very important it is that our minds are stayed upon our Heavenly Father and His righteousness—Isa. 26: 3.

It is said that **one tenth part** of every human mind is conscious and nine tenths subconscious; that is, outside the range of attention. It is through this very remarkable arrangement that our Creator has built into the human brain what can be called a **subconscious homing device**, and which is in its effect really a subconscious feed back cycle. It works on this principle: we all know that man is endowed with five senses—sight, hearing, feeling or touch, smell and taste. So each day humanity judges its affairs by the exercise of these five senses. Every day, every hour, every moment of our wakeful or conscious time, through these senses, mental impressions of situations that continually develop and pass around us in the daily course of our lives are **fed back** through the one tenth or conscious part of our mind to the larger or subconscious part, the nine tenths. Examples are the constant barrages of advertising, radio, TV, hoarding or by whatever means. Thus any repeated impression or thought fed back in this manner builds up a tremendous bank of subconscious energy.

These thoughts and impressions are received by the subconscious as the operational "data" on "the way things are", just in the same manner in which a programme is fed into a computer. The subconscious then goes to work to suppress or expand our performance to conform exactly to this set pattern. Can we see then why Solomon said—"As a man thinketh in his heart, or mind, so is he"? Prov. 23: 7. This, then, is how man's daily performance is controlled.

If a man takes a daily "failure", or "life is difficult" or "no progress" attitude; in other words, a constant negative thinking programme, and builds up thereby a self image of this kind he can be sure that his subconscious will use all the forces or resources of the human body to limit his energy—his creative ability, analytical skill and perception—so that he conforms exactly to the "operating formula" of this image. He literally **cannot do better** than his self image, which has come from his thoughts and mental perception. Observations of results of his performance must not lead to negative "can't do better" frame of mind. Reaction of others to things he has done must not lead to constant thoughts of, "I cannot seem to please anyone" attitude. His visualization of things he fears might happen or hopes will happen must not make him give up trying to think and act and hope positively.

Let us see, then, how some of these thoughts can be applied to our Christian lives and also how they apply in answer to our question as to why the human mind needs to be changed and renewed by the transforming power of Christ in us, and working through us by the power of the holy spirit. Rom. 12: 2, which has been quoted, goes on to give a reason why the human mind needs renewing—"so that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Yes, indeed how very true. The veil of **human mindedness** in the natural man hangs between him and the sacred spiritual truths of God. The only way to set it aside is to make a full consecration to do God's will which is to sacrifice the flesh and its interests. It is in the glorious and privileged condition typified by the Holy of the Tabernacle that the consecrated children of God enjoy their inner life and walk with God. Yes, this is quite beyond the sight of the world and the worldly. What a precious thought!

In the "Holy" we are experiencing the transforming and it is during this process that we are learning more and more, that we may **prove** what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." (1 Thes. 5: 23; 4: 4; John 17: 17.) What a privilege is this proving? The Greek word here translated "prove" was used in olden times in connection with testing or proving of metals and means to investigate, examine and

discern. By careful tests under close examination and observation the metal was proved. So it is we **prove the will of God**.

How do we do this? One way is surely through the study of His Word individually and with others, and by prayer and faith. We all know the joyful experiences of gathering around God's Holy Word collectively. On such occasions we meditate upon the Scriptures, we endeavour to rightly divide the word of truth-2 Tim. 2: 15. With sentiment of praise and worship in our hearts we wait upon the Lord and He **speaks** to us through His Word..

How important this is—assembling ourselves together in the right attitude of heart and mind.

So, then, as we come to see less and less of ourselves, and more and more of Christ and His spirit of love in our hearts, cannot we see how the subconscious feed back cycle works out in our Christian lives? As an instance, if we come to the meeting for the Bible Study and feed into our one tenth conscious mind critical thoughts that are not positive or constructive, or not in harmony with God's love of what this Brother or that Sister has to say, instead of endeavouring to see Christ and His words, these negative impressions feed into the nine tenths or subconscious part, and build up to become the force which directs our daily living. If we continually dwell on the weaknesses, real or imagined, of our Brothers and Sisters, see always their faults instead of their Christlike qualities, then just as surely as we are feeding those impressions into the subconscious mind, to that extent we will be the poorer in our own spiritual lives.

Oh, if we would only follow our Lord's example of positive action when tempted to criticise, condemn or judge our brethren. When tempted to listen to something which is in the nature of gossip or evil speaking, if we instead resolve to think and speak as would our Lord and Master were He in our position, how greatly we would enrich our Christian living. How much more influence for good would our daily lives become if we see to it that each day and hour and minute, through our conscious mind we are feeding into our computer (as it were) the right programme for daily Christian living. Is this, then, how the mind is renewed?

This may mean a complete change of ideals and a new attitude toward our whole way of living—"Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face." Our Heavenly Father asks from us a full surrender, full consecration, nonconformity to this world and a transforming to the kingdom requirements. Then, and only then, can God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness fully shine into our hearts and minds by the gospel to give us the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. This knowledge cannot be comprehended by the natural mind-1 Cor. 2: 14.

What is the result of this transforming work? Development of the character-likeness of Christ. Growth in the fruits of the spirit—Gal. 5: 22, 23. Daily development? Yes! A desire to please Him in all things and a love in our hearts which comes from God the Father. How do we continue in this way against the powers of Satan aligned with all the forces of evil to thwart God's plan? We can gird up the loins of our mind-1 Pet. 1: 13. We can think on all those virtues of Phil. 4: 8 (please read).

Can we develop or cultivate our five earthly senses to a greater appreciation of our daily needs as new creatures in Christ Jesus? Or would we say, we also have what can be called five spiritual senses corresponding to the five natural senses?

Can these be cultivated? Yes, indeed, as we come more and more into Christ, the **"eyes"** of our understanding open wider and wider to things not seen by the natural eye. By degrees, the **"hearing"** of faith increases until every good promise of the divine Word is forceful and meaningful. In time we come into close **"touch"** with the Lord and His invisible powers (the power of prayer and praise). After a time and little by little we **"taste"** that the Lord is gracious and precious. As we progress, we come to appreciate those sacrifices and incense prayers which are of a **sweet odour** to the Lord.

Can the Christian, then, be described as having a sixth or spiritual sense which enables him even though still in the earthly body to understand things quite beyond the perception of those around him, who are not begotten of the holy spirit? Yes, indeed-1 Cor. 2: 9, 10, 14 (please read). How grand, how glorious, how rich is the daily experience of all those, who, by the grace of God, are finding that the things of this earth are growing dim, as the "deep things of God" revealed to us by His spirit, come more and more into focus, as the "mind of Christ" which is in us (1 Cor. 2: 16), enables us to appreciate the transforming work which has given us this renewal of mind.

What exaltation, what thanks are due to our Heavenly Father as we experience with Paul the joy of understanding even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles which is "Christ in you, the hope of glory", Col. 1: 26, 27. May God bless to our hearts and minds the thoughts presented

here, that we may see the daily need, the constant need of feeding through our one tenth conscious part of our mind the thoughts and impressions which are godly and pure, so that the force which is built up in the subconscious will direct our daily performance in ways which will be well pleasing to our Heavenly Father, and edifying to all those with whom we daily associate.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiem, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, Victoria, 3167.

OUR BIBLE TRANSLATED

A new print has been made recently of the very interesting and informative booklet, "Our Bible Translated", compiled some time ago by the brethren of "The Dawn". To cover cost of materials this booklet is supplied at 10c per copy, post paid.

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God Dwells Not in Temples Made With Hands

“God that made the earth and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.” (Acts 17: 24.)

BEFORE reviewing the Apostle’s words in the above verse, spoken to the Athenians in the early days of this Gospel Age, it is well to view God’s dealings with His covenant people Israel in former times, when God’s presence was manifested in a particular building, first of all in the Tabernacle which God instructed Moses to build, and later in the Temple which Solomon erected to the glory of the Lord. There are always good reasons for the Lord making changes in His dealings with His human family, and it is most important that we, as Christians, note well the particular changes in God’s plan and the lessons He wishes us to learn from those changes.

When God delivered Israel out of the land of Egypt, we have a record in Exod. 25 giving us a description of the Tabernacle which God desired Israel to build under the direction of Moses. In verse 8 we read—”And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.” God desired a special sanctuary in Israel, that His presence might be manifested among them. In verses 9 and 40 we find the Lord impressing the need that His sanctuary be constructed strictly in accord with His instructions. It was apparently very important that Moses carry out the instructions in detail, not only in respect of the building, but also with the furnishings and instruments used in the services Israel performed as God’s covenant people. In the following verses descriptions for the making of the ark, the mercy seat and the cherubims are given. Verse 22 reads—”And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony.”

God was going to meet with Moses in this sanctuary which He instructed the Israelites to build, and a supernatural light which appeared between the cherubims represented the presence of God. Thus, God’s presence was manifested in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple which Solomon built as a house for the Lord. God’s presence is also pictured in the words of Psa. 80: 1,—”Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel . . . thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.” And in the prayer of Hezekiah in Isa. 37: 16, we read—”O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.”

Down the centuries to the Lord’s first advent God’s presence with Israel continued to be manifested in the worship in the Temple and the synagogues, and it is of importance to note that Jesus acknowledged the Temple as His Father’s house, when He had cause to rebuke those who were using the precincts of the Temple as a place of merchandise, as recorded in John 2: 13-16. The Lord knew they were not only using the precincts of the Temple as a place of merchandise, but were robbing the people who came to exchange their money for the animals to sacrifice at the time of the Passover. “Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise,” He declared.

However, in John 4 our Lord’s words to the woman of Samaria reveal that a change of dispensations was at hand, and with that, a change in God’s dealings with Israel, and those who became followers of Jesus, who were then also God’s special people. Read John 4: 3-15. Then Jesus *revealed* Himself as a prophet to this woman. We note in verse 20 the Samaritans worshipped in a mountain, a particular mountain called Gerizim which dated back to Jacob. The woman said, “Jacob’s well was there.” A temple had been built on this mountain and the Samaritans felt it was really holy ground, just as the Jews thought of Jerusalem. But how enlightening are the words

of Jesus—”Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship rather . . . for they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” shortly there would be no special place for worshipping the Heavenly Father, neither for the Samaritans in the mountain, nor for the Jews in Jerusalem.

During our Lord’s ministry His actions foreshadowed the outcome of His words to the woman of Samaria. He had no special building or location in which to worship or teach the people. We read in Matt. 5: 1, 2—”And seeing the multitude he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him; and he taught them.” There, amidst the natural setting on the mountains side He taught them the lovely Beatitudes of this 5th chapter of Matthew. Again in Matt. 13: 1 -3 we have another example of our Lord teaching—”Jesus sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spoke many things unto them in parables.” It was a lovely natural setting, the multitude on the shore would rise up from the water and it would be almost like a little amphitheatre. They could all hear His teaching in these peaceful surroundings of nature.

As previously noted, our Lord did not shun the Temple, which was still accounted as the Father’s house, for He preached and taught wherever there were ears to hear and appreciate His message of the kingdom. One occasion at the Temple is of special significance at the time of the Jews’ feast of tabernacles, recorded in John 7. See verses 14-16—”The Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” He had never learned in their theological colleges, and they felt He was not qualified to teach, which is often the sentiments also towards the Lord’s people today. From verse 37 we read—”In the last day, that great day of the feast (the day of the water offering) Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” This was a timely opportunity to declare if any man thirst for the higher, spiritual truths which Jesus preached, he could come unto the Lord at that time. Verses 38 and 39 show the outcome when the holy spirit was given to such thirsty ones who would come to Him.

Our Lord’s reference to the spirit that they who believed on Him would receive after He was glorified was a further unfolding or revealing of the meaning of His words to the woman of Samaria, that those who worshipped the Father must worship Him in spirit and in truth. When those who believed in Jesus had received the holy spirit, worshipping “in spirit and in truth” was then possible. While Jesus was still with His disciples they were unable to rise to great heights of understanding because the holy spirit was not given to them until His sacrifice was completed and He had ascended on high to the Heavenly Father. That is why the minds of the disciples were working as expressed in the words of Matt. 24: 1—”And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple; and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple.” They were proud of that Temple; it was still the house of God, and probably they had the idea that even Jesus may have it as His headquarters when He set up the kingdom which **He** preached. Probably there was an attachment to that Temple which corresponds to the attachment which many people today have towards their cathedrals and churches, with stained-glass windows or statues of one kind or another. Can we imagine the surprise of the Lord’s disciples at the answer the Lord gave to them? Verse 2 reads—”And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” This lovely, glorious Temple! Our Lord’s words were actually fulfilled about forty years after Jesus’ death and resurrection. Why did God permit such destruction of the Temple? Did its destruction interfere with the true worship of God? No, not at all! Supposing the same thing happened to the great cathedrals or churches today. Would it hinder the true worship of God? No, not at all!

When Jesus had completed His sacrifice for the sins of the whole world on the cross, we read in Matt. 27: 51—”And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.” That was the veil that separated the Holy from the Most Holy in the Temple. The Most Holy was the place that represented the very presence of God. The veil being rent from the top to the bottom showed that it was a judgment from heaven. Jesus’ sacrifice had been consummated; He was the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world. Henceforth there would be no more Temple services acknowledged by God at all, now that the anti-type had come. There would be no more animal sacrifices typically cleansing Israel that could be accepted by the Heavenly Father. The Temple now was outside God’s jurisdiction, and was no more acknowledged as the place where He dwelt with Israel. From that time forward God dwelt not in temples made with hands. Those who worship the Father must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

The Apostle Paul having been brought into God’s service after our Lord’s death and resurrection, it is quite understandable that he would be fully informed by God’s spirit respecting the change in worship which God desired from His servants. So it is no surprise that when the Apostle came to Athens and found a great number of altars erected to various gods, and one specially dedicated “To the unknown God,” that he very diplomatically declared, “Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.” It has been estimated there were hundreds of

altars erected to various gods at Athens; in case any had been overlooked, they had one "To the unknown God." After declaring in verse 24 that the "Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands," the Apostle continues—"Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.

. . . Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.- The second commandment in Exod. 4-6 given to at the time of the Tabernacle services was a definite law which is very good for us today, just as it was for Israel and was clearly in Paul's mind when he spoke to the Athenians the main part of the second commandment reads—"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God." There was an instruction given to Israel, and if it had been carried out down the centuries how much better would the human family be today!

The Apostle continued in verse 30 of Acts 17—"The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." God "winked" at the various kinds of ignorance, at the idols and altars erected down to the time of our Lord's great sacrifice. He ignored the nations generally, excepting Israel, as they were a typical nation. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth," God declared through the prophet—Amos 3: 2. They were a people set apart, and the Lord gave them His law through Moses as a "schoolmaster to bring them to Christ" if possible. Few were able to benefit by the instructions of the Law Covenant, so few received the Messiah when He came. But from our Lord's first advent was the beginning of the time when God "commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Three thousand years have been allotted in God's plan for repentance of the human family—two thousand years of this Gospel Age, when "as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2: 39) have this privilege of repentance and coming into God's family for the heavenly kingdom, and one thousand years of the Millennial Age when all the remainder of mankind will be required to repent to inherit the earthly kingdom. This will include all who have gone down into the death condition, for all shall be resurrected and be instructed in the Millennial Age to "know the Lord from the least unto the greatest." That the Apostle included the Millennial Age in the period when all men are required to repent is clearly stated in verse 31 of Acts 17,—"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

After Paul's conversion it was understandable that Ananias was suspicious of him, inasmuch as Paul had gone on a mission to Damascus to persecute the saints, but the Lord assured Ananias that this opposer of His cause had now become "a chosen vessel to bear the Lord's name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." Therefore Ananias was sent by the Lord to encourage Paul in the words of Acts 9: 17,—"Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, and sent me, that thou might receive thy sight, and be filled with the holy spirit." This is the important point "filled with the holy spirit."—come the time of our Lord's ascension to heaven and the outpouring of the holy spirit on the Day of Pentecost, Christ's true followers who have consecrated their lives to God's service have received the begetting and enlightenment of the holy spirit. There has been no more temple worship for people thus enlightened with the holy spirit. They worship God in their own homes, at their work, wherever they are, seven days a week; all their waking hours they are able to worship God. We do not need any special building; there is no particular location required. God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but in the hearts of people.

With reference to the Apostle Paul as he had been begotten of the holy spirit for the heavenly calling, henceforth all his words and writings were directed to encouraging other believers to enjoy the same blessing and enlightenment by the indwelling of God's spirit, thus making them New Creatures in Christ Jesus. Throughout Paul's epistles we have numerous texts impressing the great privilege and favour of being members of Christ's church. These are a called-out people, growing up into Christ, worshipping God in spirit and in truth.

In Ephesians 2 the Apostle tells us about the Jewish and Gentile Christians being united in gaining access to the Heavenly Father through the indwelling of the holy spirit. "At that time ye were without Christ.... But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Those "far off" were the Gentile Christians, those "nigh" were the Jewish Christians. "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 into an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit." This is the **temple** in which God dwells, builded together for an **habitation** of God through the spirit. Isn't it wonderful, that God gives His people here on earth the privilege of being His **temple**, that they may by His spirit be developed into vessels of honour, transformed from very imperfect beings into vessels for His use. They are used

in service in this life to some extent, but more so up above, when they have the spirit nature and are with Christ to reign with Him a thousand years to accomplish the “restitution of all things.” We notice the word “habitation” which means dwelling place. God’s true people are a dwelling place, a temple in which He dwells by His spirit, transforming them in preparation for the heavenly kingdom, to His praise.

In writing to the Corinthian church, the Apostle presents a stirring exhortation when he declared in 1 Cor. 6: 19, 20—“What? 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.” Here Paul presents the individual aspect of this wonderful relationship between the Lord and the members of His body. As there is the collective body as the temple of God, there are also the individual temples—each member in Christ is a temple of God’s holy spirit. How it humbles the followers of the Master to know that God is dwelling in them as individuals, to develop, fit and shape them for a place in His wonderful composite temple in heaven. “Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God.”

This favour and privilege is also shown in 1 Cor. 3: 16—“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?” Here again the individual aspect is shown to us—God’s true people are His temples. Then we have a lovely reference to the overcoming members of Christ’s body on the other side of the veil in Rev. 3: 12, which reads—“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out. . . .” A pillar pictures strength and support. These “pillars” in the spiritual temple will be there with Christ to support and bless all the obedient of the families of the earth through the Millennial Age. This text in Rev. 3: 12 also reminds us of the words of Jesus to His chosen disciples near the end of His earthly ministry in Luke 22: 28-30,—“Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” We know what thrones represent; not literal thrones, but places of authority, pillars in the temple of the Lord; places of authority to administer the laws of the kingdom. “The law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem”,—Zion is the heavenly kingdom, and Jerusalem will be the earthly centre of administration.

While our Lord was still with His disciples He also gave a wonderful promise to all His true followers throughout this Gospel Age when He declared in John 14: 23,—“If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” To think of the Father and the Lord Jesus making their **abode** with those who have yielded their lives fully to their service, is gracious indeed. No wonder Jesus said, “Neither in this mountain nor at Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father; but they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” And in the very small gatherings of the Lord’s people we have the promise—“Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” How lovely! We do not need multitudes. Where two or three are met together in His name—in any building, in any location, out by the wayside, on the hills, in the home, there the Lord will be in the midst. “God dwelleth not in temples made with hands.”

The circumstances surrounding the members of the early Church are also of much interest and encouragement to us, as it is likely that similar conditions may yet exist at this end of the age as were experienced in the beginning of the Gospel Age. The words of Paul in Rom. 16: 3-5 which indicate the faithfulness of some members at that time are stimulating to us, as also the message—“Greet the church that is in their house.” That is very lovely. How often the Lord taught in the homes of the people. What a blessed sanctuary it must have been at Bethany, with Martha, Mary and Lazarus and Jesus’ disciples. There was no cathedral there, no elaborate church building of any kind.

Again in Col. 4: 15 Paul says to the Colossians, “Salute the brethren . . . and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.” Here is the church gathered together in this brother’s home. God dwells not in temples made with hands. They that worship God will worship Him in spirit and in truth. What a privilege to worship God wherever we are, in all circumstances and conditions. If we must have special buildings, special ceremonies and services, we have not yet experienced the indwelling of God’s holy spirit without which no one shall prove an overcomer. How true it is that God dwells in the hearts and minds of His people, working in them to will and to do of His good pleasure. No temple or edifice of mankind is required for the true worship of God, who dwells not in temples made with hands.

Bible Stories for Children

A BOOK of Bible Stories for children, containing 173 large pages, entitled "Pictures from the Past" has been duplicated in our office, and will be ready quite soon. Compiled by the late Sister Poole of Canada, the author of "The Ten Camels" and "Son of the Highest," these stories told to "Linnet" by her mother are undoubtedly helpful and instructive for adults as well as children. One of our interstate brethren has read the copy of the stories and his report is as follows.

"I have just finished reading the copy of the stories which Sister Poole has put together for children. They are very beautiful indeed, and we do thank our Heavenly Father for the blessing we have received in reading the lovely stories. We will be very pleased to have the completed book, as I am looking forward to reading it again in the handy form.

"The story of Joseph and his brothers is perhaps one of the finest stories that has ever been written, apart of course from the New Testament stories of Christ and His wonderful words and teachings. And the manner in which the lovely stories are recounted—the winsome way the mother unfolds the story to her little daughter is very engaging. Sister and myself have enjoyed them immensely; we hope the books will be available before Christmas, as they will make fine Christmas gifts. We would like to order at least 10 copies."

The cost of the book, to be determined shortly, will be to cover the outlay for materials only, as the labor of typing the stencils and making over 23,000 prints on the duplicator has been a pleasure, also the assistance of others in checking the stencils, etc., has been greatly appreciated as a labor of love.

Orders for this book may be placed right away, and the price will be quoted before the books are despatched so that all friends may be fully satisfied. As the number of this first print is limited, requests for copies will be supplied in the order in which they are received. Postage costs can be greatly reduced if friends desiring copies combine their orders and have the books posted together.

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Threescore Years and Ten

HOW often do we hear people say, on reaching the age of seventy years that they have reached the "allotted span" of life, and that thereafter they are living on "borrowed time". The translation of Psa. 90 from the Amplified Version, with footnote on verse 10 is of much interest, and is worthy of attentive examination. The verses and quotation are as follows:

"LORD, You have been our dwelling place and our refuge in all generations (says Moses). Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed and given birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting You are God. You turn man back to dust and corruption, and say, Return O sons of the earthborn (to the earth)! For a thousand years in Your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. (2 Pet. 3: 8.) You carry away (these disobedient people, doomed to die within forty years) as with a flood; they are as a sleep (vague and forgotten as soon as gone). In the morning they are like grass which grows up: In the morning it flourishes and springs up; in the evening it is mown down and withers. For we (the Israelites in the wilderness) are consumed by Your anger, and by Your wrath are we troubled, overwhelmed and frightened away. Our iniquities, our secret heart and its sins (which we would so like to conceal even from ourselves) You have set in the (revealing) light of Your countenance. For all our days (out here in this wilderness, says Moses) are passed away in Your wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told (for we adults know we are doomed to die soon, without reaching Canaan). (Num. 14: 26-35.) The days of our years are threescore years and ten, or even if by reason of strength fourscore years, yet is their pride (in additional years) only labor and sorrow; for it is soon gone, and we fly away."

The quotation on verse 10 reads,—This Psalm is credited to Moses, who is interceding with God to remove the curse which made it necessary for every Israelite over twenty years of age (when they rebelled against God at Kadesh-barnea) to die before reaching the Promised Land (Num. 14: 26-35.) Moses says most of them are dying at **seventy years**. This number has often been mistaken as a set span of life for all mankind. It was not intended to refer to any one except those Israelites under the curse during that particular forty years. Seventy years never has been the average span of life for humanity. When Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes had reached 130 years (Gen. 47: 9), he complained that he had not attained to the years of his immediate ancestors. In fact, Moses

himself lived to be 120, Aaron 123, Miriam several years older, and Joshua 110; while in the Millennium a person dying at 100 will still be a child (Isa. 65: 20).

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Israel Today

AN INTERESTING report from Israel by one of our brethren living in that land had been sent to a Convention in U.S.A. some months ago, and has been forwarded on for our benefit. No doubt our readers will appreciate this review of events in the Land of Promise, as follows.

During Passover Week we took a 3-day trip through the Sinai peninsula. Near Sharm-el-Shech, children played on the guns that once threatened to sink Israeli ships if they tried to pass the Straits of Tiran. On the beach at Sharm-el-Shech we slept peacefully under the stars in what could be made into a beautiful resort area: a place that the powers of this world want returned to the Egyptians, whose only purpose in occupying it would be to harass Israeli shipping. The next night we slept in a tent on the west coast overlooking Egypt across the Gulf of Suez. Then we returned through Mitla Pass and northern Sinai, where the Egyptian army was destroyed in 1967 and much of the billions of dollars worth of Russian equipment taken intact.

But interesting as the trip was from the standpoint of current history, the real fascination came from the realization that in our circuit around the peninsula we must have crossed at least twice the path of Moses and the Children of Israel and that in places our route may have coincided with theirs. The desert and the mountains that we were looking at were the same as they saw while they made their way toward Kadesh-Barnea.

Incidentally, a month or two earlier, we had taken a trip to Kadesh-Barnea, the place where the Children of Israel abode many days. It was from there that the twelve spies went out, to there that they returned with a huge bunch of grapes from Hebron. There the people murmured, and God proposed to destroy them and make a new nation from Moses; but Moses protested, and God spared the people, but told them that they must wander in the wilderness for forty years until all who were twenty years old and older, except Joshua and Caleb, had died. Even Moses displeased the Lord there and was told that he would not enter the promised land. There Miriam died and was buried. But even though Moses lost his temper and struck the rock instead of speaking to it, yet the water came out abundantly and continues to flow to this day, making Kadesh-Barnea the largest oasis in Sinai.

One place we visited on the west coast was A-Tor. Up to the six-day war, this had been a base for pilgrimages: for Mohammedan pilgrimages to Mecca and for Christian pilgrimages to Mt. Sinai. It has two large compounds, one Moslem and the other Christian, with living quarters for hundreds, possibly thousands of pilgrims who gathered there before continuing their journey to the holy sites. Arab dhows are lined up out of the water near the shore. An idea of the size of the operation can be gained from the fact that a narrow gauge railway system connects all the hostel buildings to the big central laundry, though I would suspect that the locomotive was probably a donkey. As we drove through the Christian compound, our guide told us that it was customary for people to spend forty days in there. Catering to such a captive market must have been a very profitable business for someone; but since the six-day war not only Islam but also Babylon has chosen not to operate under Jewish rule. The merchants must be weeping and mourning over her, for no man buyeth their merchandise any more at A-Tor.

On this trip we did not go to the Mount Sinai where the Santa Catherine monastery is, though *we* saw in the distance two other mountains that also are thought to be possibly the mountain where Moses received the Law. The positive identification of which of the many mountains of Sinai is the one where the Law was given will require more research, or, after the resurrection has started, the testimony of those who were there. However, one feature that could be used in identification impressed me. The mountains of Sinai may be classified into two general types. First, there are mountains that rise up gradually from the surrounding countryside, in the usual manner; second, there are mountains that project abruptly from the plain like some of the rocks in Wyoming and Arizona. From the bus it appeared that it would be possible to walk up to such a mountain and touch it with your hand, just like standing on the sidewalk and touching a building. Mount Sinai is clearly a mountain of the second type, because the Lord gave Moses specific instructions against allowing anyone to touch the mountain. In Exod. 19: 13, He says, "There shall not a hand touch it." Hand—not foot.

What a fitting symbol such a mountain is of the Kingdom. We are not come unto the mount that might be touched (Heb. 12: 13), but we are come unto the same kind of mountain. Just as those mountains in the Sinai look as though they have been set down on the sand, so the heavenly Jerusalem to which we have come comes down

from God out of heaven. (Heb. 12: 22; Rev. 21: 2.)

All the “mountains” that will be carried into the “sea” are pictured by the first type of mountain, rising gradually from the surroundings; all are developments of the present evil world. But the new heaven and earth have no connection with the old. So it should not surprise us that Israel, the start of the new earth, has no connections with any other nation. It is not that Israelis would not like to be close friends with some other nations, but that such fellowship is just not possible. Many considered France an ally until De Gaulle did an abrupt about face in Israel’s hour of danger in 1967. Few, if any, have illusions about the United States. While they sincerely appreciate all the help they have been receiving from America, particularly the large quantities of modern armaments provided on easy terms during the past year, they realise that support from this direction results from a coincidence or interests and is able to be conditioned at any time in response to the wishes of Washington. An incident that every Israeli will remember for a long time happened in August, 1970. The White House was eager to arrange a cease-fire between Israel and Egypt. Israeli planes had been preventing the Egyptians from placing Russian SAM missile sites within range of the Suez Canal. Before agreeing to the cease-fire, Israel demanded and, it is generally understood here, received from the United States assurance that during the cease-fire no missile launching bases would be placed in the zone that Israel had been keeping clear. But on the same night that the cease-fire started, and continued for weeks, missile launching bases were placed in that zone until it was saturated. At first the Americans didn’t want to see; then they didn’t want to admit what they saw, and then didn’t want to do anything about it. As a result, Israel was given the privilege of buying sophisticated arms on credit, the missiles stayed in their places, and every Israeli considers an American guarantee as no more than a puff of wind. Any faith they may have had in United Nations guarantees has been shattered long ago. Of course, everyone is glad that there is a cease-fire.

Discussions about opening the Suez Canal seem to be accomplishing their dual purpose. The secondary purpose is apparently to provide Egypt’s president Sadat with an excuse for not carrying out the military action that he has been threatening for so long—action for which Israel is fully prepared, but which Egypt could not possibly survive without heavy, direct Russian involvement. The primary purpose of the talks, however, appears to be to give the United States and Egypt something to think about. The Egyptians have no use for the Russians as people, but only as means for wiping out Israel; and if they are not going to accomplish that task, then the Egyptians don’t want them around. But no country in modern times has been able to get the Russians out once they have come in. So Sadat needs to keep the Americans talking, and perhaps providing some money, in an effort to neutralize the Russians with their three or four Egyptian naval bases, which Russia intends to use in dominating the Mediterranean Sea. The question whether or not the Suez Canal will actually be opened is purely coincidental.

When speaking of peace, it is necessary to understand a Middle-Eastern custom in order to avoid being misled. We are all familiar with the method that Jesus set out in detail for settling differences. A feud between Arab families or tribes may last for days or for centuries, but it is only settled by means of a **sulha**. In a **sulha**, which is often arranged by a neutral third party, all interested parties to both sides of the dispute are seated at opposite sides of a long table, their declared purpose in coming together being to end the feud and to live in peace. All points of contention are thoroughly thrashed out and a money settlement made, after which they all eat bread and salt together. From then on every member of each family or tribe must treat everyone of the other as a friend. When Israel insists on direct negotiations, she is actually insisting on the national equivalent of a **sulha**.

It should not surprise us if Israel finds no wholehearted friends among the nations of this world, nor even if attitudes should gradually develop toward the eventual gathering of all nations against Jerusalem (Zech. 14:2). The forced separateness is, in fact, strong evidence that this nation of Israel is truly the beginning of the earthly phase of the Kingdom for which we pray, and not an outgrowth of the old world. The struggle to maintain the old order is epitomized in the attitude toward a Jewish Jerusalem, which the master of the old house knows signifies the end of his dominion. The official position of Israel’s best friend, America, was expressed by Secretary Rogers when he removed the Israeli pennant from his car before entering the Old City.

Anyone who thinks Israel will ever give up any part of Jerusalem is drunk; but the Lord said He would make all nations drunk. Even Sheshach is already beginning to show signs of intoxication on the subject of a Jewish Jerusalem as evidenced by Vatican support for a plan to put Lebanon in charge of the Christian parts of Jerusalem. (Jer. 25: 26, 27; 51:42.) All the people are finding Jerusalem a burdensome stone (Zech. 12: 3), but to Israel the City is a delight to be made into a thing of beauty and a joy forever. As Brother Russell pointed out that a horse represents a hobby, so the horses of Zech. 12: 4 would seem to picture the various plans to take Jerusalem away from Israel—the Rogers plan, the Jarring plan, the Lebanon plan, the Schumann plan, etc.—and the riders would be the promoters of the various plans. But the leaders of Israel can take a firm stand because they know very well that the whole nation, to a man, is solidly behind them in their determination to hold Jerusalem, as are all Jews all over the world whose hearts inhabit Jerusalem. They know in their hearts that the Lord has founded Zion and that

the poor of His people take refuge in it (Isa. 14: 32), while the rich support it from outside.

Notable among the Jews who find Israel a refuge and a source of strength are the three million Jews of the Soviet Union. The outcome of the six-day war inspired some of them to challenge giant Russia by openly demanding the right to emigrate to Israel. The results, while relatively only a trickle, are already miraculous. More than two thousand Jews came from Russia in 1970. In April, 1971, about two and a half thousand come, and two or three plane loads of Russian immigrants now come every week from Vienna, in addition to those who come on regular flights. Even these numbers are remarkable. But numbers are cold. The thrill of finally arriving in their Homeland after a long and desperate struggle against impossible odds, the feeling of being tree mingled with the yearning for those loved ones who have not yet been released; these and related emotions I will have to ask you to fill in from the warmth of your own souls, because I have no way of expressing them.

You will recall that in my letter to your Convention last year I mentioned the openly expressed desire of some Russian Jews to come here. Those of you who joined with us in the prayer that our Heavenly Father fulfil His promise in Jer. 16: 14, 15, can rejoice with us in seeing such a generous beginning to the answer to that prayer. Here in Israel, that passage in Jeremiah was the subject of a special prayer during our Memorial Service both last year and this year, and the practice can be expected to continue until the promise has been completely fulfilled. But let us remember, not only at Memorial time, but throughout the year, that it was only while Moses' hands were held high that the battle went well for Israel. Let our eagerness to see the Lord fulfil His promise be the measure of the fervency and continuing of our prayer that He bring the Children of Israel from the land of the north into their land that He gave to their fathers.

Since the shooting at the Canal stopped in August 1970 and Jordan's internal troubles started shortly afterwards, things have been reasonably quiet on the borders; to which statement the ordinary Israeli would add, "blessed be the Lord". Terrorist activities have been confined almost exclusively to the Gaza Strip and occasionally the Hebron area, mainly in an attempt to discourage Arabs from co-operating with and working in Israel. On a construction job where I worked for nearly a year, a bus load of Arabs came in from Hebron every day. They worked alongside the Jews and were well accepted, being perfectly free to pray toward Mecca at the appointed times. On one occasion they sat down quietly and refused to work until assured of prompt payment just as any Israeli crew would do. When the money came through they went back to work with no penalties against them, because they were simply exercising their rights as workers in Israel.

Just in the past year quite a number of permanent buildings, some quite substantial looking, have sprung up along side the black tents in the Bedouin encampments visible from the highway between Arad and Beer Sheva. If you travel along the highway at the right time in the morning, you can see Bedouin youngsters trotting across the fields on their donkeys on the way to school. This will be a government subsidized the planting of wheat in the Negev, and the Bedouin plowed rind ranted. Because of a shortage of rain during the middle of the winter, the harvest, if any, will be meagre, but there will be a lot of excellent pasture land. It was a thrill when travelling to Beer Sheva through what has always been semi-desert to go thirty miles through green fields on both sides of the road, extending far off into the distance, much like approaching Lancaster Pennsylvania from the east.

May the days soon come when the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established in the top of the mountains, when many nations will come to it to learn God's ways, when the law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, when the nations shall not learn war any more.

Pilgrim Way Ended

On September 2nd our elderly Sister McDougall of Melbourne finished the earthly way rather suddenly after over thirty years in appreciation of God's wonderful plan of salvation. Our dear Sister truly loved the Lord and His truth, and sought to pass on the good news to others throughout the years in which she was comforted herself by the "glad tidings of great joy which shall yet be to all people." Having suffered much sorrow in her long life of over ninety years, with the passing of her husband and all five children, the knowledge of salvation for all loved ones, through the sacrifice of Christ, enabled her to give thanks to God for all His love and mercy bestowed upon us.

It was a pleasure to have our elderly Sister with us at the Melbourne Class throughout the years, and her readiness in reading the Scriptures at the Bible Studies showed her love and interest in the truths which were uppermost in her mind and heart. Becoming frail in recent times, she still wished to be present each Sunday, and only for a few weeks was this impossible, prior to the pilgrim way being ended. Sincere sympathy is extended to the members of our dear Sister's family, a number of whom also rejoice in the precious message of present truth. *We*

truly “sorrow not as those without hope” respecting our Sister McDougall being fully committed to God, by His grace she shall have entered into the joys of the Lord.

(Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, Victoria, 3167.

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



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The Divine Nature

(Convention Address)

2 Peter 1: 1-4; Romans 12: 2.

VERY few sermons are entirely original. Others labor and we enter into their labors. That which comes to us bringing a blessing, we communicate or share with others. Peter tells us that as Christians, we should desire to partake of the divine nature. What does that mean?

If, as a point of theology we were questioned —What is the divine nature? a quick answer would come from most—immortality. That answer has never been completely satisfying, though it was not until recently that it was clearly realised just how incomplete is such an answer. Other Bible students have helped in understanding more beautifully than it had ever been seen before. The “Bible Study Monthly” has been the main prompter of these thoughts, though the writings and scholarship of some others have also aided.

If, as has often been done, we take Peter’s exhortation, to seek after the divine nature, to mean seeking after immortality, then we would find ourselves seeking something that our Lord Himself never seemed to seek. Most certainly we believe our Lord to be immortal now, death proof, but He received it **not because he sought it**, but as a consequence of His seeking to maintain something else which was more important—even the divine nature or character likeness of God Himself.

Jesus did not meditate a usurpation to be equal with God (Phil: 2: 6); but Lucifer did, — “I will be like the Most High”, (Isa. 14: 13, 14). When Jesus had fulfilled His first advent mission, had poured out His soul unto death, if anyone had a right to feel he deserved exalted rank as a reward, surely it must have been He. But what was His request—“Father, glorify me with the glory had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5). With our Lord, even immortality was not a thing to be grasped after. He was not immortal before He came to earth, and He did not request it when about to return to the heavenly courts.

What He did appreciate and desired ever to retain, was the divine nature—God’s character. “I and my Father are one.” “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, he has declared Him”, (made God and His character known). God is Love, and what magnitude of love. No tongue can describe it; but those who have tasted any depth of it, long for a greater portion of this wonderful divine nature. “O”, says the apostle Paul —“to be filled with **all the fulness of God.**”

The word “partakers” in 2 Pet. 1: 4 is the same as when Christians are referred to in 1 Pet. 4: 13 as being “partakers of Christ’s sufferings”, and the word occurs again in 1 Pet. 5: 1, which states that Christians are also partakers of the glory to be revealed, after the sufferings are over. Stupendous as it may seem, therefore, Peter is telling us that it is **possible** for us to become partakers or sharers of God’s divine character and nature.

How is this done? We would never accomplish it of ourselves. It must be accomplished through Jesus Christ who strengtheneth us. We must **desire** a thing before we seek to obtain it; that is true in every field. What then has caused us to desire the divine nature, the excellent goodness of the character of our Creator and God? **God called us**, and taught us of His graciousness and His attributes of love, justice, wisdom and power. Not only did He call us, but He provided everything whereby we might attain His nature. As the apostle says in 2 Pet. 1: 3, 4, His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness . . . and great and precious promises. He provided for us wonderful things in order that we might partake of His nature, become God-like in all our

dispositions, and escape the corruption that is rampant in this present evil world.

Coneberre and Howson's rendering puts it—"by a **glorious divine efficiency**, God has done so much for us." He has dealt with us as a loving Heavenly Father, disciplining us, chastening us for our highest profit. In the passage Heb. 12: 5-10 which speaks about the chastenings of the Lord, which every son receives, it tells us in verse 10 that the **object** of it all is "that we might be partakers of his (God's) holiness", in other words His nature, His divine nature.

Dr. Paterson Smythe once said — "character tends to permanence." The sooner all men realise this truth the better. Everyone will be sorry some day for persisting in known evil ways.

Now this is where a correction of a very poor translation is highly important. 2 Peter 1: 5 should commence "For this very reason", and not "and besides this." Because God has provided so much for us, "for this very reason" we should give all diligence to the discipline outlined in the following verses. If we do, the apostle tells us, we will never fail, but shall enter into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord. This is the same reward or culmination which in 2 Pet. 1: 3 is referred to as (God's) glory and virtue. In this verse two translations agree that what the apostle says is—"God has appealed to us **by his** glorious perfections." The Amplified Version also appeals. It reads, "For his divine power has bestowed upon us all things that are requisite and suited to life and godliness, through the full, personal knowledge of him who **called us by** and **to his own** glory and excellence (virtue)."

Young's Concordance is also helpful. It points out that the meaning of "virtue" here, is "Power of mind and body." God has called us to share His own power of mind and body—to attain to His perfections. Only in measure can it be realised upon earth, but when we are with Christ in His throne we will share it fully. It is wonderful grace wherein we stand, able to rejoice in hope of the glory of God—the hope of sharing His perfection. (Rom. 5: 2). As yet our hopes have a sombre hue, for as Hebrews tells us—(Heb. 2: 10) in bringing many sons unto this glory, he made the captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings."

It depends upon how we view these experiences as to how much "glory" we find in them in the present time. If we can consistently regard them as "light afflictions which are but for a moment" happy indeed are we. They are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us later. He has made good progress toward the divine nature who can so regard present hard experiences. But who does not, from time to time, flinch under them? Let us not be discouraged. Peter says (1 Pet. 5: 10) "The God of all grace, who has called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." God brings all His sons (including the Captain) to His glory, through sufferings—all kinds of suffering, sufferings for righteousness sake, and disciplinary sufferings. But through them all He will "perfect" us.

Gold is not left in the crucible for ever, it is left there only until all the dross is refined away. It then becomes an ingot of pure gold, ready for all kinds of uses for ever. Let God perfect, stablish, strengthen and settle us then, till we have attained His nature, coming forth as pure gold and thus be fitted for His service through the ages of eternity.

When we look carefully at Isa. 60: 1 in the light of the last verse of the previous chapter, as well as the verses following, it would seem that we could say when we believe into the Lord, "the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." It will not be until the Kingdom that the **full** glory of the Lord shines out from His people, both from the Church and the restored nation of Israel (Isa. 40: 5), but right now **some** of the glory is discernible.

Remember Jesus performing His first miracle, changing the water into wine? "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth his glory. . . ." (John 2: 11). Not all His glory was revealed then. His glory was to be shown forth progressively from that moment to all who were worthy of discernment, and it will culminate when at last Gentiles and kings everywhere will rally to its beauty (Isa. 60: 3).

Quoting the words of another—"The glory of the Lord is the beauty of His character. It is risen upon you when **you realise it**, even though on earth you can do so only in part." So the glory of the Lord arises upon us when, with our intellect or understanding (through the spirit) we discern God's true character and His purposes through His son. The glory of the Lord arises more and more upon us as we become "doers of His word", and others begin to discern the Christ character developing in us—they take note that we have been with Jesus. The glory of the Lord will rise upon us in its fulness, "when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3: 4).

Read Rom. 12: 2. The good and acceptable and perfect will of God is that we all become God-like, become partakers of His divine nature. The transforming work is not accomplished quickly. We are indebted to another Bible student here for some helpful thoughts. The Greek word rendered "transformed" is closely related to a word

which in English signifies “transformation, as the chrysalis into a winged insect” (Nuttall’s Dictionary).

In the case of a butterfly we have, first the egg, then the caterpillar, then the chrysalis (cocoon, perhaps, we may know it) and finally the butterfly. We note some radical changes in the process—a caterpillar eats leaves, its mouth and organs adapted for this type of food. The butterfly has a mouth suctorial, adapted to suck nectar from flowers, by which its life is sustained. The caterpillar is **earth bound**, the butterfly is an entirely different creature. But the change is **not instantaneous**—the chrysalis is a seeming deathlike condition, while the caterpillar is being put to death and the butterfly is developing. The illustration is obvious. We are being transformed as “new creatures”, while the old creature is being put to death. The “inward” man develops spiritually while the “outward” man perishes (2 Cor. 4: 16). We are to “put off” the old man and “put on” the new (Eph. 4: 22-24). In the antitypical “holy” we are experiencing transformation, proving what is good and acceptable and the perfect will of God—the old creature is put to death, a “living sacrifice” while the new creature begotten of the holy spirit is being developed. Just as the chrysalis is a mystery to human understanding, so is our transforming as new creatures. The butterfly must “struggle” to free itself from the chrysalis state, so we too in transformation must “work out” our salvation.

If we are faithful unto death, we will receive the crown of life. That may well be summed up in the ultimate as immortality; but we gain immortality not because we sought it for itself, but because we sought above everything else God-likeness, the divine nature. As one Brother reminded us at the 1970 Melbourne Convention — there should be less thought of reward in our Christian striving and service, we should want to serve God simply because He is **good** and all that He does is good.

The life and spirit of our Master, Jesus, should be often considered. The marginal rendering of Col. 1: 19 reads—“for in Him (i.e. Jesus) all the fulness (of God) was pleased to dwell.” Verily He displayed the “divine nature.” Read Rom. 12: 3. It is very important that we be not high minded, and think ourselves something when we are nothing. What hath any one of us, but what we have received from the Lord. The more we are privileged of the Lord to render service for Him to the cause of His truth, the greater the temptation to become heady. *We* know this from our own personal experience, and we know it, too, through observation of other brethren’s experiences.

Brother Russell and some with him in his day knew it. Quoting from “Reprints” page 5001— “as one Pilgrim Brother remarked some time ago, I sometimes think that when we get beyond the veil, we shall be astonished to find how few of those who have exercised positions of prominence in the Church will be amongst the elect. It behoves us all who are associated in the Lord’s work to watch ourselves closely, that if we find the slightest tendency in this direction of pride, we may stamp it out as we would some contagious disease, knowing what the effects are upon others.”

Phillips renders early portion of 2 Cor. 10: 12—“Of course we shouldn’t dare include ourselves in the same class as those **who write their own testimonials.**” Another commentator who rendered this portion somewhat similarly, commented further—“How many there are, I fear, among professing Christians, who have no other standard of excellence than themselves. Their views are the standard of orthodoxy; their modes of worship, are the standard of the proper manner of devotion . . . their own characters are the models of excellence and they see little excellence in any who differ from them.”

How foreign to the divine nature, God’s character, did Jesus show the thought of pre-eminence to be. The disciples reasoned who should be the greatest amongst them and Jesus taking a little child taught them the lesson that “he that is least among you all, the same shall be greatest.” (Luke 9: 46-48).

We are told that as star differeth from star in heavenly glory and brightness, so shall it be among the Lord’s Church in the first resurrection; but it would seem from the general tenor of Bible teaching that those who will shine the brightest will be those who on earth had the poorest opinion of themselves. Those who will shine the brightest will not be those who **sought it**, but those who served the Lord without thought of preeminence or **special** reward.

It has been suggested that the Apostle Paul will be one “star” who will shine very brightly when the “new heavens” is eventually placed, and he could well be. During his earthly ministry he never showed any desire to seek pre-eminence, but described himself as “less than the least of all saints”, and when confidently at the journey’s end, declared that “henceforth there was laid up for him the crown of righteousness” the Lord would give him, showed he had no thought of pre-eminence by adding—“and not to me only, but to **all** those who have loved his appearing”, (had served God acceptably), 2 Tim. 4: 6-8.

May God help each one of us to a keener discernment of His “divine nature”, and to desire it so much that we make full use of all that He has provided for us in order that we may become partakers of it. It will surely be a

blessed experience to be finally confessed before God by His beloved Son, as one “who has made himself ready” to enter into the eternal joys of the Kingdom.

Correction

A mistake appeared in the last issue of “Peoples Paper” on page 2, first column, second paragraph, sixth line, where the word “imperfect” should read “perfect.” The sentence should read—“How little have we understood how great our need, and also how perfect our claim to all His fulness!”

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PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM *Australia, 3101.*

Whose Heart the Lord Opened

(Acts 16: 14)

THIS verse in Acts 16 refers to a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of Thyatira, who worshipped God and whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul. This is a very lovely record of this one being worthy of being blessed in the manner stated. In recent years we have become accustomed to hear of various operations of opening peoples’ hearts, and inserting valves to correct and restore normal heart action, so people may regain health and strength. This is a very helpful work of skilled surgeons because of the greatly increased knowledge of our day.

Back in the time of the early Church such operations would have been out of the question, but the operation concerning Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened, was of greater importance than all the heart operations or heart transplants of our day. We are well acquainted with the use of the word “heart” as referring to the centre of the affections. It is well used in the Bible to indicate the innermost thoughts and feelings. When we read, “My son, give me thine heart,” we know at once it means giving our whole life, our whole being, to the Lord.

We have a further use of the word “opened” as in our text, in Luke 24: 28-32, after the Lord had walked to Emmaus with His two disciples. On reaching their destination, the Lord had no intention of intruding into the home where the disciples were going. “But they constrained him,” and when He sat at meat with them and asked a blessing, as was His custom with them in past time, “their eyes were **opened** and they knew him.” The “opening” here is exactly the same word as in our text respecting Lydia. Anyone whose heart the Lord has opened will have their heart burn within them. It really means something when the Lord opens hearts. The two disciples on the way to Emmaus said their hearts “burned,” while He talked with them by the way, and while He opened the Scriptures to them. It was such a thrill to hear the Lord’s explanations; they had never heard anything like it before. The Lord explained that the events that had taken place had to be fulfilled before He entered into His glory. When they knew the Lord had really risen from the dead, that was an added joy as they brought to mind what He had explained to them as they rejoiced in His message; and it is even so today.

Our English word “burn” is a very good translation of the Greek word in the text, “Did not our heart burn within us as he opened unto us the Scriptures.” It means “to set on fire, to kindle, or (by implication) consume.” We have no doubt that those two followers of our Lord became His disciples indeed; their hearts were opened in no unmistakable way.

Further, in Luke 24:45, we have the same Greek word used,—”Then **opened** he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.” The Lord continued—”Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things” (verses 46-48). These disciples had been with the Lord for 31 years, and had witnessed all that He had done and told them, and no doubt felt the – influence of His spirit in their hearts. In other words, the work of opening their hearts to the privileges

and opportunities of the heavenly calling, begun in their lives, was to be extended from that time onward to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

What a glorious example we have in the opening of the heart of the Apostle Paul, in Acts 9: 3-6. Here we have the record of the Lord apprehending the zealous, persecuting Saul, in such an outstanding manner, that he was thoroughly subdued and humiliated, and from that time forward rejoiced to serve and suffer for the Lord's sake, even unto death. The Lord's words to Ananias respecting Saul were—"Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9: 15, 16). All Paul's life, henceforth, he was shown the things necessary to enable him to develop that quality of character which revealed him to be the wonderful "chosen vessel" in the service of the Lord.

The witness the Apostle Paul gave to King Agrippa in Acts 26: 13-19, has no doubt been a stimulating example to many followers of the Master. Just how beautifully the Apostle fulfilled his commission in being "obedient to the heavenly vision" is fully revealed throughout his epistles, once his heart had been truly opened by the spirit of the Lord. See also Acts 21: 10-13, in this connection; and Phil. 3: 7-11.

Then we have the Apostle Paul's appeal and exhortation to the Corinthians in his masterly presentation in 2 Col. 6: 4-13—"In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God. . . O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged." The word "enlarged" means "to widen"—his heart was going out to them in sincere and earnest appeal. The Lord had opened Paul's heart for complete and devoted service, and now his heart was "enlarged"—"widened" in fatherly appeal. From the Amplified Version, verses 11 and 13 read—"Our mouth is open to you, Corinthians—we are hiding nothing, keeping nothing back; and our heart is expanded wide (for you)! By way of return then, do this for me: speak as to children—open wide your hearts also (to us)." No doubt Paul meant, "open wide your hearts to us, for Christ's sake."

For ourselves, the Lord has graciously opened our hearts to appreciate His great love and the truths of His Word, which mean everything to us. Our hearts are to be kept open, enlarged, during the whole of our pilgrim way, towards the Lord and in the service of His cause, to His praise. The Apostle Jude joins with Paul in exhorting us also to "enlarge our hearts" in devoted, sacrificing service, in verses 20 and 21 of his epistle—"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the holy spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

Things That Come Not Back

(Convention Address)

THERE is an old adage which says: Four things come not back. (1) A spoken word. (2) A sped arrow. (3) Time past. (4) A neglected opportunity. Three of these have impressed very much—a spoken word, time past and a neglected opportunity.

Firstly, let us concentrate on the "spoken word". A spoken word is one which **never** returns, whether true or otherwise. The spoken word of truth is the one which we do not wish to return but to accomplish its desired purpose, but on the other hand, an evilly spoken word would also never return but would accomplish the purpose on which it was sent.

Also a word spoken hastily in anger would never return, however sorrowfully regretted. In Isa. 55: 10, 11, we read—"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 to me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." The Word of God reveals the Divine Plan for the reconciliation of the sin-cursed and dying race. In this text we are given the blessed assurance that this divine purpose will not fail, that God will cause the things spoken in His Word to be accomplished. We must also have the Word in **our** hearts, but it should not be hidden there. If it is to be truly effective in our lives it must also be upon our lips. It was so with Jesus, who is represented prophetically as saying, in Psa. 40: 9, 10—"I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving kindness and thy truth from the great congregation."

It is a humbling thought to realise that the Word of God, which He declares shall not return unto Him void, can be communicated through **us, and will be**, if we are faithful to the commission which has been given to us by the

anointing of the spirit. How reassuring it is to know that even though our efforts are feeble, and we speak with lisping, stammering tongues, the “Word” will accomplish the good pleasure of the Lord.

We read in Isaiah—“I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.” “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of God shall stand for ever.” (Isa. 45: 23; 40: 8.) These Scriptures prove that the word of truth accomplishes its purpose and does not return.

We also have other Scriptures to prove that an evilly spoken word also accomplishes its purpose and does not return. James emphatically points out the necessity for the control of the tongue. James 3: 5, 6,—“Even so the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity among our members. It defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of Gehenna.”

Here we have a series of word pictures. The tongue is a world of iniquity in the sense that every iniquity in the world can be introduced descriptively by the tongue. Of course, the organ itself is never meant, but speech, which the tongue represents. By the tongue, by our speech, oral or written, every form of evil may find its highest power. The tongue can paint pictures more quickly and more vividly than any painter’s brush. Since the world about us is full of iniquity expressed in a thousand forms, it is within the range of the powers of the tongue to picture these and by the printing press, to distribute them to thousands of millions, and they come not back.

It is indeed a whole world of iniquity, if improperly used. Alas! that even amongst Christians this is frequently the case. Careless words, insinuations, hints, are dropped into the minds of neighbours or friends and, because these are already predisposed to evil thinking, evil surmising, etc., these words are like lighted matches dropped in a hayloft—apt to start a conflagration which may do incalculable injury to the neighbour and from him the sparks may fly far and near, working moral and spiritual havoc. The tongue is the match. Possibly James had specially in mind the course of the new creature and its dangers. What if it should be set on fire and the entire spiritual prospect blighted, destroyed! That this is his thought seems to be implied by the words, “and it is set on fire of Gehenna.”

The world in general has evil tongues, reprobate minds, but being unregenerate, the world’s children, are not in danger of Gehenna, the second death. But the Church, having received the grace of God in Christ, having been “begotten again,” has staked its all upon the attainment of the spiritual blessings which the Lord has promised to the faithful. In the Church, therefore, the power of the tongue is much more potent than elsewhere. It may set on fire the course of the new nature for some—a fire which may burn into the second death, and a fire which may not be confined to the one in whose heart it is ignited, but which may spread to others with similar effect, blighting the sweetness, the happiness, the Christ-likeness in the present life and destroying all future prospects. The tongue which praises God, curses men.

If we could but get a proper conception of the mighty potentialities of the tongue, it would make us almost afraid to speak a word lest we should speak amiss. Such a fear would be very helpful to us, as gradually then, a desire to speak the words of justice, love and soberness, the good tidings, should burst the restraint and find utterance, while the dread of the evil would still guard every expression. The result would be greater Godlikeness. Psa. 141: 3,—“Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.” Remember, brethren, these words come not back.

Secondly, let us consider the phrase “Time past.” The Apostle draws our attention to Eph. 5; 16,—“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” Col. 4: 5,—“Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.” The Lord’s people are to watch in every direction. Our time is consecrated to the Lord, and it is our duty to watch that we render it to Him. If we consecrate our time to Him, and then waste it in reading novels and other worldly literature or in playing games, we are not using our time properly. If we are too much engaged in work or in pleasure to have time to study, to watch properly, we find ourselves in difficulty.

It is necessary for us to engage in some kind of occupation in order to prove our faithfulness. Further, as other people are engaged in these same occupations, laboring for the comforts of life, we are compelled to compete with these to some extent. But as we see that we have a nobler business, we shall see to it that all these secular things in life are cut off, as far as possible, in order that we may have the more time for the Lord’s service. The old ambition to gain earthly things would lead us to lay up treasures on earth. But the hope set before us in the Gospel leads us rather to lay up treasures in heaven.

So, this class does with as few luxuries in life as possible, in order that they may lay down their time in His service. And the more they do this, the more they become copies of God’s dear Son. Thus, if anyone is engaged in

the carpentry business—the same in which our Lord engaged when He was a youth—he will say, How can I minimize the affairs of life so that I can give more of my time to the Lord and less to earthly matters? And so it will be his endeavour to cut off the desire for earthly luxuries.

In proportion, therefore, as we imbibe the truth, in that same proportion we shall be striving to sacrifice, to cut off, to devote to the Lord this time and talent and energy. We do not think that the Lord would wish us to be too particular regarding earthly things and waste valuable time. For instance, we might say, I will keep this house as unto the Lord. And we might give too much of our time and attention to different matters about the house. Whoever would give too much time to the housework or to other earthly affairs would show that he did not appreciate the privileges of the Lord's service. The time spent on earthly affairs comes not back.

Finally, let us analyze the third phrase: "A neglected opportunity" which also "comes not back." Hence the Scriptures. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." "How shall **we** escape, if **we** neglect so great salvation." (Gal. 6: 10; Heb. 2:3.) It must not be thought that the Lord penalizes all blindness, some of which seems unavoidable. No one with decency would reprove his fellow-man, generally, for being blind, whether the blindness be of the physical or mental kind. However, it is upon those who have the capacity to hear and yet will not understand, and upon those whose eyes can see, yet will not perceive, that the penalty of blindness is pronounced; that, in having scorned the marvellous opportunity of understanding and perceiving the mind of God, they will thereafter be too late and the opportunity passed on to others. If we use the opportunity we possess, to the best advantage according to our best judgment, with an eye single to the Master's glory, it is acceptable unto Him, as the faithfulness and greater results of those possessing greater opportunities. And every faithful one will be able to increase his opportunities and service and shall thus increase his joy.

Nevertheless, be sober in the sense of earnest appreciation of present opportunities and privileges in connection with the Lord's service—not thoughtlessly negligent, letting opportunities and privileges slip through our hands to be afterwards regretted. In whatever department of the Lord's service He is pleased to open the door of opportunity to us, we should enter it promptly and with energy—with zeal for Him and for the cause to which He has called us. This is one condition of our acceptableness to Him. If we are slothful, inattentive to opportunities, undoubtedly they will be removed from us, and given to others, for the Lord is abundantly able to raise up one or another to serve His cause without interfering with, or overruling our free moral agency—one opportunity missed may be the marring of our whole life.

One day a harsh word rashly said,
Upon an evil journey sped,
And, like a sharp and cruel dart,
It pierced a fond and loving heart,
It turned a friend into a foe,
And everywhere brought pain and woe.

A kind word followed it one day,
Flew swiftly on its blessed way,
It healed the wound, it soothed the pain,
And friends of old were friends again;
It made the hate and anger cease,
And everywhere brought joy and peace.

And yet the harsh word left a trace
The kind word could not quite efface;
And though the heart its love regained,
It bore a scar that long remained.
Friends could forgive, but not forget,
Or lose the sense of keen regret.

Oh! if we could but learn to know
How swift and sure our words can go,
How would we weigh with utmost care
Each thought before it sought the air,
And only speak the words that move
Like white-winged messengers of love!

In Due Time

TIME is one of the most important factors in God's plan. The days of creation were long periods of time; the time of man's experience with evil has been six days of a thousand years each; the days of redemption and of the development of the Church has been nearly two thousand years. Time has been necessary for the accomplishment of God's great work; and it has also been necessary in proving to man the righteousness of God's character. Only time could prove to men His invincible justice. Six thousand years ago His sentence of death passed upon mankind, and during all that time He has permitted generation after generation to go down into the grave in the midst of agony, blood and tears. And though He loved men so, even while they were yet sinners, that He spared not His own Son, but freely gave Him up for us all, yet He has never for a moment relented so as to interpose His power for the relief or release of the groaning creation; nor will He do so until His "due time"—the time which His wisdom appointed, which will be the very best time for the securing of the largest possible results to the race, both of knowledge and of advantageous experience, as well as for the development of several of the most important features of His plan. But, as time can only develop God's plan, so time only can manifest His love as well as His wisdom, His power and His justice.

Time will fully manifest the Divine wisdom in what seems to short-sighted humanity like pitiless delay. Already those who are privileged to view by faith the Divine plan see the necessity of time for its full accomplishment. It is in view of such necessity that the children of God are frequently exhorted to patience. God has kindly brought us to His standpoint of view, and bidden us look into the glorious future—to the outcome of His plan; and in proportion, as we are able to comprehend and believe it, we may rest and rejoice in it. But in the meantime, being thus graciously refreshed by the cheering prospect, we must patiently wait for the end, however painful the waiting season may be.

Patience is a virtue which our heavenly Father desires to cultivate in us; and He manifests in Himself the grandest example of it. Through all the centuries past He has patiently endured the reproaches of those who, failing to understand the course of His wisdom in executing justice and in working out the deep designs of His abounding grace, attributed evil, and only evil, to His glorious and holy character. He knows that "in due time" His character will be fully vindicated, and so He patiently waits and works and endures. So also our Lord Jesus waits and endures. He endured great humiliation in coming to our low estate. Then, as a man, He patiently endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself and ungrateful persecution, even unto death, from those He came to serve. And, like His heavenly Father, through it all He was cheered in consideration of that "due time," though then in the far distant future, when His character, and also the Father's character, would be fully vindicated and manifested to every creature in heaven and in earth. And still our blessed Lord Jesus and our adorable heavenly Father await with patience the grand consummation. So, in similar attitude of mind, we must wait, for the servant is not above his Lord, and our rejoicing in view of the future will, if we have the mind of Christ, be not only because of our own prospective vindication and glory, but also in prospect of the vindication and glory of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the prospective everlasting triumph of truth and righteousness.

The waiting time is by no means a time of rejoicing, except in hope. This is a time when they that live godly must suffer persecution, when our eyes must look upon scenes of sorrow and mourning, when our ears must hear the wails of distress, and when our feeble flesh must experience the pangs of death. But oh, there is a glorious release to come "in due time." Wait for it patiently. "Let patience have her perfect work!" Submit to the humbling process. The Church's pathway of present humiliation leads to the future glory.

"Humble yourselves," says the Apostle, "under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." Do not make the great mistake of seeking present exaltation at the expense of that which is to come in due time to those who patiently endure to the end. It is only in proportion as any turn their eyes away from the glory to follow in due time, and thus lose faith in it, that they begin to prize the trifling recompenses which the world offers for the sacrifice of their birthright. Let us, therefore, dearly beloved, keep the eye of faith fixed upon the hope set before us in the Gospel; and, forgetting those things that are behind—all worldly ambitions, etc.—let us press toward the mark for the prize of our High Calling, which shall indeed be realized by the faithful—"in due time"; for, "Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it." His purposes cannot fail, nor His Word return unto Him void.

We Shall Not All Sleep

THE manner in which the members in Christ are changed from the earthly to the heavenly condition is of much importance to those who desire to be fully informed respecting all that the Lord has been pleased to reveal to His

children by His Word and spirit.

While many seem to see clearly that the Lord's people all down the Gospel Age, on finishing the earthly way in death, have fallen asleep, to await the time when "the dead in Christ shall rise first," some have difficulty in understanding how the last members—those "who are alive and remain unto the presence of the Lord"—are dealt with in fulfilment of the Apostle's words, "we shall not all sleep."

At the present time when the truth concerning the presence of Christ is being discredited by many, it is not surprising that the change of the last members of the Church should also be misunderstood and interpreted to support the incorrect view of the manner of our Lord's return.

It should be clearly noted that the Apostle in 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52, does not imply that any of the "we" class—the Lord's people—shall not die. He had previously stated in this same chapter, verses 6 and 18, that some of the saints had already "fallen asleep" in death. But now, in regard to those of the same class who would be living on the earth "at the last trump," he would show them "a mystery." The procedure of their change to "the image of the heavenly," at the consummation of the human sacrifice, would be different in that they would not need to sleep in the unclothed condition, because at this time-- the presence of Christ—the dead in Christ would have been raised already, so there would be no necessity for these last members to sleep, on their proving faithful unto death.

In thinking of the new creature, the new life, being transferred from the earthen vessel to the spiritual house (God giving to every seed its own body), that we may be like Christ, "for we shall see Him as He is," it may appear to some that the conscious existence would be unbroken, when the Apostle says it will come about "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." This, however, is not the Apostle's thought. The new creature could have no conscious existence apart from a body, and as the death of the earthly body is real and true in the case of all the saints right down the Gospel Age, so the unconsciousness before the union with the spirit body is just as real and true in every case, but the mystery is, that now in "the days of the Son of Man"—the presence of Christ—the union of the new creature, the new life, with the spirit body will come so quickly following the release from the earthen vessel that there will be no sleeping period, no remaining in the unconscious state, the transition period being so short. Hence, he uses the words, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: (during the time of Christ's presence, the harvest time). Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14: 13.)

Pilgrim Way Ended

Word was received of the passing of our Sister Jackson of Geelong on the 10th June, after a prolonged period of ill health in a nursing home in Geelong. Known mainly to the friends in Geelong and Melbourne, also to the Adelaide brethren, having attended the Easter Conventions there, our dear Sister truly loved the Lord and His truth very dearly.

Having responded to the radio message in 1944, and attending the meetings in Geelong for some years, Sister Jackson was stricken with a physical weakness some years ago, but was ever cheerful and mentally alert to appreciate the message of the truth, even when unable to speak or move without assistance. When visited by a member of the Geelong Class and having her glasses adjusted, she would delight in the message of the truth, just as others who have all their faculties. This surely was a good witness of our Sister's devotion to the Lord, and having her mind established on things above, looking forward to a place in the Lord's Kingdom with thankfulness and patient endurance.

"Peoples Paper" Delayed.

This issue of "Peoples Paper" has been unavoidably delayed at the linotypers.

Little Foxes and Little Lambs, a humorous, yet thought-provoking, illustrated book of clever poetry. The first poems call attention to the "little foxes" in people's lives—common faults and failures such as lying, evil-speaking, pride, laziness, anger. Next, attention is given to the "little lambs", such as truth, humility, patience, courtesy. Children will enjoy coloring the pictures that go with the poems. Paperback, 63 pages, price 70c post paid.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

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



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Abide in Christ

(Convention Address)

“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” (John 15:4.)

DURING the life of Jesus on earth, He frequently said to His disciples, “follow me”. It was when about to leave them that He used these words which indicate the more spiritual and intimate union with Himself in glory, **“abide in me.”**

There are many earnest followers of Jesus from whom the meaning of these words, with the blessed experience they promise, is somewhat hidden. They seem not to have realised to what closeness of union, to what intimacy of fellowship, to what wondrous oneness of life and interest, He invited them when He said, “abide in me”.

“I am the vine, ye are the branches” (John 15: 5). It was in the parable of the Vine that our Lord first used the expression, “abide in me.” That parable so simple, yet rich in its teachings, gives us the best and most complete illustrations of the meaning of our Lord’s command, and the union to which He invited us. The connection between the vine and the branch is a living one. No external temporary union will suffice; no work of man can effect it. The branch, whether an original or an ingrafted one, is such only by the Creator’s own work, in virtue of which the life, the sap, the fatness and the fruitfulness of the vine communicate themselves to the branch. Just so is it with the believer. His union with his Lord is no work of human wisdom or human will, but an act of God, by which the closest and most complete life union is effected between the Son of God and the redeemed one. God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts. The same spirit which dwelt, and still dwells, in the Son becomes the life of the believer into Him.

So close is the union between the vine and the branch, that each is nothing without the other. To the vine the branch owes its place in the vineyard, its life and its fruitfulness, and so the Lord says, “without me ye can do nothing.” The believer can each day be pleasing to God only in that which he does through the power of Christ. Christ dwells in him. The daily inflowing of the life-sap of the holy spirit is the only power to bring forth fruit. The Christian lives alone in Him, and is each moment dependent on Him alone.

No less indispensable than the vine to the branches are the branches to the vine. Such is the wonderful condescension of the grace of Jesus, that just as His people are dependent upon Him, He has made Himself dependent upon them. Without His disciples, His bride, He will not dispense His blessings to the world; He will not offer them the grapes, the fruit. Marvel not! It is His own appointment, and this is the honour to which He has called the redeemed ones, that as indispensable as He is to them, that from Him their fruit may be found, so indispensable are they to Him that through them His fruit may abound. (See Eph. 1: 22, 23, Diaglott.) Beloved, let us meditate upon this mystery of the perfect union between Christ and His members. All that the vine possesses belongs to the branches. The vine does not gather the soil’s fatness and sweetness for itself. All that it gathers is at the disposal of the branches. And Jesus, to whom we owe our life, completely gives Himself for us and to us. “The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them.” “He that believeth into me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater shall he do.” All His fulness and all His riches are for the true child of God. O beloved! the vine does not live for itself, keeps nothing for itself, but exists only for the branches. All that Jesus is and has, He is for His body members. He has no interest separate from His church, His bride, and as our representative He stands before the Father.

The branch, likewise, does not exist for itself, but to bear fruit which will proclaim the excellence of the vine. It

has no reason for its existence excepting to be of service to the vine. As Jesus has given Himself so wholly over to him, the believer feels himself urged to be wholly his Lord's. Every power of his being, every moment of his life, every thought and feeling belong to Jesus, that from Him, and for Him, he may bring forth fruit. As he realises what the vine is to the branch, and what the branch is intended to be to the vine, he feels that he has but one thing to think of and live for, and that is the will, the glory, the work, and the kingdom of his blessed Lord, the bringing forth of fruit to the glory of His Name. (1 Cor. 6: 19, 20.)

The branches are for fruit, and for fruit alone. "Every branch that beareth not fruit, he taketh away." The branch needs leaves for the maintenance of its own life and the perfection of its fruit. The fruit itself it bears to give away to those around. As the believer enters into his calling as a branch, he perceives that he must forget self, and live entirely for others, love to sacrifice and to do good unto all men, especially to the household of faith. It is for fruit, "much fruit" that the Father, the Husbandman, has made us one with Jesus.

O wondrous parable of the vine, unveiling the mysteries of Divine love, of the heavenly life; how little have we understood thee! Jesus the living vine in heaven, and we, the living branches on earth. How little have we understood how great our need, and also how imperfect our claim to all His fulness! How little understood His perfect claim to all our emptiness. Let us in its beautiful light study the wondrous union between Jesus and His church, His body, until it becomes to us the guide into full communion with our blessed Lord. Let us listen and believe until our whole being cries out, "Jesus is indeed to me the true vine, bearing me, nourishing me, supplying me, using me, and filling me to the full, to make me bring forth fruit abundantly." Then shall I not fear to say, "I am indeed a branch to Jesus, the true vine, abiding in Him, resting in Him, waiting for Him, serving Him, and living only that through me, too, He may show forth the riches of His grace, and in due time give His fruit to a perishing world." "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine." (Song of Sol. 6: 3.)

So, beloved, it is when we try thus to understand the meaning of this parable that the blessed command spoken in connection with it will come home to us in its true power. The thought of what the vine is to the branch, and Jesus to the child of God, will give new force to the words, "abide in me." It will be as though He says, "Think, child, how completely I belong to thee; I have joined myself inseparably to thee; all the fulness and fatness of the vine are thine in very deed. Now thou art one in me, be assured that all I have is wholly thine. It is my interest and my honour to have thee a fruitful branch. Only abide in me, yield thyself wholly to my teaching and rule, simply trust my love and grace, my promises. Only believe I am wholly thine. I am the true vine, thou art the branch. Abide in me." What sayest thou, O child of God? Shall I longer hesitate, or think how hard it is to live like a branch because I thought of it as something I had to accomplish? Shall I not believe that I am in Him, He Himself will keep me, and enable me to abide? Beloved, is not our answer "Yes, I will abide in Thee, blessed Lord Jesus"? O Saviour, how unspeakable is Thy love. *We* can only yield ourselves to Thy love with the prayer day by day that Thou wouldst unfold somewhat of its precious truth, and so encourage and strengthen Thy loving children to do what our hearts long to do, ever, only, wholly to abide in Thee.

The Great Husbandman

It is God Himself who has united you to Christ. "Of God are ye in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, both righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (deliverance) (1 Cor. 1: 30). "My Father is the husbandman" (John 15: 1). The whole Christian life depends upon the clear consciousness of our position in Christ—"Of God are ye in Christ Jesus." We must remember our union to Christ, especially that it is not our own doing, but the work of God Himself. As the holy spirit teaches us to realise this, we shall see what a source of assurance and strength it must become to us. It is of God alone that I am in Christ, then God Himself, the Infinite One, becomes my security for all that I can need or wish in seeking to abide in Christ. Let us ask the Father to assist us to understand what it means, this wonderful "Of God in Christ." (See Eph. 2: 4-10.) in becoming partakers of this union with Christ, there is a work God does, and also a work for us to do. God does His work by moving us to do our work. The work of God is hidden and silent; what we do is something distinct and tangible. For instance, conversion and faith, prayer and obedience are conscious acts of which we can give a clear account while the spiritual quickening and strengthening which come from above are secret and beyond the reach of human sight. So it may be that when the believer says, "I am in Christ Jesus", he may be looking more on the work which he did than to that wondrous secret working of God by which he was united to God in Christ. It is of great consequence that the mind should be led to see that behind our turning, believing, and accepting of our Lord Jesus, there was. God's almighty spirit doing its work, inspiring our will and carrying out His own purpose of love, in planting us in Christ Jesus. So, dear brethren, as we meditate upon this, the Divine side of the work of salvation, we learn to praise and to worship with new exultation and rejoice more than ever in the Divine favour which has made us partakers of Christ. At each step, as we review it, the song will come—"Of God are we in Christ Jesus",

and “To Him be all the praise.”

O, what hope and strength, what a sure standing ground it gives us as we rest our right to Christ and all His fullness on nothing less than the Father’s own purpose and work. We have thought of Christ the vine, and the called one as the branch; let us not forget that other precious work, “**My Father is the husbandman.**” The Saviour said, “Every plant which my Father hath not planted shall be rooted up”, but every branch grafted by Him into the true vine can never be plucked out of His hand. As it was the Father to whom Christ owed His life as the vine, so to the Father the called one owes his place and his security in Christ. The same love and delight with which the Father watched over the Beloved Son watches over every member of His Body, all who are in Christ Jesus. (See Phil. 2: 13.)

Oh, what confident trust this faith implies, not only as to the being kept in safety to the end, but especially in the being able to fulfil in every point the object for which we have been invited into Christ. The branch is as much in His charge and keeping as the vine. His honour is as concerned in the well-being and growth of the branch as of the vine. God, who chose Christ for the Vine, fitted Him thoroughly for the work He had to perform. God, who has chosen us and planted us in Christ, has thereby engaged to secure, if we will but let Him, by yielding ourselves to Him, that we too shall be to His praise in Christ Jesus. Oh! that we did but fully realise this, what confidence and urgency it would give to our prayer to the God and Father of our dear Saviour! How it would quicken the sense of dependence, and make us see that praying without ceasing is indeed the one need of our lives. An unceasing waiting upon God, who has united us to Christ to perfect His own Divine work! To work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure! What a motive this would be for the highest activity in the maintenance of a fruitful branch life. Beloved, motives are mighty powers; it is of infinite importance to have them high and clear. Here, surely, is the highest we can have. “You are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Eph. 2: 10); grafted by Him into Christ; what for? Unto the bringing forth of much fruit! Whatever God creates is exquisitely suited to its end. He created the sun to give light; how perfectly it does its work! He created the eye to see; how beautifully it fulfils its object! He created the “new man” unto good works; how admirably it is fitted for its purpose!

So, then, dear brethren, each branch can say, “Of God I am in Christ, created anew, made a branch of the vine, fitted for fruit bearing.” Oh, that believers would cease looking mostly at their old natures, and complaining of their weaknesses, as if God called them to what they were unfitted for. Would that they would believingly and joyfully accept the wondrous revelation of how God is uniting them to Christ, has constituted Himself the Husbandman taking charge of their spiritual growth and fruitfulness. How sickly hesitance would disappear, and under the influence of this mighty motive—faith in the faithfulness of Him of whom they are in Christ—their whole nature would rise to accept and fulfil their glorious destiny. So, then, beloved, as we press onwards and upwards to our glorious inheritance, let us yield ourselves to the mighty influence of these wondrous words, “Of God are ye in Christ Jesus.”

Let us take more time to meditate upon this deep truth; our union with Christ is indeed the work of the Heavenly Father. Listen to Jesus as He speaks to us. “Abide in me.” “My Father is the Husbandman; of Him thou art in me, and to Him and to His glory shall be the fruit thou bearest.”

The Fruitage

“He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.” When we live by faith in the Son of God, the fruit of the spirit will be seen in our lives. There are times when the great Husbandman trims and prunes the vine. “Every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” Thus Jesus with solemn tenderness explained the purpose of the Husbandman. The pruning may cause pain, but it is the Father who applies the knife. He works with no wanton hand, or indifferent heart. Some branches may be found trailing on the ground; these must be cut from earthly supports to which their tendrils are fastening. They must reach heavenward and find their support in God. Excessive foliage which draws life-sap from the fruit must be pruned off. The overgrowth must be cut out to give room for the healing beams of the Sun of Righteousness, so the Husbandman prunes away harmful growth that the fruit may be richer. “Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit.” The Lord indicated the kind of fruit when He said, “This is my commandment that ye love one another, even as I have loved you.” The fulfilling of this commandment is to be the convincing and indisputable token of discipleship. Let us try to understand how this is so. We know that God is love, and that Christ came to reveal this, not as a doctrine, merely, but as a life. His life in its wonderful self-abasement, self-sacrifice, was above everything the embodiment of Divine love, the showing forth to men, in such human manifestations as they could understand, how God loves.

In Christ’s love to the unworthy and ungrateful, in His humbling Himself to death, He simply lived and acted

out the life of Divine love. Just as our Lord Jesus showed forth to the world the love of the Father (we remember how our Saviour said to Philip, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"), so we the disciples and followers of Christ, by living and loving just as He did, are to be perpetual witnesses to the love that gave itself to die. Amidst all the diversity of character, of language, or of station, they are to prove that love has made them members of one body, and of each other, and has led them to forget and sacrifice self for the sake of the other. Their life of love is the chief evidence of being children of God. Of all the evidence of a true saint of God, this is the mightiest and most convincing. It is the love to each other as true followers of Christ that is ever put in the foreground as the link between love to God alone and to men in general. In Christ's intercourse with His disciples, this brotherly love finds the law of its conduct. It studies His forgiving and forbearing spirit, with the seventy times seven as its measure. As it looks to His unwearied patience and humility, His meekness and lowliness and entire devotion to their interests, it accepts the instruction, "I have left you an example that ye should do as I have done to you" (John 13: 15). Following His example, each will not live for himself, but for others. The law of kindness is on the tongue, for love has vowed that no unkind word shall pass its lips. It refuses even to listen to, or to think, evil of others. In gentleness and loving-kindness, in courtesy and generosity, in its life of blessing, the Divine love which has been shed abroad in every heart of the children of God, shines out as it did in the life of Jesus. Beloved, do not our hearts bound at the thought of the unspeakable privilege of thus showing forth the likeness of Him who has loved us? Does it seem too high for us to attain? Let us remember that we have but to "abide in Him" to be able to love like Him. Let us regard this abiding in Him more than ever as an abiding in His love. Rooted and grounded in a love that passeth knowledge, we receive of its fulness and we learn to love. We learn to love the brethren, even those who may be the most trying and unlovable to us. With the love of Christ in our hearts, this command will cease to be a burden, and become a joy. "This is my command, that ye love one another even as I have loved you." (See 2 Cor. 4: 10, 11.) This is surely some of the "much fruit" which the great Husbandman is looking for. Beloved, let us try in all simplicity and honesty to translate this language into the daily doings in our homes and daily conduct, that all men may see that we are living with Jesus, and learning, little by little, His sweet and gentle ways. Let our tempers be under the rule of our Lord Jesus. Let the gentleness that refuses to take offence, that is always ready to excuse, to think and hope the best, mark our intercourse with all. Let the love that seeketh not its own, but is ever ready to wash each other's feet, or even to give its life for them, be our aim. Let our life be one of self-sacrifice, ever seeking that the welfare of others may be our joy. Let us yield ourselves as obedient learners to the guidance of the holy spirit. By the grace of God, the most commonplace life can be transfigured with the brightness of heavenly beauty, as the infinite love of the Divine nature shines through our frail humanity. Beloved, let us praise God; we are called to love as Jesus loves, as our Heavenly Father loves.

Then let us with fresh faith accept the blessed injunction, "abide in me, and I in you . . . abide in my love." (See 2 Cor. 3: 18.)

Jesus, Thy life is mine!
Dwell evermore in me;
And let me see
That nothing can untwine
My life from Thine.

Thy life in me be shown!
Lord, I would henceforth seek
To think and speak
Thy thoughts, Thy words alone,
No more my own.

Thy love, Thy joy, Thy peace,
Continuously impart
Unto my heart;
Fresh springs, that never cease,
But still increase.

The blest reality
Of resurrection power,
Thy Church's dower,
Life more abundantly,
Lord, give to me!

Thy fullest gift, O Lord,
Now *at* Thy feet I claim,
Through Thy dear name!
And touch the rapturous chord
Of praise forth poured.

Jesus, my life is Thine,
And evermore shall be Hidden in Thee!
For nothing can untwine
Thy life from mine.
F.R.H.

The Institute's Work

ANOTHER year's work for the Berean Bible Institute "has been completed with the close of April, and once again in making a brief report, it is with much thanksgiving to the Lord for His blessings received in connection with the privilege of serving 'His cause of truth in co-operation with the brethren throughout this great country, and in other lands. The association with the dear friends has been most encouraging, as they also rejoice in the message of the truth, and seek to let their light shine for the benefit of others who have ears to hear.

Regular contact has been maintained with many of the brethren and friends throughout this land and overseas by means of our bi-monthly "Peoples Paper" and it has been encouraging to know that the contents of our little journal have been appreciated again over the twelve months past. To all contributors to the columns of our "Peoples Paper" sincere thanks is expressed again at this time.

In view of the high publishing costs, and particularly the increased postage rates now operating, it has been decided to increase the annual subscription of our "Peoples Paper" to 75c, and also gradually adjust all subscriptions to expire at the end of each year. As it now takes 36c out of each subscription to post the "Paper" to individual subscribers, all readers, we feel sure, will understand the reason for the slight increase.

It could be mentioned that the "Peoples Paper" has not been registered as a periodical over the years past, to gain a cheaper postage rate, because a goodly number are used as free samples to the many enquirers through the radio and other witness work. Thus it does not qualify for registered periodical postage, but we feel the supplying of the "Peoples Paper" free to all enquirers for some months, to encourage their interest, more than compensates for cheaper postage, being a valuable witness in the service of the Lord in these days. A number of the "Paper" is also now gladly supplied to India for distribution there among the brethren who read English.

A quantity of tracts has also been distributed throughout the year to various parts of this land, and also to our brethren in India for general use amongst the English speaking people. The article which appeared in the last issue of "Peoples Paper"—"Armageddon—Then World Peace in God's Plan"—will also be available in tract form very soon. Friends who can place these tracts wisely, where good may be done, are invited to procure supplies right away. Also all who can use the small "Do You Know?" slips are also urged to have supplies on hand for opportunities of service in a more general way, as these slips are cheap in comparison with the larger tracts which are mainly for people who give indications that they will read them carefully. The General Tract Fund covers the cost of all tracts and the deficiency in publishing the "Peoples Paper".

During the year past scores of requests for Bibles have been received from young people of Ghana and Nigeria, West Africa. Many free Bibles have been supplied together with literature, but at present the requests are so numerous that New Testaments are now to be used, with literature, which we trust and pray may be a blessing to the poor young people of that region. It will take some time to assess what benefits are being gained from supplying these requests for Bibles; *we* have faith that some good will be done, by the Lord's overruling.

Witnessing the message of the kingdom has been continued throughout the year over the radio on 3GL Gee-long with quite good response generally. Interested listeners are very often telephoning for the free copies of the broadcasts and booklets offered immediately the session ends, and give evidence of appreciating the messages on the Lord's gracious plan of salvation. Other listeners at a distance also communicate through the mail from various parts of Victoria and Tasmania. A number now receive the "Peoples Paper" regularly through contact over the

radio. Lectures are also advertised over the radio when held from time to time in Melbourne. During the year the cost of broadcasting increased considerably, but as the brethren within hearing range also look forward to the sessions and find the messages refreshing, we are glad that this opportunity of service is still possible, in the Lord's providence.

The balance sheets of the General Tract Fund and Radio Fund reveal the financial side of the work over the year past. We are grateful that, in the Lord's providence, the voluntary contributions of the friends who are sincerely committed to the Lord and His cause, provide the means to continue this work. This includes some legacies sent along to assist, as unto the Lord. To all our brethren and friends who have gladly made sacrifices of time and the good things of the present life to assist so well, sincere thanks are expressed on behalf of the Lord's work, knowing that all is rendered as unto Him. Would all our dear friends remember the efforts before the Lord in prayer, that all may be done faithfully, in humble service in accord with His good will.

The year past has seen further development of events expected to transpire prior to the setting up of Christ's Kingdom. The signs are even more pronounced that the passing of the present order is well under way in this "day of his preparation, when the fir trees (nations) shall be terribly shaken" (Nahum 2: 3, 4), to make way for Christ's Kingdom. We are glad and thankful that this is all preparing a clean and worthy foundation upon which our Lord's Kingdom will be established to bring in real peace, happiness and lasting life to the poor groaning creation. It is important to remember again that the Lord's people are to have no part in the pulling down or propping up of the present order. Their privilege is to "hold forth the word of life", the glad message of the kingdom, which calms and comforts all who have ears to hear. All who are the Lord's people truly delight to trust Him in all faith and confidence that all things work together for their good, because they love the Lord, and which will also yet bring about the salvation of humanity, to God's praise.

General Tract Fund

To Credit Balance 1/5/70	„ Donations .	
„ Sale of Used Stamps		
By Free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples Paper"	„ Hall Rents, Newspaper Advertisements	
„ General Expenses (Office, etc.)	
Towards Personal and Household Expenses	.. „ Bibles and Testaments for West Africa	„ Postage
„ Travel and Sundries		
„ Credit Balance 1/5/71		
		\$2,260.13

Radio Fund

To Credit Balance 1/5/70	\$105.50
„ Donations	739.60
	\$845.10
By Radio Station 3GL	\$634.70
„ Recording Tapes	36.30
„ Printing Dialogues	20.00
„ Bank Charges	8.60
„ Credit Balance 1/5/71	145.50
	\$845.10

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$12.50.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at \$10.50.

"The Creator's Grand Design" is the title of a 240 page cloth bound book, from the "Dawn" brethren. It is a helpful study covering the plan of God as a whole. Supplied at \$1.25, post paid.

Poems of Dawn, 320 pages of original poems with additional choice Christian poems are now in stock. Excellent as gifts. Black simulated leather, handy size, price \$2.20, plus postage **25c**.

Convention News

THOSE who were privileged to meet together at the Easter Convention in Adelaide received a rich blessing from the Giver of all good gifts. Our hearts are filled with thankfulness to our gracious Heavenly Father for the many blessings bestowed during the four days of happy fellowship around His precious Word.

It was a pleasure to welcome to the Convention a number of brethren from the Melbourne Class, also a brother and sister from the Perth Class, a sister from a country centre in Victoria, and a brother from a country district in South Australia.

The portions of Scripture chosen for consideration as Bible Studies were Romans 8: 31-39; John 14: 6-16; and 2 Peter 1: 3-11. The exhortations and encouragement of these Scriptures were most helpful and profitable to us all.

The topics of the addresses given by various brethren were, "Peter Wept"; "The Evil One"; "The Royal Law of Love"; "Consecration and Sanctification"; "Hasting Unto the Coming of the Day of God"; "True Worship"; "Faith, Hope and Love"; "Worshipping God in Vain"; "We Have an Advocate With the Father"; "The Lord's Prayer"; "Character Witnesses"; "Abide in Christ" and "The Divine Nature."

The "Hymns we Love and Why" session was, as usual, much appreciated, as also were the Praise and Testimony sessions. The Lord's spirit of loving, humble service was much in evidence, being reflected in the efforts of the brethren who spoke to us words of encouragement and loving exhortation, and *we* are thankful for the helpful assistance of the brethren who served as chairmen for the Bible Studies. Much appreciation was also expressed for the loving services of the sisters who attended so efficiently to our needs by supplying tea and refreshments, etc.

It was also a pleasure to receive many messages of Christian love and Scriptural greetings from various Bible Classes and individual brethren. Also sympathy was expressed for some of our members unable to be present because of ill-health. The Scriptural message sent by the Convention to the brethren everywhere is found in the Apostle Paul's prayer in Eph. 3: 16-21, and also Hymn 35 (Dawn 23), "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love."

The Convention closed with the usual closing feature, the Love Feast, during which members file around shaking hands with each other while singing "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love." Then the hymn, "God be with you till we meet again", was sung, followed by the closing prayer of thanks and praise to God for His goodness and mercies, asking also His grace to help us to serve Him faithfully and joyfully *in* the days ahead. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

Memorial Observances

Melbourne

ONCE again in response to our Lord's request that we observe the Memorial of His death "in remembrance of Him", the brethren in Melbourne gladly assembled on the anniversary of our Saviour's loving sacrifice for us and for all mankind. Previous studies in Mark's Gospel on the institution of Christ's Memorial refreshed our minds and hearts respecting our Lord's delight to do the Father's will and become "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

Our Service comprised a number of lovely hymns appropriate for the occasion and sung with thanksgiving to God. Prayers of gratitude for the gift of our Saviour, and on behalf of all the Lord's dear people everywhere were offered before the throne of grace. Scripture readings from the Gospel of Matthew 26: 17-75; 27: 1-50 brought home to us again what it cost our dear Redeemer in giving His life a ransom for humanity. An address on the privileges we enjoy and the responsibilities of the Lord's people as they seek to follow in the steps of the Lord added to the helpfulness of the occasion. Asking the Lord's blessing upon the emblems they were partaken of with thankful hearts, demonstrating the desire of each one to walk in the steps of our Master, by His grace.

Geelong

Two separate studies completing Psalm 22 proved a very helpful preparation for the Memorial. Meeting together for the observance the Service consisted of the singing of three hymns, Nos. 2, 259 and 128, from the “Bible Students’ Hymnal”, the reading of the Scripture passages Numbers 21: 4-9; John 3: 14-21; 6: 47-59; 17: 1-11; 18: 1-13; 19: 1-18; 1 Cor. 11: 23-26, prayer, and a short address. We then gladly partook of the emblems.

Adelaide

The brethren of the Adelaide Class met together as in previous years to keep the Memorial of our Saviour’s sacrificial death. This Service is always a blessed one, and we gladly observe it in obedience to our Lord’s request—”This do in remembrance of me.” We are thankful to our Heavenly Father, and also to our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for the grace so freely bestowed upon us. We realise that all our hopes of future life and blessing are dependent upon the ransom-sacrifice of our Lord Jesus.

The Memorial Service also becomes an occasion for the fully consecrated followers of Christ to revive and renew our vows of consecration to be dead with Christ, and to seek for renewed grace to enable us to “die daily” to self-will, and to the world, and to “lay up treasure in heaven.” We do well to consider the exhortation of the Apostle in Heb. 12: 3—”Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” We do well to keep the example of Christ continually before us —His patience, His zeal, His humility and His supreme love for God; also His great love for His brethren and for mankind.

Gladly do we yield our hearts and our mortal bodies to Him in thankful appreciation, realising that we are not our own, but we belong to Christ, having been bought with His precious blood. We seek His grace to enable us to “walk in newness of life”, “looking unto Jesus”, and seeking by “abiding in Him”, to bring forth, by His grace, more and more of the fruitage of His spirit. The Apostle assures us in Rom. 6: 5—”If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death (His sin-atonement death) we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”

Perth

Our little group in Perth again remembered our Lord’s great sacrifice for sins. Our minds were directed to our Lord’s 31 years of sacrifice and especially His last days when He endured the greatest tests of faith, culminating in crucifixion on Calvary’s Hill. Yes, Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us, so we kept the Memorial feast, in memory of our Saviour’s dying love.

We were glad to renew our trust and allegiance to Christ, partaking of His merits and being washed with His blood. We are also happy to continue to serve our Lord and suffer any reproach for His name. As the emblems so fittingly symbolise our Lord’s broken body and shed blood, so we partook of these, and further attested our desire to follow in our Master’s steps and give our sacrificed lives to Him. May we be “faithful unto death”, so we may receive a crown as overcomers. Praise the Lord!

Sydney

The brethren who are in Sydney and Canberra met together at Leichhardt this year also to celebrate the Memorial of Christ’s death. It was a solemn commemoration with a very appropriate discourse, prayers and hymns, which brought our minds to that night when our Lord Jesus took the place of the typical lamb.

Even though it was not a night when we could “speak to each other joyfully with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”, we all felt richly blessed. After the final hymn was sung we all left quietly for our homes realising that the Lord was in our midst, and that He accepted that simple feast which we kept in His memory.

Queensland

Two small groups of brethren gathered for the Memorial in Brisbane and Toowoomba. From Brisbane—On the 8th April, after 6 p.m., we celebrated the Passover. Our Beloved Redeemer told us to do this “in remembrance of Him”, Matthew 26: 19-28. Our little company took part in breaking the bread and drinking the wine. As Jesus said, Where two or three meet in my name, I am among them. That is why we were very -happy spiritually and fleshly, that our beloved Heavenly Father gave us strength, health and opportunity to celebrate the Memorial Supper. We asked God in prayer to bless us and guide us, and also all the brothers and sisters all over the world, that they may be in peace and love, and be full of gladness while celebrating the Last Supper.

From Toowoomba—We were pleased and grateful to be able to gather at Toowoomba and be with the few brethren there for the Memorial. Our hearts were lifted up in appreciation of our dear Saviour as details of His great sacrifice, and of this Memorial that He asked His followers to keep, were brought to our attention. We heard a tape by Brother Fay on the type and antitype. *We* partook of the emblems in humble, silent gratitude, and may our lives be worthy of these privileges and blessings.

On Jehovah's Right Hand

THE following from the Bible study—"The Divine Plan of the Ages"—written in the last century, will no doubt be of good interest to our readers at the present time, as in the past.

There are two texts chiefly relied upon by those who claim that the Lord will not come until after the Millennium, to which we would here call attention. One is "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24: 14). They claim this as having reference to the conversion of the world before the end of the Gospel Age. But **witnessing** to the world does not imply the conversion of the world. The text says nothing about how the testimony will be received. This witness has already been given. Reports of the Bible Societies show that the Gospel has been published in every language of earth, though not all of earth's millions have received it. No, not one half of the hundreds of millions living have ever heard the name of Jesus. Yet the condition of the text is fulfilled: the gospel has been preached in all the world for a **witness—to every nation**.

The Apostle (Acts 15: 14) tells that the **main object** of the gospel in the present age is "to take out a people" for Christ's name—the overcoming Church, which, at His second advent, will be united to Him and receive His name. The witnessing to the world during this age is a secondary object.

The other text is, "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Psa. 110: 1). The vague, indefinite idea regarding this text seems to be that Christ sits on a material throne somewhere in the heavens until the work of subduing all things is accomplished for Him through the Church, and that then He comes to reign. This is a misconception. The throne of God referred to is not a material one, but refers to His supreme authority and rulership; and the Lord Jesus has been exalted to a share in that rulership. Paul declares, "God hath highly exalted him and given him a name above every name."

He hath given Him **authority** above every other, next to the Father. If Christ sits upon a material throne until His enemies are made His footstool (all subdued), then, of course, He cannot come until all things are subdued. But if "right hand" in this text refers, not to a fixed locality and bench, but, as we claim, to power, authority, rulership, it follows that the text under consideration would in no wise conflict with the other Scripture which teaches that He comes to "subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3: 21), by virtue of the power vested in Him. To illustrate: Emperor William is on the throne of Germany, we say, yet we do not refer to the royal bench, and as a matter of fact he seldom occupies it. When we say that he is on the throne, we mean that he rules Germany. Right hand signifies the chief place, position or excellence or favor, next to the chief ruler. Thus Prince Bismarck was exalted or seated at the right hand of power, by the German Emperor; and Joseph was at the right hand of Pharaoh in the kingdom of Egypt—not literally, but after the customary figure of speech. Jesus' words to Caiaphas agree with this thought: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on **the right hand of power**, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26: 64). He will be on the right hand when coming, and will remain on the right hand during the Millennial Age, and forever.

A further examination of God's revealed plans will give a broader view of the object of both the first and second advents; and we should remember that both events stand related as parts of one plan. The specific work of the first advent was to **redeem** men; and that of the second is to **restore**, and bless, and liberate the redeemed. Having given His life a ransom for all, our Saviour ascended to present that sacrifice to the Father, thus making reconciliation for man's iniquity. He tarries and permits "the prince of this world" to continue the rule of evil, until after the selection of "the Bride, the Lamb's wife", who, to be accounted **worthy** of such honor, must overcome the influences of the present evil world. Then the work of giving to the world of mankind the great blessings secured to them by His sacrifice will be due to commence, and He will come forth to bless all the families of the earth.

(Those of our readers who have not yet read and studied "The Divine Plan of the Ages" are highly recommended to do so. It is a "key" to the opening up of the Scriptures. Copies are supplied in strong paper covers for 75c post paid, 24c being for postage.)

Tracts Available

The article which appeared in the last issue of "Peoples Paper"—"Armageddon—Then World Peace in God's Plan"—will be available in tract form immediately. Friends who can use these to advantage are invited to obtain supplies which are provided through the General Tract Fund. Other tracts, also the "Do You Know?" slips are also available for witness work.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

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

“Peoples Paper” Subscriptions

As announced elsewhere in this issue, subscriptions to the “Peoples Paper” are now increased to 75c per annum. On account of increased costs, particularly in postage, this has been found necessary, which we feel sure all our readers will understand. Also subscriptions are to be adjusted to expire at the end of each year, which will mean easier reckoning for all concerned.

Books Available

“God’s Promises Come True”—\$2.00, plus postage.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages,” Cloth bound—\$1.00, including 24c postage. Paper covers-75c, including 24c postage. “Emphatic Diaglott,” New Testament—\$2.00, plus postage. “Daily Heavenly Manna”, birthday pages—\$1.25, post paid. “Tabernacle Shadows”-75c, post paid.

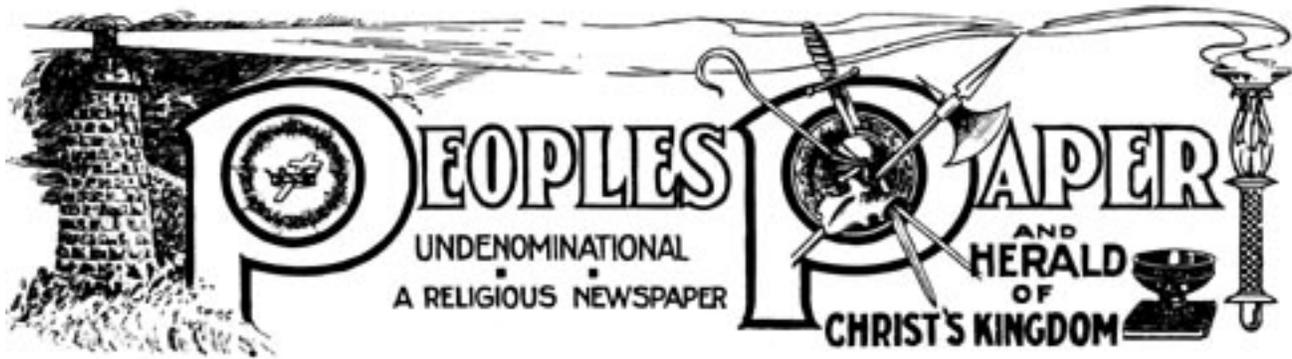
“The Book of Books,” Reviewing the Bible as a whole—\$1.25, post paid.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy”-16c post paid. “Manner of Christ’s Return”-16c, post paid. “Christ’s Return-16c, post paid.

“Some of the Parables”-16c, post paid. “Hope Beyond the Grave”-16c, post paid. “God and Reason”-16c, post paid. “Where are the Dead?”-12c, post paid.

OUR BIBLE TRANSLATED

A new print has been made recently of the very interesting and informative booklet, “Our Bible Translated”, compiled some time ago by the brethren of “The Dawn”. To cover cost of materials this booklet is supplied at 10c per copy, post paid.



Volume UV No. 2 MELBOURNE, APRIL—MAY, 1971 Armageddon Then World Peace in God's Plan

(This subject published by request)

THE word "Armageddon" appears in the Bible only once; but as it is associated with what is termed the "Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty", we can see that it is connected with world-wide influences at the end of a dispensation, which we feel *we* are approaching very definitely at the present time. Let us note the context in which this word "Armageddon" is found in Revelation 16. In highly symbolical language we are told in verse 14 of powerful influences or spirits of demons working miracles, that go forth to the leaders or rulers and kings all over the world to gather them together to battle, to war, on the great day of God Almighty. Verse 15 is really a parenthesis, so verse 16 connects with verse 14. "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." The Concordance indicates that "Armageddon" is a symbolic name for the scene of some great spiritual contest, and means "Mount of Destruction." Further, as we read in Rev. 16, Armageddon is of Hebrew origin, and is associated geographically and historically with the Hill of Megiddo.

We learn that Megiddo occupied a very strategic position in the ancient Holy Land, commanding an important pass into the hill country. The general locality of Megiddo was the great battleground of Palestine. We understand that here Gideon and his 300 routed the Midianites, and King Saul was defeated here by the Philistines. So we can see the Hill of Megiddo was an important location in the ancient land of Palestine.

As Armageddon has been given a symbolic meaning, it is helpful to think of other words used in a symbolic manner in general language today. For instance, when we hear of an army "meeting its Waterloo", we know the meaning is that army has been utterly defeated. It was Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo that caused significance to be attached to this particular battleground; and so it is with Armageddon. It was Israel's battleground; and to grasp its symbolic meaning in the prophecies it is necessary to see the special characteristic of all battles in which ancient Israel participated. Israel was not always victorious; sometimes God permitted His people to be defeated because they had sinned against Him and needed to be disciplined. However, there was one outstanding characteristic of all Israel's battles which was not true, and has never been true, of the battles fought between other nations. It is that God took a hand in the battles of Israel, and overruled their victories and defeats in keeping with His own Plan of the Ages. God allowed them to be defeated on occasions, and gave them miraculous victories on other occasions to fit in with His own wonderful Plan. When we take this fact into consideration the word Armageddon assumes a definite significance. It indicates a struggle in which God is definitely concerned, assuring final and glorious victory for the forces of righteousness. Further, as the prophecies show, it is the last great battle of the ages, and will result in the permanent defeat of all the agencies of Satan, thus preparing the way for the full manifestation of the kingdom of Christ. This is why it is described as the "Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty." The prophecies clearly show that that battle is the one which marks the end of the present age or dispensation, when this present evil world or social order comes to an end. It is described in the Bible as the "day of God's vengeance" and as "the day of the Lord", because it is the time when the Lord intervenes in the affairs of the world to halt their mad and downward rush into sin and destruction, and establish His long-promised kingdom.

This "day of the Lord" is referred to by the prophet Zephaniah; all God's prophets were instructed by His spirit, so what they say is not their own ideas, but what the Lord imparted by direct influence of His spirit. When the prophet says, "Thus saith the Lord", we know it is from God Himself. Zeph. 3: 8, "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." This is God speaking, saying He is going to assemble the kingdoms, gather

the nations, to pour upon them His indignation. We notice the similarity of expression in this prophecy, “to gather the nations and assemble the kingdoms”, to that found in the text respecting the gathering to Armageddon.

How do we understand the expressions “to gather the nations and assemble the kingdoms” and the gathering together to Armageddon? These may be understood as we view world conditions today in contrast with the early years of this century. Before the invention of aeroplanes and other modern means of transport and communication, nations were largely divided. Now all that has changed. Nations are gathered and assembled so that events happening in one country often shake the whole world, so to speak, in an hour or two. They are assembled and gathered together as never before. This is happening in these “last days.”

Isaiah 42: 13, 14 also describes these events. “The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies. I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself; . . . I will destroy and devour at once.” Ever since our first parents transgressed God’s law, war has been a factor in the affairs of the human race. In the days of ancient Israel other nations occasionally came in contact with divine authority and power. Various heathen kings were compelled to acknowledge His sovereignty as a result of the miraculous manner in which He protected and delivered His people. But many long centuries have passed since the world has witnessed such manifestations of God’s power, with the result that faith in Him and His authority and ability to rule the affairs of men is almost non-existent in all the council chambers of the world. God explains this situation by saying that He has “refrained” Himself from interfering in world affairs, and has “holden” His peace. His people, on the other hand, have been encouraged to “wait on the Lord” until the day He no longer holds His peace, until He ceases to refrain from intervening in the affairs of men, assured that then He would “rise up to the prey”, and that the whole “earth”—“this present evil world”—would be destroyed by the fire of His jealousy. It is in this work of destroying evil and evil systems that the Lord represents Himself as going forth as a mighty man, and stirring up jealousy like a man of war. It is this which precipitates the “Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty.”

Someone may ask, Why is this great Armageddon trouble to come upon the world; why is it really necessary? Why doesn’t God restrict evil doers, and allow the world to have peace and happiness today? Or in other words, Why doesn’t God establish peace on earth as was promised at the birth of Jesus? When we have a question of this kind, we realise that for God to establish peace, or force peace upon the world in its present state, would certainly mean better conditions on earth; but it would still be a dying world. Could there really be genuine peace in the hearts of mankind while any of the human family were dying? No, there could not! As for happiness, it would not be possible when loved ones were growing old and passing away to the land of the enemy. So if God established peace on the earth now, and allowed the present order of things to continue as it is, this peace would be in the midst of a dying human family, as it has been over the last six thousand years. That would not be lasting peace and happiness for humanity at all.

So we see that God’s plan allows the trouble of Armageddon to bring down the present evil world fully and completely; and this is the only lasting and satisfactory solution that would bring praise and honor to God’s name. Let us remember that Armageddon is not Doomsday to the world, as some people not acquainted with God’s plan may assume. It will seem like Doomsday to the ignorant while it lasts, no doubt, but the outcome will be glorious.

Many of the prophecies describing the passing of the present social structure on earth are summed up in Isa. 24: 19, 20. This is what Isaiah says under the inspiration of God’s spirit. “The earth is utterly broken down; the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.” It will not rise again in similar form to that which is existing now. The earthly order of society, man’s social order, shall “reel to and fro.” After the fall of this present evil world there is to be a new order established. The Lord has said distinctly, “I make all things new.”

From Nahum 1: 7, 6 and 9 we also read, “The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble: and he knoweth them that trust in him. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him. What do ye imagine against the Lord? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.” God will not have a repetition of what has happened from the Garden of Eden to the present day. Mankind has been in rebellion for six thousand years. One experience of the results of disobedience will be enough for all to learn the needed lesson, and be assured also of God’s great love in redeeming them through the sacrifice of our dear Saviour.

So the Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty prepares mankind for the new age and the great work of restitution. Though “weeping will endure for a night”, with thick clouds and darkness, the work of destruction will be a short work. Then joy will come “in the morning.” The Sun of righteousness will arise with healing in his wings,

with blessings for mankind. The present social structure will be removed “like a cottage” to clear the way for the new building that God intends—the new heavens and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Isaiah tells us of the new order that follows, in chapter 65: 17-19 and from verse 21. “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” God is going to forget about the old order; it is good that God will forget the waywardness of human beings. Verse 18, “But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.” We know Israel will have a leading part in the new order, and that is why Jerusalem and Israel are brought into the prophecies so frequently. We can see Israel is being threatened now, which is also fulfilling Scripture. But God will deliver Israel also out of this trouble, “Jacob’s trouble”, and show the world that Israel is His nation. “And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.” That is a promise from God. “And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build and another inhabit: they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.”

“As the days of a tree” are the days of God’s people Israel. Trees are very long-lived. We have heard that some of the olive trees are still living on the Mount of Olives from the time of the First Advent. That is a picture of lasting life; and it is a very lovely thought. “And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” In other words, when Israel respond and give their hearts to the Lord He will supply all their needs. This is an indication of what will happen to every nation which also falls into line with the new laws then operating throughout the whole world. “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain (kingdom), saith the Lord.”

We notice very clearly in this prophecy of Isaiah’s that there is to be a new heaven as well as a new earth; and here we have described the new spiritual order of the kingdom. The heavenly and earthly phases of God’s kingdom are revealed in the beautiful language of Isaiah 2: 2-4. “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it”, or acknowledge that this kingdom is of God. “And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” There we have the two phases of the kingdom described, Zion representing the heavenly kingdom and Jerusalem representing the earthly kingdom. Zion is a picture of the spiritual phase, from whence the Deliverer comes. Christ will be manifest out of the heavenly kingdom. Jerusalem will be the great earthly centre of the new order.

“And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” That is a very lovely assurance; wars will be finished forever, because the spirit of the Lord will be abroad in the earth, in contrast with the spirit of the Adversary, as we have it today.

To accomplish this great transformation in the spiritual and earthly control of earth’s affairs we see clearly from the Scriptures there must be an Armageddon of world-wide dimensions. Even the isles of the sea will be affected. Every part of the world will be transformed, because God’s kingdom will take over every part of this planet. So we see Armageddon is absolutely essential. It can be compared with the words Jesus spoke to His disciples—it was absolutely essential that He die and go to heaven. They thought it was dreadful to think He had to die; but His death brought about the great salvation God had provided. When the wrath of Armageddon is past, the new kingdom will be for the blessing of mankind. Then people will not die at all; they won’t even get sick, because the spirit of the Lord will promote restoring and healing of all the willing and obedient. So it is very comforting to find, in the various promises of the Bible, that when the destructive work of Armageddon has accomplished the pulling down of the old order, there is also described the up-building work of the new order, with lasting life and peace for all.

In the prophecy of Zeph. 1: 14-18 we have described again the “great day of the Lord”, and it is recorded that the Lord will make a “speedy riddance” of all things out of accord with His designs for His new order. With God’s new order established following the passing of the present order of society, as already quoted from Zeph. 3: 8, we read in verse 9, “Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.” This is surely a wonderful message, giving assurance to all who accept the Lord’s Word that world peace will follow the Armageddon experiences, based upon the pure language of truth which will enable all the obedient to serve the Lord wholeheartedly in spirit and in truth.

Haggai 2: 6, 7 gives us the same thought, based on the signature of the Lord Himself. "For thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." This is symbolic language. The "heavens" are the ecclesiastical heavens, and the "earth" is the earthly order of society. The "sea" is the restless masses of humanity. Men's hearts will fail them more and more as the present systems of earth disintegrate. But there will be no conflict when the "desire of all nations" comes. That is absolutely true! When mankind are able to appreciate what God has provided for them they will rejoice that His plan is in operation. Satan will be bound that he deceives the nations no more, and the blessings of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. When the Lord makes all things new, all people of all nations will have their desires fulfilled, not temporarily, but for all time.

Turning to Psalm 72, it is very evident that the spirit of the Lord guided the writing of this Psalm. We have here described in poetic language the blessings which mankind will experience—worldwide peace that will follow the necessary Armageddon experiences. Verses 1 and 2 read, "Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment." Some people think of the Judgment Day as being Doomsday, but Isa. 26: 9 gives us the true picture of God's judgments, when we read, "When thy judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness." The people will learn righteousness then; they will know that by learning they will be blessed. (See also Acts 17, 31).

Verse 3 of Psalm 72 says, "The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness." Micah 4: 3 tells us about this same time, "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Psalm 72: 4, 5, "He shall judge the poor of the people. . . . They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations." The sun and moon will endure forever, and that is what is implied here. (See also Isa. 11: 9.)

Psalm 72: 6, "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth." This speaks of refreshing and blessing. See also Isa. 25: 6-9. Psalm 72: 7 reads, "In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." This means real peace for all time in the hearts and minds of the people, as also expressed in Isa. 9: 7. Psalm 72: 8 tells us "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." We have this world-wide dominion pictured also in

Psalm 2: 8, where Jehovah is speaking through the Psalmist, and says to Christ on Zion's hill, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." We see here the extent of Christ's wonderful kingdom; the whole globe will belong to the Lord.

Psalm 22: 27, 28 tells us, "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is governor among the nations." He will rule supreme with His kingdom of peace, having complete control over every part of this world. Psalm 98 also has a very lovely message which tells us about the administration of Christ under the direction of our great Heavenly Father. "O sing unto Jehovah a new song; for he hath done marvellous things; for his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory." Here we have our Lord Jesus, the great risen Christ, as Jehovah's right hand and holy arm. Prophetically, He has gotten the victory for Jehovah. See all this Psalm 98.

Many of the prophets tell us we are living in the last days of this dispensation, when Armageddon will wipe away this present order. But it will not take away those things worthy to remain. Those things which "cannot be shaken" shall remain. There is a text in Zeph. 2: 3 which is wonderful advice to all people in this end of the present dispensation. "Seek ye the Lord all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." We should not be involved in any of the strife in this present evil world.

Of particular interest is the fact that numerous kings and queens have lost their thrones since the First World War. Before this time there were dozens of kings and queens; now there are very few indeed. Mankind has tried monarchies, dictatorships and democracies, but no government can bring in the happy day. Only Christ's kingdom can solve earth's problems, and only Armageddon can prepare the way for that wonderful kingdom. We thank God that His plan will provide the lasting solution for all earth's ills. In the meantime God is keeping His own people, refining them, for they will be associated with Christ in the work of administering the kingdom for the benefit of all humanity.

Class Bible Studies

To gain the greatest benefit from Class Bible Studies should surely be the sincere desire of all who are privileged to be living in association with fellow Christians and are seeking to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Many of the Lord's people are isolated and lack the opportunity of attending a Bible study group, so those who have this privilege should esteem it highly, and give all diligence to benefit from the contributions which fellow Christians are able to give, and also be prepared to contribute helpfully for the upbuilding of other members in the study group.

Those who have had experience with Bible Classes well know that to gain maximum benefit from united study calls for much preparation on the part of each student prior to attending the study group. Those who put little effort into prior study could not expect to gain full benefit from any Bible Class. This often causes loss of interest with some people, who may feel that progress with certain verses of a study is too slow, because extra details are brought out by those who have prepared the lesson well beforehand. The solution is not in covering more verses of Scripture to hold the interest of those who have not prepared the study, but for everyone who loves the Lord and His truth to prepare the lesson well, and also their hearts to receive and impart helpfulness as members of the Lord's family.

When young people are preparing for matriculation much study is called for if success is to be attained, so the greatest of all studies, the study of the Bible, calls for devoted attention if one is to be worthy of gaining the blessing and honor which the Lord bestows upon those who diligently search His Word and ask in prayer for His spirit to guide and assist in finding the hidden treasures of the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." There is no more rewarding experience for lovers of God's Word than to prepare a Bible study with the numerous helps available today, and then feel somewhat equipped to take part with other students in comparing Scriptures and thoughts for the upbuilding of the group which then represents the Lord's Church preparing for the greater work of the kingdom. Expressions should not be lengthy, but short and to the point.

Having prepared a study well with notebook of thoughts in detail, it is important for all students to adhere to the verse or verses of a passage before the Class, as the chairman seeks to direct the study. It is helpful if there is a slight pause between each speaker, not necessarily for the chairman to speak after each contributor, but to allow any other member to add to the thought already given. Too often in a study, after a helpful thought has been given, another speaker may come in quickly with a different thought or Scripture which cancels out the previous thought too quickly for the greatest benefit to be gained. Being good listeners to all speakers in a Bible Class is essential, whereas if we are studying out something to say, we often miss much, and at times repeat Scriptures and thoughts already given. Having our contributions largely in writing we are free to listen well to other speakers, and are the better able to assist helpfully ourselves.

Experienced students are well aware that margin references in their Bibles are often misleading, because the compilers of the references list up Scriptures mostly with the same words in other parts of the Bible without taking into account the context of each passage. Before quoting margin references, it is therefore necessary to note well the context, or quite a different meaning may be given instead of an intended supporting thought to the study.

In leading Class Bible Studies chairmen may often speak too much instead of seeking to draw out the thoughts from the members of the Class. On the other hand, the studies need guiding tactfully, and questions from members should usually be placed before the Class for general discussion, and then summed up by the chairman as to the conclusions reached. As the Lord's blessing is sought by all members Class Bible Studies can be a means of much enlightenment and encouragement in developing the Christian life in the steps of the Master.

Passover Memorial 1971

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 8th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "In remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

Melbourne—Sunday, 4th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

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

Perth—Thursday, 8th April, at 7 p.m., at Women's Service Guild Rooms, 7 Harvest Terrace, Perth (opposite

Parliament House).

Sydney—Thursday, 8th April, at 7 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 280 Dalhousie Street, Haberfield.

The Lord's Supper

(Contributed Address.)

OUR thoughts being more directly focused on the Memorial of our Saviour's death at this time of the year, it is good to review the institution of this Supper which our Lord established shortly before the close of His sacrificial life on earth. It was celebrated on the day before the Passover proper began—on the fourteenth of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish sacred year. The law respecting the Passover was very exact. The lamb was to be taken on the tenth day of Nisan, was to be killed on the fourteenth, and was to be eaten during the night before the dawn of the fifteenth. In the antitype Jesus offered himself at Jordan and was killed 31 years later, on the fourteenth of Nisan, after all except His faithful few neglected to receive Him. It was in the same Jewish day in which He was crucified that He ate the Passover and later on was betrayed. (The day with the Jews began at sundown and lasted until the next evening.)

One evangelist records that our Lord said to His disciples, "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." It was His last commemoration of the Jewish rite, which as a Jew He was bound to observe legally, fully. We may not know the particular hour of the fourteenth day in which our Lord and the disciples partook of the Lord's Supper, but probably it was near midnight, after the Passover had been eaten, that our Lord instituted the new Memorial of His death, substituting it for the Passover Supper of the Law, and intimating this in His words, "Henceforth, as oft as ye **do this**, do it in remembrance of me". "This" represented the antitypical Lamb of God, "which taketh away the sin of the world", and doing this—breaking the bread and drinking of the fruit of the vine—showed forth our Lord's death and not any longer the death of the type, because the antitype had now come, and in this same day, a few hours later, He would be killed, crucified. Our Lord was thus laying a deep and broad basis for the NEW CREATION, His church, and separating it from the Jewish type by pointing out to them **Himself** as the antitype, and the higher meaning connected therewith—the deliverance of all the true Israelites, not from Pharaoh, but from Pharaoh's antitype, Satan, the deliverance of all the first-born of God's people from death into life more abundant, eternal life.

It was while the Lord and His apostles were eating the Passover Supper, the typical roast lamb, that our Lord said to them, "One of you shall betray Me." John tells us that our Lord was "troubled in spirit", manifested emotion, at the time He said this. His emotion was not caused, we may be sure, by the matter of His betrayal, for He evidently foreknew the particulars as well as the fact of His death. The cause of His sorrow, we may reasonably be sure, was the thought that one of those whom He had so tenderly kept and cared for should now prove so ungrateful, unthankful, unholy—evidently His sorrow was for Judas. His statement drew forth inquiries from the disciples, "Lord, is it I?" Or rather, as the Greek word would seem to indicate, the question signified, "Lord, do you mean to accuse me?" "I am not the one am I?" And the disciples in general were sorrowful too. It was well, perhaps, that they should pass through this experience at this time, as they evidently needed it all, in order to prepare them for the trying times just before them.

Judas asked the same question with the rest, for not to have asked it would have implied that he admitted his guilt. Our Lord's answer was that it was one who supped with them, and dipping the sop He gave it to Judas, who went forthwith out—John 13: 25-30. So far from these incidents melting the heart of Judas and leading him to change his course before it was too late, they seem to have aroused in him a malevolent spirit, just as divine mercy toward Pharaoh, in the stopping of the plagues, hardened his heart. Instead of resisting the Adversary's suggestions, Judas entertained them more and more, until he was filled with the Satanic spirit. Satan entered into him fully, completely—took possession of his heart as an instrument of evil, and it was doubtless because he felt out of place in such society that he went out. It thus seems that Judas was not with the others when our Lord instituted with the bread and the fruit of the vine, the Memorial of His death. It was better that he should be absent and so, in coming to the Memorial table all should be invited to come who trust in the precious blood of Christ for redemption and who profess a full consecration to the Lord. In presenting to the disciples the unleavened bread, as a Memorial, our Lord gave a general explanation, saying, "Take, eat, this is my body." The evident meaning is, This symbolises or represents my body. It was not actually His body, because in no sense of the word had His body yet been broken, in no sense would it have been possible for any to have partaken of Him actually or antitypically then, the sacrifice not being as yet finished. But the picture is complete when we recognise that the unleavened bread represented our Lord's sinless flesh—leaven being a symbol of sin under the Law, especially commanded to

be put away at this time. On another occasion our Lord gave a lesson which interprets to us this symbol. He said, "The bread of God is he that came down from heaven and giveth life for the world. I am that bread of life." John 6: 33, 35. In order to appreciate how we are to eat or appropriate this living bread, it is necessary for us to understand just what it was. According to our Lord's explanation of the matter, it was His flesh which He sacrificed for us. It was not His pre-human existence as a spirit being that was sacrificed, although that was laid down and its glory laid aside, that He might take our human nature.

It was the fact that our Lord Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and without any contamination from father Adam, and hence from sin—it was this fact that permitted Him to be Redeemer of Adam and his race—which permitted Him to give His life as a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. And when we see that it was the pure, spotless human nature of our Lord Jesus that was laid down on behalf of sinners, sacrificed for us, we see what it is that we are privileged to appropriate. The very thing which He laid down for us is what we are to "eat" appropriate to ourselves, that is to say, His perfect human life was for us and redeemed Adam and all his race from condemnation to death—to a right to return to human perfection and everlasting life if they would. The Scriptures show us, however, that if God would consider all of past sins cancelled and should recognise us as having a right to return to human perfection, this still would not make us perfect nor give us, therefore, the right to everlasting life. In order for the race of Adam to profit by the redemption accomplished by our Lord's sacrifice, it is necessary that He should make a second advent, and then to be to the whole world a Mediator and King, to assist back to perfection and to harmony with God all who will avail themselves of the privileges then to be offered. It is this same blessing which the Gospel Church in this age receives by faith from the Redeemer, namely, justification by faith—not justification to a spiritual nature, which we never had and never lost, and which Christ did not redeem: but justification to human nature, which father Adam did possess and lose, and which Christ did redeem by giving His own sinless flesh as our ransom-sacrifice. The partaking of the bread, then, means to us primarily, acceptance and appropriation to ourselves, by faith, of justification to human rights and privileges secured by our Lord's sacrifice of these. Likewise the fruit of the vine symbolised our Lord's life given for us—His human life, His being poured out unto death on our behalf—and the appropriating of this by us signifies primarily our acceptance of restitution rights and privileges which our Lord has thus, at His own cost, secured for us.

As we have already seen, God's object in justifying by faith the Church during this Gospel Age in advance of the justification of the world through works of obedience in the Millennial Age is for the very purpose of permitting those who now see and hear and appreciate the great sacrifice which Love has made on their behalf, to present their bodies living sacrifices, and thus to have part with our Lord in His sacrifice—as members of His body. The additional and deep meaning of the Memorial, our Lord did not refer to directly. It was doubtless one of those things to which He referred, saying, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when the spirit of truth is come, it will guide you into all truth and show you things to come." The spirit of truth speaking through the Apostle Paul clearly explains the matter of this secondary and very high import of the Memorial for he says, writing to the consecrated church, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the participation of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the participation of the body of Christ?"—to share with Christ as joint-sacrificers even unto death that we may be sharers of His glory? Both views of this impressive ordinance are important. It is necessary that we should see, first of all, our justification through the Lord's sacrifice. It is proper then, that we should realise that the entire body of Christ is from the divine standpoint, a composite body of many members of which Jesus is the Head, and that the Church as a whole must be broken, and that in this respect each member of it must be a copy of the Lord Jesus and must walk in the footsteps of His sacrifice. We do this by giving our lives, "laying down our lives on behalf of the brethren", as Christ laid down His life for all. It is not our spiritual life that we lay down, even as it was not our Lord's spiritual life that He laid down in sacrifice: but as He sacrificed His actually perfect being, so must we sacrifice our justified selves, reckoned perfect but not actually so. Likewise, the cup represents suffering. It is one cup, though it be the juice of many grapes, even as it is one loaf, though it be from many grains. The grains cannot maintain their individuality and their own life if they would become bread for others, the grapes cannot maintain themselves as grapes if they would constitute the life-giving spirit, and thus we see the beauty of the Apostle's statement that the Lord's people are participants in the one loaf and the one cup.

Our Lord distinctly declares that the cup, the fruit of the vine represents blood, hence life, not life retained, but life shed or given, yielded up, sacrificed life. He tells us that it was for the remission of sins, and that all who would be His must drink of it—must accept His sacrifice and appropriate it by faith. All who would be justified through faith must accept life from this one source. It will not do to claim an immortality outside of Christ. It will not do to declare that life is the result of obedience to the Law. It will not do to claim that faith and obedience to any great teacher will amount to the same thing and bring eternal life. There is no other way to attain eternal life

except through accepting the blood once shed as the ransom price for the sins of the whole world. “There is no other name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved.” Likewise there is no other way that we can attain to the new nature than by accepting the Lord’s invitation to drink of His cup and be broken with Him in baptism into His death, and thus to be with Him in His resurrection to glory, honor and immortality. Rom. 6: 3-5; 8: 1 7.

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a warm invitation to all friends to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th in the Manchester Unity Hall, (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information may be had from the Class Secretary—Mrs. R. Jordan, 14 Newark Road, Torrens Park, South Australia, 5062.

He Lived Inside a Whale

The following article by David Gunston appeared in the Melbourne “Young Sun” of 22nd January, 1959. Having obtained permission it was printed in our “Peoples Paper”, and we believe this amazing account will prove of much interest again, and serve to show that the story of Jonah and the big fish 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 hand-held 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 terror 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 blows!” he cried, and two whale-boats 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 whale-boat 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. 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. He groped about in the stench and darkness to find the walls of his prison slimy and yielding. Slowly the awful truth dawned 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 in 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 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.

OUR BIBLE TRANSLATED

A new print has been made recently of the very interesting and informative booklet, "Our Bible Translated", compiled some time ago by the brethren of "The Dawn". To cover cost of materials this booklet is supplied at 10c per copy, post paid.

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$12.50.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at \$10.50.

"**The Creator's Grand Design**" is the title of a 240 page cloth bound book, from the "Dawn" brethren. It is a helpful study covering the plan of God as a whole. Supplied at \$1.25, post paid.

Bible Student Manual, otherwise known as Berean Comments, are now in limited supply. With nice appearance, bound in strong cloth, with gold lettering, the price is \$4.00, plus postage of up to 70c interstate.

Poems of Dawn, 320 pages of original poems with additional choice Christian poems are now in stock. Excellent as gifts. Black simulated leather, handy size, price \$2.20, plus postage 25c.

Little Foxes and Little Lambs, a humorous, yet thought-provoking, illustrated book of clever poetry. The first poems call attention to the "little foxes" in people's lives—common faults and failures such as lying, evil-speaking, pride, laziness, anger. Next, attention is given to the "little lambs", such as truth, humility, patience, courtesy. Children will enjoy coloring the pictures that go with the poems. Paperback, 63 pages, price 70c post paid.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

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



Volume LIV No. 1 MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY—MARCH, 1971 Does Speaking in Tongues Promote Understanding of the Bible?

(This Article Published by Request)

THIS subject has been prompted largely by the ' prominence given to speaking in tongues not only in our own land, but by reports of this fast growing practice in many countries. Recently, a broadcast was given entitled "Catholic Pentecostalism" with information about a movement within this church in the Sydney area. During this broadcast reference was made to the fact that during the last three years in particular what has been called a revival in Pentecostalism has been penetrating the Roman Catholic Church in America, and is now active in a particular branch of the Catholic Church in Sydney. We have no doubt this movement is operating in many other centres in Australia and throughout the world.

One thing of vital importance is that during the broadcast describing the Catholic Pentecostal Movement in Sydney, no claim was made that the speaking in tongues promoted an understanding of God's Word. Strange as it may seem, in dozens of broadcasts where speaking in tongues is the main subject of discussion, no claim has been made that speaking in tongues has meant increased understanding of the Word of God. This being the case, sincere and intelligent people who are attracted by the claim that speaking in tongues is from the Lord should surely enquire why no enlightenment from the Bible results from speaking in tongues today. Surely the Lord desires to teach His people from His Word, so if speaking in tongues is from the Lord, why is no understanding of the Bible gained by those who preach little else than speaking in tongues in these days? We hope to find an answer from the Scriptures.

In Acts 2 we have the record given of the Day of Pentecost, which followed our Lord's resurrection and ascension to heaven. On the fiftieth day from our Lord's resurrection God acknowledged Christ's sacrifice by the gift of His spirit from on high, just as Jesus predicted to His disciples in John 16: 5-7. Our Lord speaking, says—"And now I go my way to him that sent me. . . . It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter (holy spirit) will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send it unto you." "It is expedient"—absolutely essential, that the Lord die as the sacrifice for sins, be raised from the dead, ascend to heaven to the Father, that the Father may witness Christ's faithfulness unto death by the outpouring of the holy spirit. It was essential if there was to be a Church, a called-out people to be with Christ, that all this take place. So the power of God came upon the waiting disciples on the Day of Pentecost, as we read in Acts 2. The opening verses of this chapter tell about the descent of the holy spirit. From verse 4 we read—"And they were all filled with the holy spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance." The following verses describe what happened, and give a list of "Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven"—about ten or twelve nationalities are mentioned—who heard "the wonderful works of God" in their own languages.

In verse 4 the meaning of the Greek word translated "tongues" is—"the tongue; by implication a language (specially one naturally not acquired)." The same Greek word is found in verse 11—"We do hear them speak in our own tongues (languages) the wonderful works of God." In verse 8, "And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?", we have another Greek word from which the word "tongue" is translated, and it means "a (mode of) discourse, that is, dialect." This same Greek word is found in verse 6, translated by our English word "language"—"every man heard them speak in his own language." Each of these nationalities heard the Apostles speak in their own language, so they could understand the messages given out on that wonderful Day of Pentecost. That was an amazing experience for those ten or a dozen nationalities listed in those verses—"and are not all these men Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue (dialect), wherein we were born?" God was interpreting the message respecting the risen Christ through the Apostles in those "tongues" to those

particular nationalities.

A most important part of this record is the fact that all those people of so many nations heard in their own languages the **wonderful works of God**. That was the message that God was giving them by the descent of His holy spirit when Christ had ascended to the Father's right hand. What is meant by the wonderful works of God they heard in their own languages, or dialects? We have a sample of what it means from Peter's sermon on this same day, when he spoke to Israel in verses 22-24 of this same chapter. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know ... ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." It was not possible Christ should have been holden in death. He was raised the third day, and remained to associate with His disciples for 40 days, and then ascended to heaven.

The Apostle Peter continued in verses 30-33, speaking of David—"Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God . . . would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the holy spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Then verse 36—"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." What a wonderful message was delivered to Israel! This is the message, the wonderful works of God, given to all those nationalities by the various languages given on that Day of Pentecost. Was not that a gracious arrangement that God provided? When those devout Jews "out of every nation under heaven" returned to their own countries, they could expound to their fellow countrymen the wonderful message of the risen Christ. They had heard it by the tongues of those Galileans. "We are all amazed", they said, "at these wonderful works of God."

Also at this same time were fulfilled the words of Acts 2: 18—"And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit; and they shall prophesy." God manifested forth His spirit upon His servants and handmaidens by the preaching in tongues to those present, at that early period of the Gospel Age. Verse 17 of this same chapter—"Saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh"—is falsely claimed as being fulfilled now in our day, but not so. Verses are not always in consecutive order for fulfilment in the Bible. How strange it would be for God to pour out His spirit upon all flesh while this present evil world is with us! But with Satan bound in the next age, and the resurrection of mankind under way upon the earth, then will be the time when God will pour out His spirit upon "all flesh."

Obviously, all flesh today is not receiving God's spirit. "Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people"; "evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." God's spirit is poured out now in this Gospel Age only upon God's servants and handmaidens, beginning with the Day of Pentecost, and only for a limited time were the gifts of the spirit given to the early Church for a special purpose when the Church was in its infancy.

It may be asked, Why did God arrange the preaching of the glad news of Christ's resurrection and salvation through Him by the speaking in tongues in the languages of many different Jews—"devout men, out of every nation under heaven"—as quoted in Acts 2:5? The answer would be God desired them to take the message of salvation through the risen Christ to their own countrymen, when there was no New Testament available. There was no Bible then, apart from the Old Testament Scriptures, and few people could read anyway. God gave the devout Jews from various nationalities the message to thrill their hearts. When they returned home, they could speak of nothing else than the wonderful works of God, that Christ had paid the penalty for all mankind, He is now at the Father's right hand and there is salvation for those who come, gladly accepting Him as their Saviour and devoting their lives to His service. But when the New Testament became available, and especially in these last days of the Gospel Age, when we have God's Word so easily procurable, we find Paul's words to Timothy, in 2 Tim. 3: 14-17, of special interest, and a guide as to what we should adhere to in seeking to know God's will in the understanding of His truth.

It is a great help to grasp the meaning of the Apostle's words in these verses in 2 Tim. 3 by examining verse 17 in some detail. Introducing it from verse 16, we read—"All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable . . . that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." We find the meaning of "perfect" in the Greek to be "complete"—"that the man of God may be **complete**." And "thoroughly furnished" in the Greek means—"to finish out (time); figuratively to equip fully (a teacher)." This same Greek word is translated "accomplished" in Acts 21: 5—"When we had accomplished (finished out, fulfilled) those days." The Apostle Paul is saying that the holy scriptures, inspired of God, are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruc-

tion in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped unto all good works. That being so, why would God add to His Word in any way with extra help, when the Apostle says God's Word is sufficient to complete, or fully equip His people. It is a great deception of the Adversary to try and convince mankind that they need additions to God's Word to enlighten them correctly.

We have seen why God used the "tongues" or "languages" of the various nationalities to convey the truths of His Word at Pentecost, when no Bible was available to give the clear message of salvation through Christ's sacrifice, but how different is the position today. God's Word is procurable in almost any language at such small cost, and as all God's truth is contained in His Word the supposed gifts of the spirit today are spurious, deceptions of the Adversary to flatter and puff up the minds of people to imagine they are heaven's favorites. There can be no doubt that the Adversary has a particular kind of deception to suit every kind of mind in the human family. For instance, for the spiritualist there is the claim that he can communicate with his departed friends, when the Scriptures clearly declare "the dead know not anything." For the Christian Scientist he is exhorted to believe there is no real sickness, and is encouraged to lie to himself. For the average church-going person there is the claim that death is not real—that a person is immortal and really never dies—when the Bible clearly states—"As in Adam all die." For those who crave outward show, "a fair show in the flesh", there is the claim that it is necessary to speak in tongues to receive God's blessing. Such people think it is wonderful if they can create some gibberish, but no one understands what they are saying, and even if this were possible no additional enlightenment is thrown on the Word of God. They think they are getting an outpouring of the spirit, when all the time it is a counterfeit of Pentecost. In a recent broadcast a speaker, who rarely speaks of anything else than speaking in tongues, said there were over 30 million adherents to this practice of speaking in tongues, which is really an indication of this great deception throughout the world, rather than proving otherwise. Our Lord stated that there would be deceptive "signs and wonders" in the end of this age that "if it were possible, shall deceive the very elect" (Matt. 24: 24).

One thing is very noticeable in the Apostle Paul's epistles, and that is that only to the Corinthian church did he mention the gifts of the spirit. If speaking in other tongues would be a mark of development for the Christian, it is very strange that Paul did not exhort all the other churches to participate in this practice. But he did not. There is no reference to speaking in tongues in his epistles to the Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus or Hebrews. The Apostle commended many in these churches for their spirituality, but the Corinthians as a church were not spiritually minded. Why did Paul mention the speaking in tongues and other gifts of the spirit to the Corinthians only? For the apparent reason they were clinging to the assistance given through the "gifts of the spirit" to the early church far too long, and prided themselves in the outward show of these gifts instead of cultivating the inward fruits of the spirit. This is clearly shown in 1 Cor. 3: 1—"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." From chapter 4: 7 in this epistle the Apostle also shows that members in this church were grasping honor and power, cultivating pride in their religion. Speaking ironically in verse 10 he declared—"We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong." Paul is really ridiculing this church for priding itself in the outward gifts of the spirit. That the Corinthians were seeking for outward show in their Christian lives is supported by 1 Cor. 12: 31, reading from the Diaglott. This is a Greek and English translation, and gives a different meaning to the King James Bible. It reads—"But you earnestly desire the more eminent gifts; and yet a much more excellent way I point out to you." Paul is not saying, "Covet earnestly the best gifts", but he is saying, "That is what you are doing." You are seeking to shine with outward show in these gifts of the spirit. Yet he would point out a much more excellent way, the development of the fruits of the spirit which he goes on to elaborate in the next chapter. Paul was seeking to wean them away from the gifts appropriate for the church in its infancy. It is a mistaken idea to assume that where the holy spirit is mentioned in the New Testament it always means the gifts of the spirit.

Gifts of the Spirit to Cease.

The Apostle shows in 1 Cor. 13: 8 that the gifts of the spirit were intended only for a limited time. We read—"Charity (love) never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, **they shall fail.**" What kind of prophecies is the Apostle referring to here? Undoubtedly the **gift of prophecy**, the ability to foretell coming events by the miraculous gift. "Whether there be tongues, **they shall cease.**" What kind of "tongues" is he speaking of? Without doubt the **gift of tongues**, the miraculous gift of speaking in another language apart from the one known by the speaker. They will cease, he says. "Whether there be knowledge, **it shall vanish away.**" What kind of knowledge is implied here? Surely not the knowledge of God and His truth. No, but the **gift of knowledge**, the miraculous understanding of knowledge, given only to the early church.

An indication as to how the gifts of the spirit ceased is given in the account of Philip's ministry in Samaria, as

recorded in Acts 8: 5-8, 14-17. (Please read.) It required the Apostles to bestow the gifts of the spirit upon members of the church in Samaria, because, while Philip could perform certain miracles in this early church he could not bestow the gifts upon others. Peter and John, two apostles, were sent for this purpose. So, when the Apostles finished their earthly ministry, no further bestowing of the gifts could be made and they automatically ceased when those upon whom the Apostles had bestowed the gifts also passed away.

A text often quoted to support the claim that God's plan for tongues in the early church is still operative today is found in Heb. 13: 8. It is a very lovely verse when rightly understood—"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever." This verse is often used to imply that what happened in our Lord's day with certain miracles and in the early church with the tongues would also apply today and for ever. But God's plan is not always the same for every age, or part of an age in the history of the human family, and the same applies to the long period of the call for the Bride of Christ, covering at least 2,000 years between our Lord's first and second advents.

Our Lord's words to His apostles in Matt. 10: 5-8 are very revealing in this same connection. He said—"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give." We have instances of the apostles actually raising the dead to life as a result of our Lord's commission to them, in addition to the other miracles performed by them through the power of God. (See Acts 9: 36-42; 20: 7-12.) The important point to note in these verses given by Jesus in Matt. 10, is the fact that the raising of the dead was equally within the power of the apostles as any other of the gifts of the spirit, because it was God's will at that period of the church's history. But who amongst the preachers of speaking in tongues would attempt to raise the dead to life today? Yet, if the claim that Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, today, and for ever" meant that tongues and healings were God's will for today, then the raising of the dead would also be in order at present. It is obvious that the Adversary can deceive so far, and no further. What the text in Heb. 13: 8 really implies is, that our Lord is the same sympathetic overseer of His church—as He was on earth, so He is in heaven. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age" were His words as He ascended on high.

Another passage of Scripture often used in support of the gifts of the spirit operating today are the verses in Mark 16: 9-20, which passage is not found in the best manuscripts, and is therefore spurious. Verses 16 and 17 are often quoted, and verse 18 which is also not part of the Bible has led to some people losing their lives. There can be no doubt that the warning of the apostle in his day, found in 2 Cor. 11: 13-15, applies very definitely today—"Such are 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."

Again we have Paul's warning respecting those who are deceived by various errors today, in this end of the age, as recorded in 2 Thes. 2: 8-12. The Apostle refers in this chapter to the great "mystery of iniquity" that was already working in his day, and for the end of the age he says—"Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his presence: **whose coming is with the working of Satan** with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this **cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie**; that they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." That is a very strong statement, that God would send people who desire these gifts, these tongues, a strong delusion so they will believe a lie. They are so sure of their own ideas, that God allows them to be deceived in this matter, because they do not seek the truth in the love of it. They have pleasure in making a great show before people, instead of seeking the lowly, quiet development of the fruits of the spirit in their hearts. God allows people to follow their own course, and they lose His spiritual blessing, though they will have the opportunity of being helped in the Kingdom age, when Satan is bound.

Yes, how different it will be when Satan is bound, to deceive the nations no more for the thousand years of Christ's kingdom. Then "all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest", and "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain (kingdom); for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11: 9). And again—"In this mountain (kingdom) shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things. . .

And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering (death) cast over all people, and the vail (ignorance) that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. 25: 6-8).

Convention News

WE are very thankful to the Lord for His blessings throughout the Annual Convention arranged by the Melbourne Class over the Christmas season. It was a great pleasure to welcome visiting brethren from Adelaide, Sydney, Tasmania, and one brother from U.S.A., all of whom contributed helpfully to the gatherings with addresses, and at the studies and in fellowship generally. It was expressed by more than one of the brethren that this Convention was the “best ever”, and we lift up our hearts in gratitude to the Lord, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, at the same time thanking all who contributed, by the Lord’s grace, in making the gatherings so profitable.

During the four days of Convention two Bible studies were enjoyed on the passages—Eph. 6: 13-18, and 1 Cor. 13: 1-8. Brief thoughts on these studies, also on all the addresses are contained in the Convention Notes, supplied to all who desire these. Some thoughts on the passage in 1 Cor. 13: 1-8 are also contained in this issue of “Peoples Paper.”

Helpful addresses by the brethren were delivered on the following subjects—”Reflecting Christ”; “The Heavens Declare the Glory of God”; “Things That Come Not Back”; “Our Resources in God”; “Love and Good Works”; “I Will Give Water From The Fountain of Life”; “A Thousand Years of Peace”; “Light”; “The Peace of God”; “Introspection and Control of Thoughts”; “Incentives”; “Edification”; “Whose Heart the Lord Opened”; “All Things Through Christ”; “Signs of the Times”; “Restitution”; “Being Strong and of Good Courage” and “Clean Every Whit.” Some of these addresses are expected to be published in later issues of “Peoples Paper”, and all appear in brief in the Convention Notes now ready.

Messages with Christian love and greetings were greatly appreciated from a number of Classes and brethren throughout Australia and from overseas. Five or six brethren in U.S.A., who have visited Australia sent their love and greetings, as also did the brethren in Bangalore, India; this message arriving just after the Convention being gladly received. Also through Brother Sironi of Sydney a message was warmly appreciated from the brethren in Italy who sent their love and greetings; this message, translated by Brother Sironi, appears in this issue of “Peoples Paper.” At the Fellowship

Meeting on the last day of Convention the passage of Scripture in Eph. 6: 13-18 was selected as the Convention message to be sent to all brethren with the warm Christian love of all in attendance at the Convention gatherings.

At the three Fellowship Meetings opportunity for Praise and Testimony and the “Hymns We Love and Why” session added to the benefits of the gatherings. Expressions of the Lord’s blessings at being able to attend the Convention, and of the overruling by the Lord of their lives throughout the year past were made by a number of the brethren, as they also looked forward with confidence to the Lord’s continued goodness and mercy in the days ahead.

It was a pleasure to have a number of our Polish brethren fellowship with us also at the Convention, and we were glad that more of our Polish Brothers contributed with addresses, their good efforts in handling the English language quite well being much appreciated. We are looking forward to hearing more from these brethren in the days ahead. At the usual Love Feast the closing hymns, “Blest be the tie that binds”, “And God be with you till we meet again”, were sung, and the prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord and asking His guidance and blessing upon all His dear people everywhere, brought to a close the profitable 1970 Melbourne Convention.

Convention Message from Italy

A MESSAGE to the Australian brethren gathered at Melbourne, on behalf of the called out ones of Italy.

Dear and beloved Brothers in the same hope. May grace and peace abound upon you all from our heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ our hope and glory. Amen!

While you are gathered in this festival of love, we from a very far and very old land, send to you a wish of brotherly love, of communion, of peace and of spiritual uplifting. This is a wish that comes from the hearts of the Italian brethren to you all.

Italy, as you all know, is a peninsula in the form of a boot which stretches itself in the most popular sea of the world, the Mediterranean Sea. Popular because of its thousands of years of history, called by Daniel the Great Sea, Dan. 7: 2. The one and the other occupy a very prominent place in the prophecies of Daniel and of Revelation: in the Mediterranean were formed the great empires of the past, the so-called “Great Civilizations.”

The nation of Italy occupies a very important place in the prophecies alongside the other nations of Europe

and the world: not a very bright place though, but of darkness and errors, because of this continent was born and developed the two greatest institutions of the old world, of- the kingdom of darkness—the Papacy and Babylon the mystic!

Nevertheless, right here, in the centre of error, and the seat of the beast, we your brothers in Christ, give our testimony with great sacrifices, bringing to fulfilment that part which Jehovah God has given us, to carry out His plan. It is a very hard work, because it is done in a society which is 99% Roman Catholic, a society that enjoys all the privileges and immunity, a society that stretches his control in every field of public life in general.

However, in Italy, Europe in general and even in the countries behind the “Iron Curtain” the witnessing for the Truth goes on, because the work is not ours but of Him that has got control over all the heavens; He who has the control of all the events of history, and guides His Church in the last stage of its earthly pilgrimage.

We have a strong need to feel and being united with all the brethren who in like manner are strangers and pilgrims on this earth, and that do the same job and experience the same trials, while announcing the same grand and noble truths of the plan of God, and that are also watching and waiting like us for the coming event of all times—the return in glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are living in a time when those who fight against the spiritual wickedness in high places, Eph. 6: 12, must have the need to know each other, to love each other and to unite each other in one spiritual communion; we have a great need of your prayers and of your brotherly love.

The first half of this 20th century has brought to the family of the Bible Students in all the world the pain of divisions, contrasts and sectarianism; the second half should make us aware of the need for Christian fellowship, the communion of the saints, the unity of the spirit. This is a must, for the time is ripe! And the conditions of the world today make it imperative, to the ecumenicalism of Catholic-Protestant-Orthodox Babylon, we should withstand with an ecumenicalism of the Bible Students family, known throughout the world under different names, but which is faithful to the one message, “The Restitution of all things.” This message will then have the strength to spread itself in all the world and will constitute in every sense of the word “the latter rain”, James 5: 7. This, dear brothers, is our dream!

Please notify us of your activities, which we shall gladly publish in our magazines. That will be of encouragement and uplifting to all your brethren in this country. All the brethren in Italy send their warmest Christian love, and united to you are waiting for their deliverance when the Lord shall appear. Pray for us, the same we will do towards you.

Little Foxes and Little Lambs, a humorous, yet thought-provoking, illustrated book of clever poetry. The first poems call attention to the “little foxes” in people’s lives—common faults and failures such as lying, evil-speaking, pride, laziness, anger. Next, attention is given to the “little lambs”, such as truth, humility, patience, courtesy. Children will enjoy coloring the pictures that go with the poems. Paperback, 63 pages, price 70c post paid.

Thoughts On 1 Cor. 13:1-8

VERSE 1. “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” The word “I” here is used in the popular sense, as the apostle designs to illustrate his idea by a reference to himself, which, it is evident, he wishes to be understood as applying to those whom he addressed.

The gift of speaking in tongues seems to have been too highly esteemed by the Corinthian church, and the apostle shows that this gift even though possessed in the highest degree would be of no avail if we do not develop in the character of love—the character-likeness to Christ. It would be just like “a noisy gong, or a clanging cymbal” (Rev. Ver.). The word translated charity is from the Greek “agape” meaning disinterested love.

Verse 2. “And though I have (the gift of prophecy), and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.” Prophecy means not only foretelling but forth-telling. “Prophecy” and the word “prophet” have two meanings. The one is the foretelling of events yet future, the other is the uttering the meaning of the Scripture, or speaking to the edification and comfort of Christians. Regarding the word “prophet” see Acts 13: 1; 15: 32; 1 Cor. 14: 1-3. “And understand all mysteries, and all knowledge.” “Mysteries”—Diaglott “secrets.” This word would refer to the hidden features of God’s Plan of the Ages. “Knowledge”—we learn from 1 Cor. 12: 8-10 of the various “gifts” bestowed upon the early church. These miraculously bestowed gifts of prophecy, knowledge and faith, etc., were given in the apostolic times for

the purpose of establishing the church. Many who possessed the miraculous “gifts” lacked the seal and witness of the spirit. The apostle shows that one may have the miraculous gifts of prophecy, knowledge and faith, yet if I have not love I am nothing.

Verse 3. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.” The apostle says that if **all** that a man had were dealt out in small portions, so as to benefit as many as possible, and yet were not attended with true love towards God and towards man, it would be all false, and really of no value in regard to his own salvation. It would profit nothing; it would not be such an act as God would approve. Though good might be done to others, yet where the **motive** was wrong, it could not meet with the divine approval. We see, then, that the thought is that we must cultivate in our hearts the graces of the holy spirit, meekness, gentleness, patience, love, etc., and that we must have these in abounding measure to be pleasing to the Lord, to bear “much fruit.”

As one has said—“The spectrum of love has nine ingredients: **Patience—**”Love suffereth long.” **Kindness—**”And is kind.” **Generosity—**”Love envieth not.” **Humility—**”Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.” **Courtesy—**”Doth not behave itself unseemly.” **Unselfishness—**”Seeketh not her own.” **Good Temper—**”Is not provoked.” **Guilelessness—**”Thinketh no evil.” Sincerity—”Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.” In these verses 4-7 the apostle describes the character and actions of heavenly love.

Verse 4. “Love suffereth long.” Love is **patient**. This is the normal attitude of love; love passive; love waiting to begin; not in a hurry; calm; ready to do its work when the summons comes, but meantime wearing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Love suffers long, for love understands, and therefore waits.

Kindness—”Love is kind.” If “long-suffering” is a victory over a just resentment, this is a victory over idle selfishness, and comfortable self-pleasing. See 2 Pet. 1: 5-8; Matt. 5: 42-48. “I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.” See Rom. 12: 10; Phil. 2: 1; John 13: 34, 35.

Generosity—”Love envieth not.” That is, it is not idly vexatious at the superiority of others, begrudging them their endowments and privileges and advantages, Phil. 2: 3. Love does not envy, because it is content. Great illustrations of unswerving love are seen in the attitude of Jonathan towards David, and of John the Baptist towards Jesus. 1 Cor. 4: 6, 7. “Love never boils over with jealousy” (Amplified).

Humility—”Love vaunteth not itself.” “Love is not boastful or vain-glorious” (Amplified). “Love makes no parade” (Moffat). There is no brag, no swagger about love (Phil. 2: 5); “love is not puffed up:” Love is not arrogant, but humble (Judges 7: 2). Love knows nothing of presumptuous self-satisfaction, of pride with contempt of others. It “gives itself no airs”, is never haughty, but humble and gracious (John 5: 19).

Verse 5. “Doth not behave itself unseemly.” **“Courtesy—**The manners or behaviour of love. Perfect love develops courteousness along with humility. A thoughtful man has said—”Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. The one secret of politeness is to love. A gentleman is one who does things gently, with love.” “Love does not willingly offend, hurt, or wound another’s feelings. Love is gentle and considerate in her manner” (Phil. 2: 3).

Unselfishness—”Love seeketh not her own.” This may well be termed the aim or central purpose of love. Love “seeketh not its own”, but finds its joy and wealth in self-forgetfulness for the sake of service. The good of others is always in love’s motive, whatever it may be doing. “Its learning is for’ the light of others; its toil is for the good of others; its prayer and faith and sacrifice are for the cleansing and the comforting of others.” Love realises itself in self-lessness. “It seeketh not its own” (Phil. 2: 4, 5; 1 Cor. 10: 24, 33; Rom. 15: 2, 3).

Good Temper—”Love is not provoked to anger” (Diaglott). Prov. 16: 32; 19: 11. “Love is not provoked” (Rev. Ver.). 1 Pet. 2: 21-23; Luke 11: 53, 54. Let us remember that in this chapter we have presented the perfect character—the character of Christ. Christ did not on one single instance lose His perfect self-control and gentleness; and, as one has truly said, “If Christ be in us (in sufficient measure) His love will not be provoked even as of old.” Henry Drummond says—”Souls are made sweet not by taking the acid fluids out, but by putting something in—a great love, a new spirit, the spirit of Christ. Christ, the spirit of Christ, interpenetrating ours, sweetens, purifies, transforms all.” Will-power does not change men. Time does not change men. Christ does. Therefore “let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” Heb. 1: 9.

Guilelessness—”Love thinketh no evil.” Love will look for some good motive. This has been rendered as “Love does not surmise evil” Matt. 5: 8. Or again, “Love imputeth no evil.” Rev. Ver.—”Love taketh not account

of evil.” “Love covers a multitude of sins”—defects. “Love does not impute evil motives.” Love works on healthy lines of thought. “Love is never resentful” (Moffatt). Prayer is the first remedy when the fever of resentment begins to rage high. Someone has said, “We can pray for those who hate us, but we cannot hate those for whom we pray.” Love thinks of Him who was bruised for our iniquities, and because she has been crucified with Him, and He now lives in her, the power of His grace is sufficient to crush all unworthy bitterness.

Verse 6. “Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.” **Sincerity**—This phrase is many sided; it means first of all, compassion for the fallen. Moffatt translates this—“Love is never glad when others go wrong; love is gladdened by goodness.” One has said, “Only one who has a very loving heart can deal helpfully with the failings of others. Harshness never helps them, censoriousness never heals them, a spirit of judging never uplifts them; but ‘ye which are spiritual restore the one that is overtaken in a fault, in a spirit of meekness’.” Love rejoices when the truth is honored, or when it prospers. Love will rejoice in the work of Christ being done by others, as well as that being done by itself, and by whatever means the cause of Christ is being promoted, it can say with Paul, “Therein do I rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice.”

Verse 7. “Love beareth all things.” **Love’s Bravery**—The “bearing all things” seems to have reference to suffering wrong without exhibiting resentment; to bear patiently neglect or indignities. Gal. 6: 2. **Passively**, love “bears” by suffering wrong done to itself without retaliating. We remember it is written of Christ that, “when he was reviled, he reviled not again.” **Actively**, love “bears” when it gets under the load of life, and bravely carries it. Someone calls this “Love’s quiet sweetness under attack.” Dean Farrar rendered these words—“Love has a gracious tolerance”—she is proof against the malice of her detractors. Weymouth—“She knows how to be silent”, not sullenly but serenely, and she understands how to keep an unbroken front.

“Love believeth all things.” **Love’s Trustfulness**—Perfect love is not suspicious, but on the contrary is disposed to be trustful. The context seems to indicate that this expression is to be understood in respect of the conduct of others. We should be trustful, and inclined to believe that those around us are sincere in their effort to do the will of God. Love takes the best and kindest view of all men, in all circumstances; as long as it is possible to do so. Love studies motives, and makes all possible allowances. “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”

“**Love Hopeth All Things.**” 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 spirit of holiness, it trusts in Him and hopes undismayed for the fulfilment of His gracious covenant, however dark the immediate surroundings. Love’s hopefulness knows no despair, for its anchorage enters into that which is beyond the Vail, and is firmly fastened to the Rock of Ages. See Heb. 6: 19.

“**Love Endureth All Things.**” One has said. “This hopeful element of love is one of the striking features of the perseverance of the saints, enabling -them to endure hardness as good soldiers.” Love’s hopeful quality hinders it from being easily offended, or easily stopped in the work of the Lord. Where others would be discouraged and put to flight, the spirit of love gives endurance, that we may war a good warfare, and please the Captain of our salvation. James 1: 2-4, 12; Heb. 12: 3; Job 13: 15.

“**Love Never Faileth.**” Not only is love the greatest of all graces and really, as we have seen, the sum of them all in combination and unification, but it is the most lasting grace. “Love never faileth”—will never cease, and he who has this character of love will never fail, will never cease. It is for such that eternal life has been provided in the Divine plan. “He that endureth to the end; the same shall be saved.”

Verse 8. “But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.” Let us bear in mind the apostle’s argument to the Corinthian brethren: (1) that the gifts of miracles, tongues, etc., bestowed upon them by the spirit were divided amongst them according to talent or divine wisdom, and were not the results of their own efforts; (2) that he is pointing out to them a **grace** much more excellent than those “gifts”—of much more value than all of them together; a grace that might properly be termed a **fruitage of the spirit—love**. Having described this wonderful and necessary element of character in its perfection, the apostle comes back and contrasts it with those “gifts” they so highly appreciated, and shows that the chiefest of those “gifts” are inferior to love.

Further information on this verse 8 of 1 Cor. 13 will be found in the front article in this “Peoples Paper”—“Does Speaking in Tongues Promote Understanding of the Bible?”, under the sub-heading, “Gifts of the Spirit to Cease.”

Pilgrim Way Ended

The following information is to hand from Adelaide. On December 10th last our dear Brother Bartel of Adelaide reached the end of his pilgrim way in his 75th year. Our brother had been enjoying the knowledge of God's wonderful plan of salvation for over 50 years, and had been associated with the Adelaide Class of Bible Students for most of that time. Brother Bartel was a devoted student of God's Word; and his constant endeavour was to follow in the steps of his Lord and Master in the narrow way of self-denial and sacrifice of the good things of this world.

We believe our brother was "faithful unto death", and has now joined the ranks of those faithful "overcomers" who are to be associated with Christ in the grand work of blessing all the families of the earth, according to the Lord's promise to Abraham, Gal. 3: 8, 16, 29.

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a warm invitation to all friends to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th in the Manchester Unity Hall, (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information may be had from the Class Secretary—Mrs. R. Jordan, 14 Newark Road, Torrens Park, South Australia, 5062.

Passover Memorial 1971

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 8th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "In remembrance of Christ."

Melbourne—Sunday, 4th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

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

Perth—Thursday, 8th April, at 7 p.m., at Women's Service Guild Rooms, 7 Harvest Terrace, Perth (opposite Parliament House).

Sydney—Thursday, 8th April, at 7 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 280 Dalhousie Street, Haberfield.

Bible Student Manual, otherwise known as Berean Comments, are now in limited supply. With nice appearance, bound in strong cloth, with gold lettering, the price is \$4.00, plus postage of up to 70c interstate.

Poems of Dawn, 320 pages of original poems with additional choice Christian poems are now in stock. Excellent as gifts. Black simulated leather, handy size, price \$2.20, plus postage 25c.

Books Available

"God's Promises Come True"—\$2.20.

"The Divine Plan of the Ages," Cloth bound-80c; paper covers-55c.

"Emphatic Diaglott," New Testament—\$2.20.

"Daily Heavenly Manna," birthday pages—\$1.10. "Tabernacle Shadows"—68c.

"The Book of Books," Reviewing the Bible as a whole—\$1.10.

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—15c.

"Manner of Christ's Return"—15c.

"Christ's Return"—15c.

"Some of the Parables"—15c.

"Hope Beyond the Grave"—15c.

"God and Reason"—15c.

"Where Are the Dead?"—10c.

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“As I Have Loved You”

(Convention Address)

“A New commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”—John 13: 34, 35.

THE Apostle Paul in a like admonition to Jesus’ words in our text, says, “But as touching brotherly (philadelphia) love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love (agape) one another—1 Thes. 4: 9.

The context of this admonition has to do with our daily walk, the conduct of our lives, particularly in our relation one with another. Paul shows that sanctification includes what we do with these earthen vessels in which we tabernacle, and that we should abstain from unholy lusts of the flesh. For “God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification. Therefore, he that disregards these admonitions, disregards not man, but God who has given us his holy spirit”—1 Thes. 4: 7, 8.

Paul does not state how they had been taught of God; but having known the commandments of the Law, and having heard the instructions that came from our Lord, Paul’s own ministry and example of untiring devotion and watchcare over them, as he led them from the worship of idols to the worship of the living God, had given them a wonderful lesson in brotherly love. He had indeed been an example to the flock.

John’s argument shows that it would be difficult to over-estimate the importance of brotherly love. He says, “He that loveth his brother abideth in the light . . . But he that hateth his brother is in darkness”—1 John 2: 10, 11.

In John’s use of the word “light”, he evidently refers to Godlike principle and conduct, rather than to the understanding of doctrine. Though one possessed all knowledge, he would still be nothing (darkness) without love (1 Cor. 13: 2). Then he further says, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, **because** we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death”—1 John 3: 14.

Love for our brethren is therefore the evidence that we see and live; otherwise we abide in darkness and death. John also avers that love for the brethren means that we know God and have become sons in His family. He says, “Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is begotten of God and knoweth God”—1 John 4: 7.

Then to further emphasise the great importance of brotherly love, he says, “If a man say, 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? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also”—1 John 4: 20, 21.

Love for our brethren, therefore, indicates the measure of our love for God. We should note this carefully and ponder the **vital** significance of John’s argument. For to profess to love God, and then not to obey His command to love our brother also, is to show the hypocrisy of our profession, for **if we love God**, we will keep His commandments.

Then, too, it matters not how much head knowledge we may possess, or how Biblically sound we may be in our beliefs, if we lack brotherly love, we dwell in darkness, and in separation from God, for God dwells in light.

Neither do we know God or partake of life, for love, particularly in its manifestation toward our brethren, is the evidence of knowing God, and of having passed from death unto life.

It would be easy to imagine someone, thinking to justify his disapproval of those whose soundness of beliefs he questioned, as saying, Who is my brother? Manifestly, you and I have no authority to pick and choose the ones who will occupy this position, for God does the choosing, and expects us to heed His command to love them. Theoretically, any one who lays claim to God's mercy, through Christ, repents of his sins, and in token of conversion turns from sin to the pursuit of righteousness and devotes himself to the doing of God's will, is our brother regardless of his idiosyncrasies or beliefs or infantile conduct.

But the questioner might further argue, Should we not expect some evidence in support of such a claim? Does God expect us to welcome to our fellowship any and all despite their actions and variances in belief? It is here that we, as Christians, need to take care that we follow closely the Lord's guidance and **do not set up -unauthorized standards and tests** of our own conclusions which will cause divisions contrary to the spirit of love, and prove hurtful to all concerned.

Obviously, sooner or later, there will be indications of the genuineness of sonship claims; for if begotten and led of the spirit, there will be manifest a striving toward holiness of life, a desire for fellowship with saints, and an eagerness to understand the Word and will of God, that the daily life may be conformed thereto. Such signs identify a true brother in Christ at all periods of his Christian development.

It is manifest, however, that many who exhibit these signs, do not agree in their conclusions respecting some of the items of truth that have been stressed in these latter days. This has proved to be quite a test of brotherly relationship and co-operation; and seemingly is being overruled of God to manifest the degree of our development in brotherly love and the spirit of tolerance. We need to watch well our own hearts, that we do not permit such differences to estrange us from brethren who may prefer association with groups more in harmony with their own doctrinal convictions.

Whereas we hold fully with the "Studies in the Scriptures" in their presentation of the Covenants, the Sin-offering, the Lord's invisible presence, etc., etc., yet we find no evidence in the Word to indicate that a misapprehension of these **operational** doctrines is to be a basis for severance of relationship with Christ. We do find much evidence, however, to show that a failure to have and exercise Godlike love, which is an evidence of a lack of His spirit within, will preclude our acceptance into the glorified Body of Christ.

Some who manifest a true, heart love for the Lord, and are diligently striving to be found ready and watching when their call comes to meet Him in the air, are not able to differentiate His secret, unseen presence from that which has operated down through the age in accordance with His promise when He said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age." To designate such as scoffers would do violence to Peter's words (2 Pet. 3: 3, 4), for they love the thought of their Lord's coming, and are striving to be found in His image. All Gospel Age saints have realised the providential leadings of their Lord's presence with them just the same as now—the only difference being the foretold evidence which we see all about us, relative to the overthrow of this present order in preparation for the incoming kingdom.

Peter (2 Pet. 1: 5-8), like John, places love at the top of the scale in the list of essentials to an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord. He shows faith to be the basis upon which we build, and then progresses upward to **agape** love—love in its superlative and all-comprehensive degree. This is the principle of love that actuates God, and is not dependent upon being reciprocated or pleased with its object. It is this Greek word **agape** that John uses in all the texts we have cited, in which he enjoins love for our brethren.

This is a lofty ideal to which we must attain; and it behoves us to take heed that our Adversary does not cause us to make issues of points that have no particular bearing on this ideal. Satan is adept in the misuse of Scripture to turn us aside, as was evidenced by his attempt to overreach our Lord in this manner.

Those teachings that pertain to God's operation in bringing to pass His will and purpose; namely, the time prophecies, the secret unseen presence of Christ, etc., are important, and are being used in this harvest period by our Lord in His work of gathering or separating His elect from the four quarters of Christendom. The whole grand system of beautiful truths contained in the "Studies in the Scriptures" are intensely interesting and instructive to us, for they give us an understanding of the "Divine Plan of the Ages", thus helping us to see the operation of the attributes of God—His justice, wisdom, love and power. It is God's will and pleasure that we should be sanctified by the truth, John 17: 17; 2 Pet. 1: 2, 3.

The great reward is given to those who overcome—those who prove faithful in keeping the **conduct** of their

lives in full accord with their covenant of sacrifice, and with the admonitions laid down in the Word. In doing this, we become holy as He is holy, and we learn to know Him, whom to know is life eternal.

Divine love always operates in accord with wisdom and justice, and in a manner appropriate to its object; therefore our love should also conform to this same rule. It would not do at all for us to love God with the same manifestations of love that we exhibit toward our enemies. Love for God consists primarily, in keeping His commandments; in rendering the honour and praise that will hallow His name; in showing our appreciation for His goodness by the worship and adoration we manifest in imitation of that goodness. But such manifestations would be wholly inappropriate if exercised toward any being other than God or Christ.

Love for mankind, and also for our brethren, will be shown by manifestations of kindness, compassion, sympathy, mercy, forgiveness, pity, and other like graces. But obviously, such manifestations would be wholly out of place in the exercise of love for God. He does not need our compassion, mercy, pity, or forgiveness, but He does look upon the exercise of these graces toward our brethren as being love unto Himself. The one predetermined and indispensable qualification necessary to an abundant entrance with our Lord into His Kingdom, is that we be conformed to His character-likeness. Such excellence can be attained only through complete trust, obedience and faithfulness in the doing of God's will.

In the process of being drawn (John 6: 44) and invited to dedicate ourselves to the doing of the Father's will, there must have existed a measure of honesty and humility in our hearts, for God does not deal with those void of these qualities. Nevertheless, the unholy things of the old man possessed us, and our affections were centred more or less on the things of the world—the things pleasing to the flesh. Therefore we had to be emptied of the things of self-will and sin; we needed to be cleansed of the unrighteousness inherited from our forefathers, which we had increased by our own mode of life prior to conversion. Theoretically, this was done when we dedicated ourselves to the doing of God's will, and were begotten of His spirit. But in actuality, it takes time for the holy spirit to be shed abroad in our hearts, and for the fleshly traits to be eradicated and replaced by the graces of the spirit.

It should greatly encourage us if, more and more, we are able to appreciate the length, breadth, height, and depth of God's glorious character, and sense within ourselves a growing desire and determination to acquire and manifest His holiness in our lives. It is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts that enlarges our hearts, that broadens our minds, and enables us to rid ourselves of the narrow, mean, petty things that once possessed us. And it is possession of God's spirit, operative through the Word of truth, that caused the growth we can see taking place in His children.

Paul says, "All Scripture, divinely inspired, is indeed profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for that discipline which is in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly fitted for every good work"—2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.

If, therefore, we are making good use of our opportunity, we are sure to grow, provided the object of our study is the knowing of God's will concerning us, and we have a sincere desire to become like Him. If we are not growing, either we do not partake with the right motive in mind, or else we fail to digest and assimilate the lessons that are given there for us. Proper study will no doubt make us aware of the great disparity that exists between us and God; but this should encourage us, for it is an indication that we are growing in appreciation of God.

Satan is constantly recalling to our minds the sins and failures of our past, and using discouragement to rob us of our faith in God's promise of forgiveness through Christ. Consequently, we need to daily remember that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from **all** unrighteousness"—1 John 1: 9. This promise, if believed and acted upon, will leave Satan no opportunity to attack us through our past sins; for if God has forgiven and cleansed, there is no higher authority, and we need never condemn ourselves, but may press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Whether or not we triumph in the race that is set before us, will depend upon the condition of the heart, which must be sound (pure) to endure the tests that will be put upon it. The heart's condition will be revealed by the way we strive to conform our lives to the will of God; and the index to the heart is the mouth—that is, the various means by which we express our thoughts. For Jesus says, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh"—Matt. 12: 24.

Early in His ministry, Jesus cited love as being the evidence of Godlikeness, saying, "Ye have heard that it was said, thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be the sons of your Father which is in heaven"—Matt. 5: 44, 45. When love to this degree obtains, all mankind will be truly blessed and happy. But is a love of one's enemies sufficient to guarantee us the privilege of becoming a member of the glorified Body of Christ?

We must not forget that in perfecting this little flock, God is fashioning a new creation which He intends shall occupy His own plane of existence—"Far above angels, principalities, powers, and every name that is named"—Eph. 1: 21. And as all of creation is expected to reflect the divine glory in proportion to its scale of being, is it not evident that God will require of this class a greater measure of His likeness than is possible to any lesser form of creation? Paul prays that we may be "filled with all the fulness of God"—Eph. 3: 19. Consequently, we may expect to be subjected to experiences and tests more crucial in character (not necessarily in physical suffering) than will be the tests applied to mankind, or to any order of beings less than the divine.

In harmony with this thought, Jesus, toward the close of His ministry, gives us what He called a **new commandment**—"A new commandment I give unto you; that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another"—John 13: 34. But the commandment to love one another had been given many times before this; so why call it new? What is there about this order that makes it different? Clearly, it is the higher standard it sets in the requirement of the additional clause—"Even as I have loved you."

This is a love that goes beyond the doing of good to one's enemies, for it requires the sacrifice of self in the service of others, especially of the brethren, and so constitutes a more crucial test of likeness to the heavenly Father. In fact, it is so unmistakable, that in the next verse Jesus says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have this (measure of) love to one another." The exercise of Christlike love for our brethren is an advanced test of our worthiness to receive the reward of the overcomer.

When first we come into association with the Lord's people, we are apt to feel that loving them is just a matter of course; for possessing the spirit of sonship, and having like thoughts and hopes, we find them very congenial. But sooner or later the individual traits, likes and dislikes, will begin to manifest themselves, and we will find that some are not as angelic as we had thought they were. Their natural dispositions and ways of doing things, will tend to irritate and antagonize us; and their conclusions with regard to certain teachings of the Word, will make the Class studies difficult sometimes.

If our love is to become like God's love, we will have to overcome our natural feelings; not only to the extent of doing good unto all, but even to the extent of sacrificing our preferences and conveniences, our time and strength when there is opportunity to render service. You will recall that Jesus said, "If ye love them only which love you, what reward can you expect? Even the unregenerate do this"—Matt. 5: 46, Diaglott.

Love, in the way that God exercises it, and in the way in which He expects us to exercise it, is not dependent upon being pleased with its object; nor of appreciating and approving what its object says and does. God does not expect us to approve our enemies, but He does expect us to love them, even though they should be brethren from whom we would expect loving consideration.

It must be evident to all, that Godlike love goes far beyond the scope of natural affection; or of that degree of appreciation and liking that most people would define as love. And since divine love constitutes the standard to which we must attain, it follows that all who hope to be of the divine nature must be tested along this line, in order to demonstrate their fitness to be associated with God and all who will be like Him.

It will be in tests of this nature that Satan will surely seek to take advantage of our fleshly weaknesses, tempting us to turn from spiritual warfare to the use of carnal weapons. Regardless of how much we strive to keep our natural tendencies under control, they still abide in our fleshly minds, and unless constantly guarded and forcibly suppressed, they will rise to the surface to defile us, and to beget roots of bitterness that others may become defiled.

It was the Apostle's realisation of this danger that caused him to refer to the "old man" as a garment that must be put off. If you had a garment which you knew was infected with dangerous germs of disease, would you harbor it—would you bring it into your home and wear it? Certainly not. You would either destroy it, or else subject it to a cleansing process that would eradicate the foul germs.

To foster the unholy things of the flesh is far more foolish than to harbor disease germs, for in so doing, we endanger the life of the new creature—we threaten our eternal existence. Loving a brother as Jesus loved us, requires that we consider his interests ahead of our own. And so whatever we say and do must be motivated with this thought in mind.

Although we have received the spirit of a sound mind, still our faculties of reason, knowledge, and judgment are very imperfect; as Paul put it, "Now we see through a glass dimly"—1 Cor. 13: 12, and so are very apt to err. Therefore, if we understand the spirit of the Word and commandments of the Lord aright, it is far better to err in being too tolerant—too kindly—than to err on the side of intolerance and fault finding.

This does not mean that we may compromise with truth or with conscience when right and wrong are clearly

marked, or even when we think that they are. But we are apt to misconstrue our own concepts as being principle, and so become dogmatic and unsympathetic toward others. The Lord's people should realise that they are imperfect, and so should exercise meekness, gentleness and patience toward those who differ from them.

To "grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might" means growth in the exercise of the graces of the spirit, for it is these graces that constitute the power of His might. It requires much more power to be kindly than to be rude; to be meek rather than assertive; to be patient rather than impatient, as we are disposed to become. God has not planned our education with the thought of giving us something easy to do, but sends things that will test our loyalty to Him and to the principles which His Word inculcates. Our fitness to receive the reward of the overcomer must be proved, and that largely by the way we exercise love for our brethren in manifesting the graces of the spirit.

The exercise of love toward our brethren! Does it not seem strange that both Paul and John should pass by all other relationships and mention only the brethren in this connection? Why is it? Why do we need to be told especially to love the brethren? One would naturally think that this would be easy as compared to love for our enemies, but it is not. Experience has shown that love for the brethren (and this means all the brethren, not just those that suit us) as exhibited by Jesus is one of the most difficult things required of us; for God has not chosen people that are congenial to one another according to the flesh. We doubtless would have chosen the friendly—the by-nature happy dispositioned folks—but God did not do so.

God is gathering jewels, living stones that will stand up under shaping and polishing that is necessary to make them shine in the setting that has been prepared for them. Diamonds as originally found in the clay and gravel pits, are unattractive. The chances are that we would toss them aside, and select stones pleasing to the eye because of shape or color. The intrinsic value of the diamond is wrought through tremendous heat and pressure; but its beauty is due to the skill of the lapidary who cuts and polishes it to reflect the colors of light.

Likewise, the Lord's jewels may be found in queer and unexpected places and be very unattractive from the outward appearance; but if He sees in them a quality that He can use, and inducts them into the Body of Christ, you and I will have to trust His judgment and learn to love and treat them as brothers in God's family. No doubt their natural bumps and disfigurements, coming in contact with our imperfections, will irritate, offend and hurt; and there will be times when much of the oil of the holy spirit will be needed. But let us reflect that if we ourselves were without bumps and imperfections, their bumps would cause us no irritation.

The statement of John that "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren", leaves no room for any qualifying proviso that would weaken its forcefulness and significance; we must love and cherish all the brethren, whether they please us or not, for all are of one body, one spirit, and one is your Master, even Christ—all ye are brethren.

We cannot help appreciating some more than others; even Jesus manifested a preference for Peter, James and John in that He often made them His special companions. It is more than likely that it was traits of character that formed the basis for this preference, and their subsequent activities and prominence in His service verified the perceptions of Jesus. Our perceptions are not so keen, and we are apt to appeal to one another largely because of our natural traits; whereas, the thing that should really gauge our appreciation of a brother, is the measure of the Lord's spirit that he manifests. This will eventually be the determining factor with each one of us.

The kind of love we are to manifest for one another, while not devoid of sentiment or feeling, is primarily a principle of action, the same as it is with God. Such love is not to be confused with natural affection. Natural affection and conjugal love are necessary and good in so far as they go, but they are limited in scope, and tend to be evanescent. Agape love is a principle that is not evanescent or limited in scope, for it is not dependent upon another's attractiveness or acts, but will operate wherever there is need.

It is this principle that must constitute the basis of our love for the brethren, if that love is to endure the tests put upon it. But additionally, being of one family, members one of another, there should be developed within us a tenderhearted affection for each other. We must follow Paul's admonition to the brethren at Rome, "Let love be without hypocrisy, abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. In love of the brethren be tender-affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another"—Rom. 12:9, 10. A.S.V.

For this to be true and operate toward all the brethren, there must be a large measure of the Lord's spirit in our hearts, for naturally we find it difficult to refrain from judging and estimating one another by what we see in the flesh. It should rejoice us to know that we have right within our own hands, so to speak, the means of keeping ourselves in the love of God, for love of the brethren, according to John, is the measure by which we are judged. If we can say we love all the brethren, and say it truly, we can be sure that we have the Lord's approval. It is a

positive evidence that we have passed from death unto life; that we are abiding in the light; that we know God and love Him.

In the 11th chapter of Revelation, it is recorded that John was given a golden rod, and was told to measure the Temple, the Altar and those that worship therein.

Whether or not we rightly interpret this symbol, we do know that the Church is the Temple of God, and that we, as individuals in this Temple, are being measured by the rule of divine love. The first Epistle of John, chapters 3 and 4 particularly, is indisputable evidence that John was obedient and faithful in the use of this rod. Here we are given to know whether we are of the right dimensions to occupy a place in the Temple, and are truly in harmony with the will of God concerning us.

“Beloved! we should love each other; because love is from God; and every one who loves has been begotten by God, and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, because God is love”—1 John 4:7, 8. Diaglott.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM *Australia, 3101.*

The Spirit of Christmas

WHILE the followers of Christ are ever mindful of the life and sacrifice of our Lord while on earth, and desire to have His spirit actuating their every thought, word and deed, the Christmas season drawing near again, will be profitable and an added time of blessing for all if it serves to further impress the spirit of love and faithful obedience to the heavenly Father’s will, exhibited by our Lord Jesus in taking upon Himself “the form of a servant.” He had loving sympathy and devotion to “His own”, and compassion on the multitudes, as He laid down His life “for every man”, commencing thirty years after that first Christmas morn, so long ago.

How good it is to think of the days when Jesus came to earth and was proclaimed by the angel as a Saviour, Christ the Lord; how that throughout His ministry He “spoke as never man spake”, “words of grace and truth”, which drew to Himself a little band of loyal disciples, and which shall yet be indeed “good tidings of great joy to all people”.

The following extracts from an address given many years ago on “Taking Jesus Seriously”, by H. R. S. Shepard, late Dean of Canterbury, serve to impress upon us the privilege of serving the Lord, in spirit and truth, through His people, as truly as did the early disciples, though the nominal church and state are in much the same condition now as when Christ came in the flesh:

“What, in fact, should we do if Jesus appeared in our society with any claim to anything but the right to console us, to heal our personal ills, and to make us all comfortable again? I wonder. As a revealer of the art of actual living, as the master of the craft of life—for that is what He is and was—should we recognise Him, or would Church and State combine against Him as a dangerous fellow, one to be dealt with in the old Judean way, to be bullied, to be betrayed, to be crucified? I wonder.

“I suggest that for many of us who are here there is, after all, particularly one thing that actually makes known the Gospel, and that is the goodness of the individual. If only when we get home tonight they knew at home, because we were rather different, that we had been trying to draw near to our Lord, if only they could see that we were a little more thoughtful, courteous, kindly and understanding, then, ‘Oh, my!’ they would say, ‘there is something in this more than we thought there was.’

“I think it might well be the ambition of all our lives that one day, possibly, most lovely of all, wife, or brother, or sister, or mother, or grannie, might say after we had left, ‘It seems as if Jesus of Nazareth had passed by.’ So when we talk, as we often do, a great deal about Church reform, and all the rest, things that sometimes mean little to some of the people, let them please remember that they will count in an amazing way if they can take Jesus Christ back to their homes or their places of business.”

Such is the happy position of all who seek to cultivate the graces and fruits of the spirit in their own lives—of being used of the Lord to impart His sweet spirit of comfort, hope and encouragement to others. Who can estimate the joy, the uplifting influence from those

“Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone.”

Many will be the opportunities for all to demonstrate their love for the Lord and their brethren, in the little acts of service and encouragement along the narrow way in all the days ahead, at the Convention gatherings, at the

regular Class meetings, and more often in the homes.

“As some rare perfume in a vase of clay,
Pervades it with a perfume not its own
So when Thou dwellest in a mortal soul,
All heaven’s own sweetness seems around it thrown”

And so, as another has said, “Our alabaster boxes are our hearts, which should be full of the richest and sweetest perfumes of good wishes, kindness and love toward all, but especially toward the Christ—toward the Head, our Lord Jesus, and toward all the members of His Body, the Church; and especially on our part toward the feet members who are now with us, and on whom we now have the privilege of pouring out the sweet odours of love and devotion in the name of the Lord, because we are His.”

The Birth of Christ

“Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy”—Luke 2: 10.

THE story of our Lord’s birth is one so familiar as to require no special comment, and yet in its simple details lies the hope of the whole world. Four thousand years previous the birth of this child was promised, and all the way along during those forty centuries some faithful souls continued to trust in the promises and to look for the salvation to be brought about through Him. We may surely take for granted that the humble shepherds to whom the message of the Lord’s advent first came were men who thus hoped in the promise of God; for to such, and to such only, the Lord discloses His purposes.

These men were quietly tending their flocks by night when suddenly the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid (verse 9). But their fear was soon overcome by the message of the angel, contained in our text, but which, strange to say, so many only partially quote, leaving out one of the grandest features of the message—namely, that it was to be to all people.

The message reads, “Fear not; for, behold I bring you good tidings of GREAT JOY, which shall be to ALL PEOPLE.” It will be observed that the blessedness of these tidings is cumulative; first, it is “good tidings”, then it is “great joy”, and then the crowning feature of it is that it is “to all people”—not only to those who were that night looking for the hope of Israel, but for all their friends and relations and all mankind far and near, both to those who now live and to those who shall live, as well as to those now in death.

Blessed tidings! Harken to the gladsome sound: “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord”—verse 11. Then He was to be a Saviour to all people; so the Scriptures clearly affirm, saying that, by the grace of God, He tasted death for every man, and that He gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time—to all—Heb. 2: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 6. The testimony, however, is quite as necessary to the salvation of the sinner as the fact that Christ gave Himself a ransom for all. The favor of salvation will not be forced upon any; but the testimony that it has been provided for every man, on condition of his acceptance of the favor upon God’s terms, is to be given to every man, for his acceptance or rejection. And though millions of the race for whom Christ died have gone down to the grave without such testimony, still the fact remains that the testimony shall be given in due time—which due time, to all such, must be after their awakening from death.

And to this agree the words of the Lord: “The hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth; they that have done good (who during the present life come into judgment and who have passed their trial successfully), unto the resurrection of life, the full reward of the faithful; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment”—John 5: 25-29. That is, the latter class will come forth from the grave to have the truth testified to them then, for their acceptance or rejection; and their final judgment of worthiness or unworthiness of life will be based upon their course under trial after the truth has been testified to them—in the Millennial Age. Thus the angel of the Lord preached the good tidings of the restitution of all things to the shepherds on the plain of Bethlehem.

Verse 12. Then they were told where and how they should find this bud of promise, so that when they should see Him they might feel doubly assured that this was He.

Verses 13, 14. “Then suddenly there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” This shows how the angels of God are interested in the affairs of men, and how they sympathise with us and rejoice over our prosperity. And this

reminds us of other statements, to the effect that there is joy in heaven among the angels over one sinner that repenteth (Luke 15: 7); and again, that they are earnest students of the plan for human salvation; and that they are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation—1 Pet. 1: 12; Heb. 1: 14. Thus we see them to be creatures of God full of loving benevolence even toward a fallen race, and esteeming it a privilege to serve the heirs of this salvation; although they know, as they studiously look into God's plan, that some of this fallen race are by and by to be highly exalted, even above the angels who never sinned.

Thus we see their humble recognition of the right of the Creator to do what He will with His own, and their cheerful and joyful acquiescence in His perfect will, which they know to be determined by His unerring wisdom and His fathomless love. Oh, what universal joy will prevail when the whole family of God in heaven and in earth is brought into fullest harmony under Jehovah's Anointed!

Verses 15-18 show the teachable attitude of the shepherds; they recognised the angels and their message as from the Lord, and, their fears being allayed, their hopes revived and their faith increased, they felt that they must go at once and see this which had come to pass. And when they had found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger, they were not silent, but "made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds."

Verse 19. "But Mary (mother-like) kept all these things and pondered them in her heart", doubtless calling to mind also the message of the angel to her—Luke 1: 28-35. Again and again we seem to hear her say, "My soul doth magnify the Lord . . . for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden . . . He that is mighty hath done to me great things and holy is his name"—Luke 1: 46-49.

Verse 20. The shepherds returned to their flocks, fully assured of the wonderful truth that the promised seed of the woman who was to bruise the serpent's head had come. And they rejoiced and glorified God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as they were told unto them.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at \$9.50.

Visiting Brethren from U.S.A.

DURING part of October and November it was a great pleasure for the Australian brethren to welcome Brother and Sister Pollock and Brother and Sister Herz, of U.S.A., to our midst, and we are grateful to the Lord for the enjoyable and refreshing time experienced at the gatherings and in fellowship with our dear friends during their sojourn in this land.

Following the visit to the friends in New Zealand, when ten days (two weekends) were much enjoyed by the brethren in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, our visitors arrived in Sydney on the evening of October 27th. Two meetings at the home of our Italian brethren were greatly appreciated, addresses by Brother Pollock being interpreted for the benefit of the Italian friends present, and were much enjoyed on the messages of the Divine Plan and prophecy being fulfilled.

On the morning of 30th October, the brethren took the plane to Brisbane, and that evening a very profitable meeting was held in the home of a Polish Brother, with friends also attending from Toowoomba, Gympie and Nambour, about 20 enjoying the gathering and fellowship. Other meetings were also held with further benefit at the lodging place.

Friday evening, 31st October, the brethren came direct to Melbourne, and for the next seven days meetings were held daily in halls, homes and informally wherever our visitors were. Three addresses for the brethren by Brother Pollock were—"Our Living Hope", "Sanctification", and "The Tree of Life", and Brother Herz spoke on "The Days of Noah." All these messages by our two brethren were warmly appreciated, and it is expected these will also be available in print shortly for the benefit of others further afield.

On Sunday afternoon, 2nd November, the public lecture by Brother Pollock on "Today and Tomorrow in Prophecy" was greatly enjoyed by a nice gathering of upwards of 100, including a number from the public, and this lecture will be supplied in print to those who left their names and addresses, and will be available for distribution by all who can use the copies to advantage. One gathering held in the home of our Polish brethren, when Brother Pollock spoke on the Divine Plan, was especially appreciated by the Polish friends in this city, as it was interpreted by two brethren for the benefit of those not yet able to grasp the English language clearly.

The days passed very quickly here in Melbourne, but we have happy memories of the return visit after four

years of Brother and Sister Pollock, and the presence of Brother and Sister Herz, this time, also added much to the enjoyment of the occasion.

Saturday morning, 8th November, our brethren were on their way to Adelaide, where the South Australian brethren much enjoyed the three days of meetings and fellowship, four meetings being held in the usual meeting place, and another at an open-air gathering. It was good that a brother from the country could also be present on the weekend, when an additional subject for Brother Pollock's addresses was "Ransom and Redemption", Brother Herz also contributing helpfully at the open-air meeting.

Continuing on to Perth, Western Australia, on 11th November, the next six days were greatly appreciated by the Perth brethren. Amongst other meetings a public lecture by Brother Pollock on "Today and Tomorrow in Prophecy" brought encouragement to the Perth friends when about ten outsiders were present to hear the helpful message in the gathering of about 37. We pray that these new friends in Perth, as well as in Melbourne and other places may continue in appreciation of the glad message of the kingdom, according to the Lord's will. A few words from Perth sums up the visit there—"Many a happy thought and exhortation has been left behind, and no doubt the six days with us were amongst the best days we have had in the truth."

We are thankful for the Lord's overruling providence, enabling our brethren from U.S.A. to visit us at this time, and we appreciate also the love and zeal of our dear friends which prompted the desire to use time and talents in the service of the Lord and His truth in this part of the Lord's harvest field. In addition to the personal sacrifices of each of our visiting brethren to promote the Lord's cause in Australia and New Zealand, they also brought gifts to the work in these lands from three other brethren in U.S.A., which are also warmly appreciated, as unto the Lord. Brethren in any land are welcome to copies of the addresses given by our visiting brethren; these are gladly supplied free for distribution. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. Further information from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, Victoria, 3167.

ADELAIDE EASTER CONVENTION

This early announcement is to advise that the Adelaide brethren expect to hold their Easter Convention in 1970, as usual, D.V. Further information will appear in next issue of "Peoples Paper".

CONVENTION NOTES

It is expected that the Notes on the Melbourne Christmas Convention will be available as usual. Copies of previous Convention Notes are still on hand, and any friends able to use these to advantage are asked to apply for them. The back copies are quite valuable with reports of studies and addresses; we would like them to be used wherever desired.

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford **Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$11.50.**



**Volume L111 No. 5 MELBOURNE, OCTOBER—
NOVEMBER, 1970**

The Destiny of Israel and Egypt in Bible Prophecy

IN reviewing events connected with our subject, it is well to remember that confrontation between Israel and the Arab nations goes back many years. We would like to draw attention to God's use of Egypt to save Israel from a devastating drought in the days of Jacob. Jacob's name, we know, was changed to Israel, and he was really the father of the nation of Israel. In Genesis 45 we have a record of Joseph in Egypt revealing his identity to his brethren, who had sold him into slavery. In verses 4-8 there is a most wonderful expression of forgiveness. Verses 7 and 8 read—"God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord to all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt." God was pleased to use Egypt on that occasion for the support of His ancient people Israel. This was fulfilling His plan that Israel spend a considerable time in the land of Egypt.

However, after the death of Joseph we find, in Exodus 1: 8, the words—"Now there arose a new king over Egypt which knew not Joseph." A great change then took place in the conditions of the Israelites in Egypt, and which finally brought about their deliverance from Egypt at the hands of Moses at the first Passover. Just as Israel's going to Egypt fulfilled an important part of God's plan, so their deliverance from Egypt fulfilled another and equally important part of the plan of God. The point of interest to us is that God was pleased to use Egypt at that period of time in the history of the human family.

When our Lord Jesus was born, some hundreds of years later, God again used Egypt to save the life of Jesus from King Herod, as recorded in Matt. 2: 13-15—"Behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son."

From the time Israel became a nation at Jacob's death (Jacob being the father of Israel), Israel had enjoyed God's favour continuously until the time of the crucifixion of Jesus. But His favour was then, of necessity, withdrawn. Whatever the length of the period of favour, for an equal period of time Israel would be required to experience God's disfavour. The disfavour of God must come upon Israel for the same length of time as His favour was manifested. This is termed Israel's "double". Only when the period of disfavour was fulfilled would God again receive Israel back into favour. Three prophets of God give testimony respecting this matter, as follows:

In Jeremiah 16: 14, 15, we have the prophecy describing the return of 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." This promise is in contrast to the former time when the children of Israel were brought "out of the land of Egypt." Then verse 18 reads—"First I will recompense their iniquity and their sin **double.**"

Then in Zechariah 9: 9-12 is recorded a prophecy of the coming of Messiah, with the statement in verse 12—"Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render **double** unto thee." The Hebrew word translated "double" in this verse, as in Jeremiah, means "a repetition, or a double amount."

Further, in Isaiah 40: 1, 2, we read—"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare (margin, appointed time) is accomplished, that her iniquity is

pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand **double** for all her sins." The Hebrew word for "double" in this text means "a duplicate."

It will be noticed that different prophetic viewpoints are presented in the three prophecies relating to Israel's double just quoted. Jeremiah foretold the time **would come** when Israel would be scattered among all nations, and after they had received double God would regather them to the land of their fathers, which would be of greater importance than their coming out of Egyptian bondage. Zechariah's words refer to the time of Messiah offering Himself to Israel as their King, and indicated that **in that day** their double commenced. It began there because they rejected the Lord as their wonderful Messiah, and He said—"Your house is left unto you desolate." Isaiah's message is written as though the end of the double had been reached. "Comfort ye, comfort ye", he says, as though Israel's double had been **completed**.

A message from Psa. 102: 13 is also in agreement with the foregoing, as it reads—"Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come." It is clearly revealed that Jeremiah, Zechariah, Isaiah and the Psalmist were all inspired by the spirit of the Lord in their respective prophecies.

Our Lord also predicted the time of Israel's disfavour, when they would be scattered amongst the nations of the world following His rejection, in Luke 21: 20-24. ". . . they shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." The Lord was there predicting the same period of disfavour for Israel, their double portion, as stated in the prophecies of Jeremiah, Zechariah, Isaiah and the Psalmist.

Students of the Scriptures are largely in agreement that the "Times of the Gentiles" was a period of 2,500 years, and this time feature had fulfilment about 1914-1918. From this time Jerusalem has been no longer fully trodden down of the Gentiles, for since then there has been progress in the land of Israel, and wonderful progress at that. The deliverance of the Holy Land from the Turks in 1917 is well established as the beginning of the rehabilitation of the country and the return of the exiles from many countries of the world.

At the time of the Second World War came the fulfilment of the words of Jeremiah 16: 16, with the return of many Israelites to the Holy Land. The verse reads—"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." During the Second World War and since there were favourable inducements, "fishers", for them to return, and the "hunters" used force in some countries. Many were lost in the process, but many returned to the Land of Promise, and rejoiced to gain that haven from Germany particularly, and other lands. Even now many Israelites desire to return to the Holy Land, particularly from Russia. The Lord may have this in store for them also in the not too distant future.

Since the establishment of Israel as a nation in 1948, and in view of the extra territory they gained in the Six-Day War of 1967, it is interesting to note the promise God gave to Abraham in Gen. 15: 18—"The Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." That is a great tract of country that is yet to be given to the seed of Abraham. This does not mean that Abraham's descendants are to obtain this land through their own war efforts, but God has guaranteed this Land of Promise to the seed of Abraham, and they will receive it in due time from God's hand, not by their own acts of war.

While Abraham's earthly seed was stated to be as "the sand of the seashore" for multitude, we read in Gen. 16: 10 concerning Hagar, the mother of Ishmael, "And the angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." This, we know, has reference to Ishmael, who was the father of the Arabs generally, and with whom the Egyptians are closely allied.

Then we have a most interesting reference in Gen. 21: 9-13 after Isaac, the son of promise, was born. "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed." The mocking of Isaac by Ishmael probably typified the mocking of representatives of Israel down the centuries to our own day. God made the promise that Isaac was to be the principal seed, but God was also going to make a nation from the seed of the bondwoman. This helps us to see the situation as we have it in the Middle East today, with the Arab nations surrounding Israel, who, though scattered among the nations down the centuries has kept herself more or less separate, as God instructed.

We have seen how God has used “fishers” and “hunters” to bring back the Israelites to their Promised Land, and it seems, Jer. 30: 4-11 has its fulfilment when there is a considerable number established in the Holy Land, as is the case today. “These are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the Lord: We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace . . . Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. . . . Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid.” The very father of Israel, Jacob, is shown as returning literally; in due course all the wonderful patriarchs will be resurrected to be the leaders of Israel under their New Covenant administration. Verse 11 reads, “For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.” Israel needs to be punished in the severe experiences of “Jacob’s trouble” but is promised deliverance from that humbling experience.

From verse 18 of this 30th chapter of Jeremiah we read—”Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob’s tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap . . . Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them.” Just how will the Lord punish those who oppress Israel? We may not know the details, but Zech. 12: 2, 3, very clearly shows that the Lord intends to protect Israel to the full. The Lord speaks—”Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day 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.” God at the psychological moment is going to deal severely with all who seek to destroy the nation of Israel now gathered in the Holy Land for the past fifty years or more.

In Ezekiel 38th chapter is given a detailed description in symbolic language of the siege to come upon regathered Israel. All nations throughout the world will know about this great happening, and God’s defence and deliverance of Israel in the great demonstration of His power. Verse 23 of this chapter reads—”Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself: and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord.”

God’s promises on behalf of Israel are continued in Ezek. 39. From verse 23 we read—”And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies . . . When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies’ lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations: then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. 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.” These are surely very wonderful promises that God makes on behalf of His ancient people, and we can accept them as being absolutely sure of fulfilment.

Again from Jer. 31, we read—”Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.” (Verses 10-12.)

When God delivers Israel from her enemies, that will be a great and wonderful experience for that people, but there will be something greater and more blessed than mere deliverance and triumph over enemies that they will experience, and that is God’s final conquest over them. God is going to conquer Israel. That will be the real turning point of importance, for when they know God is really their Deliverer from their enemies, and their hearts are turned to Him, that will be far greater for their eternal welfare than any conquests Israel has gained over the Egyptians or any Arab nation.

Formerly, when God gave Israel victory over their enemies, they were soon proud in heart, but that will never be so again. The great Messiah who comes to conquer their foes comes also to subdue their hearts. This combined work of the Lord was revealed to the prophet Zechariah in chapter 12, verses 9 and 10—”And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication: and they shall look upon me whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bit-

terness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.” Not that they will literally see the Lord whom they pierced. Rather, their minds will go back to the very time that happened; they will be so touched and grieved at heart that they brought about the Lord’s crucifixion. They will be thoroughly humiliated and that will be the turning point for their real salvation, and God will bless them as His covenant people as never before.

As with Israel, the Bible also assures us that the national life of Egypt will not be extinguished. God has a future for Egypt. Various Scriptures tell us that Egypt shall yet know Jehovah—”All the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord.” “And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and when all her helpers shall be destroyed.” “Thus will I execute judgment in Egypt: and they shall know that I am the Lord.” (Ezek. 29: 6; 30: 8, 19.) God requires obedience, but has no pleasure in the destruction of His human beings, whoever they are, Egyptians, Israelites or Arabs, but all mankind must be humbled and subdued before God to receive the blessings of His wonderful kingdom. In Isa. 19: 22 we read—”And the Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.” (See also Zech. 14: 16-19.)

Continuing in Isa. 19: 23-25, we read—”In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria . . . In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.” The nations now at loggerheads and endeavouring to consume one another are going to be comrades in this wonderful time when the Lord establishes His kingdom, and when His spirit is being implanted into the hearts of Israel and the other nations round about. When we read of a “highway” out of Egypt to Assyria, we are reminded of the wonderful highway presented in Isa. 35, which will be for the peoples of all nations as they walk up this “highway of holiness” back to harmony with God through Christ Jesus.

We noted previously the lovely disposition of Joseph in respect of his brethren, and this is the disposition surely that people of all nations will need to show to each other to receive the blessings of the Lord in due time. From Gen. 50: 15-21, we read—”When Joseph’s brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him. And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of thy servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him . . . And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spoke kindly unto them.” That is a very lovely disposition on the part of Joseph. He seemed to be a type of Christ, picturing His great salvation and the lovely disposition of humility and forgiveness that our Lord exemplified so beautifully throughout His life.

So all nations will need to take that same spirit into their hearts. There will never be any conflict or friction once God’s spirit is received in the hearts of people. Haggai says, “the desire of all nations shall come”, after God has shaken all men’s sinful systems and iniquity out of existence, and only Christ’s Kingdom is operative throughout the earth to mellow the hearts of all who respond to the laws of that kingdom. We rejoice that Israel is to be blessed particularly “for the fathers’ sakes”—not that those in Israel today are really religious. They need to be conquered by God, even now. It will be a greater victory for them when that is accomplished than all the victories of the past or future gained over the Egyptians or others. When God subdues all, Israelites, Egyptians and people of all nations, they will be ready for His blessing, and the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, and mankind will be blessed and uplifted, to live to His praise for all time.

End of the World

THE following short article appeared in our “Peoples Paper” in 1925, and is reprinted exactly as it appeared at that time. It is felt it will be of equal interest to our readers today as it was 45 years ago.

In almost every age, seers arise to prophesy exactly the end of the world. They generally inspire a panic of greater or lesser violence. It is an astonishing fact that not even the learned can free themselves from the end-of-the-world obsession. It is only a little over six years ago that Professor Porta, of Michigan University, spread panic and dismay in the United States by deducing destruction from the giant sunspot of that year, and even fixed the date for December 17, 1919.

Even more recently, in May, 1922, Dr. George T. Harding, brother of the late President Harding, and a promi-

ment leader of the Seventh Day Adventists, warned his followers that all would be over before his brother left office. The President died in August, 1923, but the world still rolled on.

The Seventh Day Adventists have now decided that the end will not come until 6,000 years after the Creation, or approximately the year 1996. On the other hand, Professor Flinders Petrie gave the earth another eight million years' run, and Dr. Charles Nordmann, the great French scientist, calculated that we might carry on for 10,000,000,000 years.—"News", W.A.

The above are but samples of the many predictions respecting the ending of the world. It is not strange that Christians should expect "the present evil world", as the Apostle terms it, to come to an end, but the general expectation as to what will happen, and how the world will end, is remarkable. There have, of course, always been those connected with Christianity, whose minds delight in dwelling upon the marvellous and mysterious things, and in matters of futurity. Such temperaments are usually excitable, easily stirred and imaginative. It is an easy matter for them to seize upon any seeming ground for the fixing of dates and details of future events, particularly on such an important matter as the ending of the present dispensation and the coming of Christ.

Some had fixed upon the present year for the great event, although they had previously declared that the world had ended, and that Christ's Kingdom had commenced some years ago. One can hardly keep track of the many refixings of the date, always with the same positiveness, and yet the "Prince of Darkness" still controls the affairs of men. Far from learning righteousness and enjoying the consequent peace, the poor old world grows worse every day, and becomes more and more "as in the days that were before the flood", and "as in the days of Lot." There can be no doubt that we are living in "the time of the end", Dan. 12: 1-4, and that the end cannot be a great way off, so that if anyone perseveres in postponing their guesses they may some time strike the date near enough to be able to say, "I told you so!"

The Seventh Day Adventist view, referred to above, is no doubt a Scriptural thought, that is, that the 7th thousand years period will be the period of Messiah's reign. The difficulty is to make certain just when the 6,000 years since the Adamic fall into sin will be completed. The data on which chronology is based is too uncertain to allow anyone to wisely dogmatise on the subject.

While we agree with the above thought of the Seventh Day Adventists respecting the 7th thousand years period, we differ very greatly respecting their anticipations. They, like others, expect the earth to be literally burned up, and the reign of Messiah is to be over a void and charred earth, and their view of the work of Messiah, and the saints who reign with Him, appears to be simply the examining of records, and allotting punishment or rewards upon the dead.

The Scriptural view is undoubtedly that the reign of Christ for 1,000 years is to be a great rest day for the poor groaning creation, the great antitype of the Jewish sabbath. Peter (2 Pet. 3) certainly speaks of "the heavens and the earth which are now" being reserved unto fire, and of the earth and the works therein being burned up, but a careful reading of the chapter will show that the Apostle was speaking in highly symbolic language. It will be noticed that he refers to "the heavens and the earth", which were before the flood, wherein the world that was being overflowed with water perished, yet it is the same world we live on today. What happened was that that order of things passed away; the "heavens" refer to the spiritual or religious arrangements, and the "earth" refers to the social and national institutions. After the destruction of that "heavens and earth" God made promise to Noah, Gen. 8: 21, that He would nevermore destroy every living thing as He had done. The present "heavens and earth" will pass away in a fiery time of trouble, but some of humanity will pass through as is indicated by our Lord, Matt. 24: 21, 22. He describes the trouble as being greater than anything in the past, and nothing so bad shall ever be again. It is to be such that if the days were not shortened no flesh could come through, but for the elects' sake the days will be shortened, so that some people will live through it. This is very definitely stated also in Zeph. 3: 8, 9, which clearly shows that it is not a literal burning up of the material earth that is meant, "For all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy, for then will I turn to the people a pure language that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent."

It is then that the promises to Abraham and to Israel shall be fulfilled, which could never be so if the literal earth was destroyed. It is then that the Lord's prayer will be answered: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven", or "all the ends of the earth will remember, and turn to the Lord. For the kingdom is the Lord's and He is Governor among the nations."—Psalm 22: 27, 28. The promise is that "all the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the great deep." What purpose could there be in destroying such a happy world? No, the Lord "made not the earth in vain." The present age, with its dispensation of grace, will pass away, but Peter again says, "We look for a new heavens (the heavenly rule of the Lord and His saints), and a new earth (Israel restored and a new order of society in the world for all nations, the world to come),

wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

Watch

(Contributed Address.)

In the number of times we find the word “watch” in the New Testament, the majority are either directly or indirectly associated with events that have to do with the second coming of Christ to establish His kingdom upon earth. Anyone who carefully reads the prophecy of Jesus relating to the winding up of this present order, “the heavens and earth which are now” (2 Pet. 3: 7), as it is narrated in Matt. 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, will note that Jesus concludes His remarks by urging His listeners to “watch”, so that they will discern the fulfilment of His words.

To whom does the exhortation to “watch” apply most—to the disciples of Jesus’ day, or to us living at the end of the age? Perhaps the tendency has been to accentuate watching on the age-end saints, and to conclude that it was not of the same importance to the earlier church; whereas it seems it has been of equal importance to all right down the age.

Many have concluded that a time was to come at the end of the age when the then living generation would see the complete culmination and winding up of the Gospel Age. This has been adduced from Jesus’ words—“Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (Matt. 24: 34; Mark 13: 30; Luke 21: 32). Nearly twenty years ago the “Bible Study Monthly” brethren in England pointed out that close study of the Greek reveals that it is more probable that what Jesus said was—“This generation shall not pass till all these things begin to come to pass” (or begin to happen).

Following this up caused me once before to speak on this subject, and the matter was printed in the “Peoples Paper” of December, 1961, under the title—“A Study in Matthew 24: 34.” Nothing has happened since that time to change my mind. However, there are other Bible students, just as sincere, and just as anxious to arrive reverently at the truth of God’s Word, who believe that the interpretation of Matt. 24: 34 in that article is controversial. For us all, then, shall we continue “watching”, that we may all see clearer as the days and years pass. What is now presented has not been mentioned in the article referred to, but seems to further confirm those thoughts.

Using Young’s Concordance, on page 180, the occasions when the Greek word “ginomai” is variously rendered “come, came, was come, etc.,” flee meaning is given as “to become.” The same meaning is given to the same word in a further long list of Scriptures on pages 73 and 74 of the Concordance. Further, the same Greek word is given three times on page 378, as having the same meaning, yet in these three texts it is rendered “fulfilled” in our Authorized Version—“This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.”

Let us note three additional Scriptures where the Greek word “ginomai” is used and which are helpful for comparison. The word is used in Luke 21: 7 when the disciples asked Jesus the question—“When shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things **shall come to pass?**” Note carefully here that it would not do to translate the word as “fulfilled.” When all these things are “fulfilled” in the complete sense, signs would be of no use. The “signs” clearly apply to the time when these things **are coming to pass, are in the course of fulfilment.** Next, we find the same word in Luke 21: 31—“When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” Obviously the meaning is, “when you see these things fulfilling.” The same Greek word is used in Luke 24: 12, where, after our Lord’s death and burial, Peter arrives at the tomb, and we read —“stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that **which was come to pass**” (or that which **had happened**).

In all the long lists previously mentioned on the various pages of the Concordance the same variation is found. Sometimes “ginomai” is used in the sense of things coming to pass, and sometimes in the sense of things fulfilled. The sense is defined from the context. The point may be clarified by using an illustration from our own language. Taking the word “read”, I may take a book and say, I have read this book—something fulfilled. Or I may say, I am going to read this book—something that will come to pass. Exactly the same word, spelt the same, referring to something fulfilled, or something to be fulfilled. Readers are left to decide what our Lord meant when He said, “This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.” To my understanding it means “till all these things begin to come to pass.”

Whether as the result of our studies we agree or not as to what is the correct interpretation or translation of these phrases, we will surely agree in this—that ever since Jesus first spoke the words, Christians have witnessed His prophecies fulfil. Those of His own day saw them commence, and others, even to our day, have seen them continue to fulfil. This generation--to whom Jesus spoke “watch”—and you will see these things **commence** to fulfil.

“And what I say unto you, I say unto all (succeeding generations), watch.” (Mark 13: 37.)

Watching Christians of Jesus’ own generation discerned the approaching sacking of Jerusalem and fled the city. When they beheld the temple destroyed, not one stone left upon another, it was only 70 A.D., less than forty years after Jesus first spoke the words, “this generation shall not pass”, etc. At this time was fulfilled what Jesus referred to in Matt. 23: 34-36 (please read). Upon “this generation”, those of Jesus’ own day, was to fall this punishment.

Further, about 46 A.D., we hear Paul declare in Acts 13: 46—”It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you . . . lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” The Jews were God’s people; from them must come the kingdom. Had they not heard Jesus say more than once that He was sent to minister only to Israel, and had He not charged them not to go to the Gentiles—Into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not.” But in the prophecy we have been considering, in answer to the question as to when He would set up His kingdom, Jesus said—”this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached **in all the world**, .. and then shall the end come.” “In all the world”—then it was clear that former restrictions were to be lifted and the “watching” saints even in the generation of Jesus day saw this **commence**, and the gospel must first be published among all nations” (Mark 13: 10).

Many generations later, in the times now designated “the dark ages”, the “watching” saints of that time would understand what Jesus meant when He said—”they shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all men, for my sake.” It was later still before nation began to rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and wars and rumours of wars filled the news sheets, but “watching” saints of the time knew Jesus’ prophecy was still in course of fulfilment.

Watching Christians of our generation have witnessed angels (messengers) going forth with a trumpet (of truth), gathering the elect from the four winds of heaven (from every quarter of Christendom). They have seen a “fig tree budding”, and “other trees putting forth leaves.” We are seeing other things too, but the end is not yet; a few more we are still to see if we continue to “watch”, but maybe there are not many. We have seen enough of Jesus prophecy fulfilled to know that the kingdom is near, even at the doors. But watching prophecy is not all we are to watch, though it is important.

After the account by Mark of the prophecies we have been considering, we find a parable given by Jesus, in Mark 13: 34. The going away of the Son of man was to be like a man taking a long journey; he would not be expected to return for quite some time, but he left everything planned and in order—”he gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.” The Amplified Version renders this verse 34—”It is like a man going on a journey; when he leaves home he puts his servants in charge, each with his particular task, and he gives his orders to the doorkeeper to be constantly alert and on the watch.” Note it is **not all watching**. Though **all** are to watch, there is also **work to be done**. Not work of our **own** volition, but work that the Master has set us. Not a frenzied disorderly preaching of the gospel, but a calm presentation of the stately stepping of our God through ages and dispensations. Not “winning the world for Christ” now, but “taking out a people for His name”, who will be ready when the Master returns, to associate with Him in establishing the kingdom.

The following phrases are from the “Daily Manna” comment for August 7th. “Jesus observed God’s times and seasons and methods . . . He did not make long prayers . . . to be **heard of men**, nor exhort the multitude with noisy harangue . . . He chose God’s methods which are rational and wise, and which are effective in selecting from among men the class which He desires to be heirs of the promised kingdom. Let those who would so run as to obtain the prize, mark these footprints of the Master, and be filled more and more with His spirit.” “Be filled more and more with His spirit”—this is what, above everything else, we have to watch. The only ones who can profitably watch history fulfil prophecy, are those who daily walk in those paths which increase the inflow of God’s holy spirit. Some watch prophecy with merely a curious mechanical attitude, and these are often loud in expressing interpretations of same. The exercise does not profit them nor their hearers. The really important “watching” for God’s saints in this time, is “walking after the spirit”, the putting away of everything that hinders spiritual progress. We must watch our words and our actions, even more importantly the thoughts of the heart and the mind, for from them proceed our words and our deeds.

What a time in which we are living. What pressures are daily upon the Lord’s people. Who shall stand! “Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.” Let us pray not only for ourselves, but for all the brethren. “Let us pray for one another, helping thus the weakest stand”, go the lines of the hymn. If I see a weakness in your character that I don’t think you are conscious of, it is my privilege to pray for you, and the same of you for me. On the other hand, some brethren seem so conscious of their weaknesses that they seem browbeaten into despondent inactivity. They need our prayers that they may find a stronger confidence in the Lord. We can have too much

confidence, and not enough; we truly have plenty to “watch.” The Amplified Version gives a very full definition of Mark 13: 37—”And what I say to you, I say to everybody: give strict attention, be cautious, active, alert, and watch.”

Pilgrim Way Ended

JUST as the last issue of “Peoples Paper” was being printed, the following information was received from Adelaide with reference to the passing of our Sister Cains in that city.

On 20th July our dear Sister M. A. Coins reached the end of her pilgrim journey after a long and trying illness. Our Sister had received the message of present truth at Gawler, South Australia, some fifty years ago. Sister Cains was zealous in the study of God’s Word, and in attending the Bible Class until failing health and strength prevented her doing so.

We rejoice in our Sister’s faithfulness to the Lord, and to the truth, and to the brethren. We are reminded of the Apostle’s words in Heb. 6: 10—”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.” We feel these words are appropriate in respect of our Sister Cains. Much sympathy is extended to the members of our Sister’s family, in the loss of a faithful mother. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” “They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.” Mal. 3: 17.

Prayer Brings Peace

BEING in an agony, He prayed,” is the record of our Saviour’s Gethsemane experience. The lesson stands for all time. Like a bright lamp, the little sentence shines amid the olive trees of the garden. It shows us the path to comfort in our time of sorrow. Never before or since was there such grief as the Redeemer’s that night, but in His prayer He found comfort. As we watch Him the hour through, we see the agony changing as He prayed, until at last its bitterness was all gone, and sweet, blessed peace took its place. The gate of prayer is always the gate to comfort. There is no other place to go. We may learn also from our Lord’s Gethsemane how to pray in our Gethsemanes. God will never blame us for asking to have the cup removed nor for the intensity of our supplication; but we must pray with submission. It is when we say in our deepest intensity, “Not my will, but Thine,” that comfort comes, that peace comes.

Perfect loyalty to Christ brings perfect peace into the heart. The secret of Christ’s own peace was His absolute devotion to His Father’s will. We can find peace in no other way. Any resistance to God’s will, and disobedience of His law, any wrenching of our lives out of His hand must break the peace of our hearts. No lesson that He gives ever mars our peace, if we receive it with willing, teachable spirit, and strive to learn it just as He has written it out for us. If we take the lessons just as they are given to us, we shall make our life music and we shall find peace.—Selected.

It is a great lesson that, if only our hearts are right and true, we may find Christ—or, rather may be found of Him—in the traffic of secular affairs. May we so learn this lesson, as to know it, not in theory only, but by experience. —Goulburn.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. Further information for the present from—Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne, Vic., 3101.

Our toil is sweet with thankfulness,
Our burden is our boon;
The curse of earth’s gray morning is
The blessing of its noon.

Whittier

COMMUNION OUR BIBLE TRANSLATED

A new print has been made recently of the very interesting and informative booklet, "Our Bible Translated", compiled some time ago by the brethren of "The Dawn". To cover cost of materials this booklet is supplied at 10c per copy, post paid.

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$11.50.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, **Is** now available at \$9.50.

"Begin the day with God;
Kneel down to Him in prayer;
Lift up thy heart to Him above,
And seek His love to share.

"Open the Book of God
And read a portion there,
That it may hallow all thy thoughts,
And sweeten all thy care.

"Go through the day with God,
Whate'er thy work may be;
Where're thou art—at home, abroad,
He is still near to thee.

"Lie down at night with God,
Who gives His servants sleep;
And when thou tread'st the vale of death,
He will thee guard and keep."
--Selected

BIBLE STUDENTS HYMNAL

A circular letter has been received from our brethren in England asking if any of our readers are desirous of placing orders for copies of a proposed new edition of the music "Bible Students Hymnal". This hymnal is a splendid collection of almost 500 hymns with music, many additions having been made to the "Hymns of Dawn". The price is likely to be in excess of \$2.00. Friends are invited to place orders as soon as possible, but not to send money at present.

GOD'S BEST GIFT

A booklet for children—"God's Best Gift"—compiled on the Divine Plan of the Ages years ago in U.S.A., has been produced in our office again recently. Written in childish language it is a splendid little book to convey the main outlines of God's Plan for both young and old. To cover cost of materials it is supplied at 10c per copy, 15c posted.



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Christian Baptism**

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ON the subject of baptism, it is helpful to consider the ministry of John the Baptist, as recorded in Matthew 3. John the Baptist was called especially of God to precede and introduce our Lord to Israel—to prepare the way before Him. In Matt. 3: 1, 2, 5 and 6 we read, “Then came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” “Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.” John’s baptism symbolized remission of sins, or washing away the sins of Israel, seeing they had gotten away from the covenant which God gave them at the hands of Moses. This was to show their hearts had come back into harmony with God again in spirit and truth, as they confessed their sins.

Reading on in the same chapter from verse 13, when our Lord came to John the Baptist, it states—”Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

John’s surprise that Jesus should come for his baptism for remission of sins is understandable when John knew that Jesus was the sinless One who had no sins to confess and symbolically wash away, as had the Israelites to whom John preached. We are aware that Jesus wished to take the symbol of water immersion picturing a deeper and much more important contract which He had previously entered into with His Heavenly Father. This important contract was that He had covenanted with the Heavenly Father to die as the world’s Redeemer; and thus water baptism at the hands of John the Baptist was symbolizing His death baptism, to die as the antitypical Passover Lamb, as John declared in John 1: 29—”Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” We see, then, that John recognised this wonderful Messiah as the Sent One of God, God’s Lamb, the Passover Lamb, the One who was to be the anti-type of the lamb slain in Egypt, whose blood covered the houses, saving the firstborn of Israel when the firstborns of Egypt were slain and the Israelites delivered.

Then we have the words of Jesus Himself in Matt. 20: 28—”The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” In other words, He came to taste death for every man.

Again in John 10 we read of our Lord being the sacrificing Good Shepherd. From verse 11, our Lord speaking, we read—”I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” Verses 14, 15, “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.” Verses 17, 18, “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might receive it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to receive it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

“The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” A wonderful thing about this sacrifice of our Good Shepherd is that He has given His life for two kinds of sheep—the sheep He speaks of in John 10 which we are reading about, and the sheep of the kingdom age, the obedient of all the world of mankind in the age to come. But now our thoughts are concerned especially with the sheep of this Gospel Age, Jewish and Gentile, for whom the Lord is particularly the Good Shepherd, their sacrificing Good Shepherd who gives His life for these sheep of whom He speaks in John 10: 27, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

What does it mean to follow Jesus? Taking the picture of the Shepherd and the sheep as an example, we see that those who follow are not driven, or forced to follow. They delight to follow in the steps of the One who has done so much for them as to give His life for them. Further, Jesus did not leave His followers in any doubt as to what was expected of them when they accepted the invitation to walk in His steps, when He described what would happen to Himself, and added what was required of His true disciples in the words of Luke 9: 22, 23. Our Lord said to His disciples, "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day. And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."

When Jesus spoke of the cross, we know He spoke of death, sacrificial death, He Himself taking away the sin of the world. In Heb. 12: 2 we read, "Who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." The joy of redeeming mankind back to at-one-ment with Himself and the Heavenly Father was set before Him. Inasmuch as God's plan provides for many sons to be taken to glory, the Heavenly Father invites a little flock, the sheep of this Gospel Age, to follow the Good Shepherd also into sacrificial death, that they may be worthy to follow the risen Lord into the heavenly inheritance, to assist in the grand restoration of humanity during the restitution times. That is what Christian baptism really means; following the Lord Jesus into death. All who are faithful in this may follow Him into eternal, heavenly life, to assist Him in the blessing of all the families of the earth.

How clearly do the words of Paul express the same thought in Phil. 1: 29—"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Also, the words of the Apostle Peter confirm this matter in 1 Pet. 2: 21—"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."

One of the most outstanding incidents recorded respecting the necessity of following in the steps of the Master, by true disciples, is found in Matt. 20: 20-23. This is a lovely incident, and reveals the desire of a mother for her two sons, who desired to be very near the Lord not only during His earthly ministry, but also when they reached the heavenly kingdom. The verses read, "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." That is lovely, isn't it? The Lord did not rebuke the mother or the two sons in this matter. He knew their desire was to be near Him in sacrifice and near Him in the wonderful kingdom He preached.

That is what the Lord wants us to desire also; to be near Him now along the earthly, narrow way of sacrifice, that we may be very near Him in the wonderful kingdom. We know God has places prepared for those who will be able to serve in that kingdom. What a privilege, to have any part in it! The Lord would be pleased with the answer given by the disciples, "We are able." No doubt these disciples meant, Lord, by Thy grace we are able. That is the answer the Lord desires from us, for we are not able of ourselves.

How important it is, to realise to the full that having made our decision to accept the Lord's invitation, to drink of His cup and be baptized with His baptism, then in the words of the Apostle Paul we must realise that we are not our own, that we are bought with a price. Therefore we belong to the Lord, and that means that having once consecrated our lives to God, many things of our past life are to be forsaken. The Lord's people are called on to forsake, not only the things the world should avoid, but also the things the world takes pleasure in, the good things of the world. As the Apostle again expresses the matter in Phil. 3: 7-11--"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, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead", that is the first resurrection.

"Being made conformable unto His death." How beautifully our Lord explained His death, His death baptism in the words of Luke 12: 50. This was quite a time after our Lord had been immersed in the River Jordan. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened (pained) until it be accomplished!" This baptism of our Lord was going on each day. As the prophet Isaiah said, "He poured out His soul unto death." He had a baptism to

be baptized with, even though He had been on the altar for some time then as the Lamb of God. How clearly the Lord was referring to His death baptism! This was the baptism He asked the two disciples whether they were able to perform. So to their answer, “We are able”, should be added the words “through Christ who strengtheneth us.”

Again, from the Apostle Paul we have those wonderfully revealing words on the subject of baptism in Rom. 6: 3-5. Paul says there, “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” Notice that in verse 3 the margin renders it, “Know ye not that so many of us as **are** baptized.” It was not a thing of the past, but of the present. Continuity is indicated there. As many of us as are being baptized into Jesus Christ are baptized into His death. The whole Christian course is one of baptism into Christ’s death. Not baptized in water; not baptized into any denomination, but baptized into Christ’s death. Not two baptisms; not death baptism and water baptism. One baptism—death baptism—symbolized by water immersion.

So, we do not rejoice in the symbol of water immersion, but rather that those who take the symbol have been prompted by the Lord to yield their lives in consecration to God, to be dead with Christ, if so be that we may live with Him. All the praise and thanksgiving belongs to the Lord, and all who have been invited into God’s family are happy to witness the reality being symbolized in the waters of baptism. It is the reality that we rejoice in, not the symbol.

Then the depth of the meaning of death baptism is shown so beautifully in 1 Cor. 12: 12-14—“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ (Christ the Head and the Church His Body)—For by one spirit are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.”

Being baptized into the one body by the one spirit impresses the reality of death baptism, the result of which is, as the Apostle states in Eph. 4: 23, being “renewed in the spirit of your mind.” This implies, as we saw previously in Rom. 6: 4—“we we also should walk in newness of life.” So in the symbol of water baptism we have the picture of death baptism, and also the raising up out of the water picturing the new life in Christ—“the inward man is renewed day by day”, as we seek to fulfil our vows of consecration as true disciples of the Master.

In Rev. 14: 4 we read concerning the victorious followers of Christ—“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.” They follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth—as Jesus said, “My sheep know my voice, and they follow me.” Isn’t it lovely to know the Lord is leading? There is no forcing, driving or compulsion of any kind. The love of Christ constrains His people. They delight to walk in His steps, to follow and walk as He walked.

From Psa. 116: 12-15 we realise the Psalmist was guided by inspiration; and while he served God, he was not invited to a part in the heavenly kingdom. The lovely Psalms were no doubt precious to all true ones who lived very close to the Lord before Christ’s first advent; but they have even more meaning to us now.

“What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.” We know taking the cup of salvation means to drink of the Lord’s cup to attain salvation. In our Lord’s Memorial we drink the cup He offered to His disciples. “I will take the cup of salvation”, the cup that brings salvation, **so great salvation** for those of this Gospel Age who have been invited and by the Lord’s grace are able to drink acceptably, and by the Lord’s spirit be faithful unto death, walking in His steps.

“I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.” We know that is not a momentary paying of vows, not a momentary sacrificing or consecration; the paying of our vows goes on each day of our lives. That is the way we pay our vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people, as we go about amongst the Lord’s people and the world, serving Him in spirit and truth as we have opportunity. Though it be only a small opportunity, we will gladly take it; we will pay our vows unto the Lord in the presence of His people, in the world but not of it.

“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” This does not imply that God sees the actual death of His saints as precious, but rather the daily yielding of their lives, the expending of their energies, their powers, the very best they have got. That is what it means—“precious in the sight of the Lord is the daily dying of his saints.” We remember the Apostle Paul said he died daily; and it was literally so. By the Lord’s grace, that is to be the lot of each one who has covenanted to walk in the steps of the Master. By His grace this will be possible; and His grace, Paul said, was sufficient for him. It will be sufficient for each one who humbly depends upon Him as

they walk along the consecrated way. They will be able to witness for Him, shine for Him by commending Him to others, especially in this distress of nations and perplexity. What a privilege to be able to commend the plan of God, to tell people of the brighter days to come because Christ tasted death for every man! What a privilege the Lord's people have in this time as they represent the Lord and His message of hope and consolation, as they fulfil their vows unto the Most High. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$11.50.

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PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM *Australia, 3101.*

The Institute's Work

THIS brief report on the work of the Berean Bible Institute is presented as another year's efforts have been completed. It is with much thankfulness to the Lord that the privilege of serving His cause of truth has been granted in much the same way as for many years past. It has been most encouraging again to have the loving co-operation of our brethren throughout Australia, and some in other countries, in the efforts to serve the Lord's cause in this corner of His harvest field.

Our bi-monthly periodical "Peoples Paper" continues as a regular means of contact with brethren and friends throughout this land and overseas. Appreciation of the messages in our journal has also been encouraging, and to all contributors to the pages of "Peoples Paper" sincere thanks is expressed again at this time. As publishing costs continue high, subscriptions to "Peoples Paper" do not cover production expenses, the deficiency being provided by the General Tract Fund. However, as in past years this expense is considered well used in supplying free copies of the "Paper" to new cases of interest over reasonable periods. Sincere thanks is also extended to some Melbourne friends who give helpful and regular assistance with proof reading and other work in connection with the "Peoples Paper". Friends providing additional subscriptions to our journal are assisting the work well, and extra copies of the "Paper" are gladly supplied to readers for passing out where good may be done.

A variety of tracts has been supplied throughout the year for the witness work in this way, and a good supply of the "Do You Know?" slips is available for general distribution.

The message of the kingdom has been proclaimed throughout the year again over the radio on 3GL Geelong with continued encouraging responses. Usually some telephone calls are received from interested listeners immediately the session ends, other requests arrive through the mail, and from the numerous enquiries received from a wide area of Victoria and parts of Tasmania over the past year, a number continue to appreciate the truth message over the air and through the literature provided. The radio is also used to advertise lectures held from time to time in conjunction with the Melbourne Class. Some of our regular Class members have been found and helped in this way.

The financial side of the work is revealed in the balance sheets of the General Tract Fund and Radio Fund. In the Lord's providence, the voluntary contributions of our friends interested in the truths of God's Word have provided the means for the work to continue as in the past, this includes one legacy left to assist the work. To all brethren and friends who have supported the efforts so well with sacrifices of earthly good things, sincere thanks are expressed, knowing that all is rendered as to the Lord, in His service. The prayers of all dear friends are requested for the Lord's blessing and guidance that all service in the work may continue in faithful humility, in harmony with His will in all the days ahead.

During the year past increased distress and perplexity of mankind in all nations shows how the passing of the present order is under way in preparation for "the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3: 13). It is important to remember that the Lord's people should have no part in the pulling down or propping up of the present order. While sympathizing with suffering humanity, they are to be strictly neutral respecting demonstrations, political, military, or otherwise, and put all their efforts into proclaiming the glad message of the kingdom, while seeking to make their own calling and election sure. "Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord" was Moses' message to Israel (Exod. 14: 13), and this is a very appropriate message for all who have

faith and confidence that God's plan for world salvation will prove to be "the desire of all nations" to His praise. (Haggai 2: 7.)

General Tract Fund

To Credit Balance 1/5/69	\$135.40
„ Donations .	1,684.90
\$1,820.30	
By Free Tract and Deficiency "Peoples Paper"\$230.25	
„ Towards New Typewriter	100.00
„ Hall Rents, Circulars, etc.	69.00
General Expenses (Office, etc.)	222.18
Towards Personal and Household Expenses	650.00
Postage	251.82
Towards visiting brethren	55.30
Travel and Sundries	91.00
Credit Balance 1/5/70 .	150.75
	\$1,820.30

Radio Fund

To Credit Balance 1/5/69 ...	\$95.50
„ Donations ..	631.50
\$727.00	
By Radio Station 3GL ...	\$561.60
„ Recording Tapes ...	34.90
„ Printing Dialogues	20.00
„ Bank Charges ...	5.00
„ Credit Balance 1/5/70	105.50
	\$727.00

“I Pray for Them.”

(John. 17: 15-26.)

(Continued from last issue)

CONTINUING our Lord declares, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." This seems to carry with it the thought, elsewhere suggested in this prayer, that our Lord had by this time come to a full realization of the Father's plan, namely, that His disciples were to be developed for the purpose of becoming His joint-heirs in the kingdom, sharers in His glory. At first thought such a sharing of the great glory of the kingdom might appear to be a lessening of the great glory of Jesus, just as the appointment of the seventy elders of Israel to be associates with Moses in judging Israel seemed at first to be contraction or diminution of the dignity or authority of Moses.

But as Moses in the type was very meek, and gladly welcomed all the elders to joint-service, saying, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them" (Num. 11: 29), so the Lord Jesus, so far from feeling that the gathering out of the church to be His joint-heirs in the kingdom would diminish His glory, joined heartily in the divine plan, and declares here that He separated Himself from that feature of the glory and dignity of the Father's reward that His followers might have a share in it, that they might become His joint-heirs, being set apart and brought to this honour through the truth, through the great and precious promises bestowed upon them. This same thought seems to be presented in the words (verses 22, 23)—"The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one; and that the world may

know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”

The love of God pervades our hearts so that selfishness has no room there, and thus it was that our dear Redeemer, instead of feeling jealous that any others should be exalted to the divine nature, participators in the kingdom, in this prayer to the Father declares His full acquiescence in the plan, His hearty co-operation, His joy to have it so. What a thought this gives to us as the prospective bride, already espoused to the heavenly Bridegroom. He is pleased to exalt us from our lowly estate to be one with Himself in His kingdom, in His throne, in His Father’s love.

Wonder of wonders! Where will the divine compassion cease! While we were yet sinners, under divine condemnation of death, we were loved and redeemed at a great price; and now, having been redeemed, we hear the voice celestial saying, “Come up higher”, yea, even to the throne, to joint-heirship with the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Could we keep ever before our minds this grand display of love and unselfishness how thoroughly it would scatter from the minds of all who are seeking to be copies of God’s dear Son every thought of rivalry one with another. How it would cause us to rejoice in the growing usefulness and advancement in the Lord’s service of every member of the body. How we should more and more feel what the Scriptures describe as “in honor preferring one another”, and which rejoices in the prosperity of a brother, in his growing usefulness in the church, in the growing evidences of his favor with God and man. Those who can thus rejoice in the prosperity of the fellow-members of the body have another evidence of their growth in the likeness of our great and glorious Head. Those who are without this sentiment should strive for it and be very discontented until it is attained.

The spirit of trusts and combinations which is abroad in the world and which is permeating everything has the effect of combining congregations, combining denominations, and in general is leading on rapidly to the formation of great religious trusts, whose development will be a serious menace to the liberties of the Lord’s truly consecrated people, but not an injury to their spiritual interests. On the contrary, it will prove a blessing to the Lord’s little flock in that it will more particularly differentiate them and confirm to them the teachings of the Scriptures, separating them the more completely from the nominal systems and binding in bundles of the tares, giving them the while the confirmation of the Scriptures, which clearly predict this condition in the end of this age as preceding the collapse of great Babylon—Rev. 18: 21.

Our Lord’s prayer, “That they all may be one”, has been fulfilled throughout the age. All who have been truly His have had a oneness of heart, a oneness of spirit, with the Father and with the Son—a fellowship divine which cannot be produced by earthly creeds and fetters. So it is today, and so it is always between those who are truly the Lord’s. They know each other not by outward passwords or grips or signs, but by the touch of faith and love which it gives and which each recognizes. “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, in that ye have love for one another.” “We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.” True, we love all men and seek to serve all as we have opportunity, but, as the Apostle explains, “especially the household of faith”, especially those who love the Lord and are trusting in the precious blood, and are fully consecrated to Him and, so far as they are able, doing His will and seeking to further know that will day by day.

This union between those who are the Lord’s people is evidently not the union of person. The Lord’s followers are not one in person but in spirit. And this is the illustration which the Lord gives of the oneness which exists between Himself and the Father—they are not one in person but one in spirit, purpose, will; for our Lord declares that He always does the Father’s will, those things which are pleasing in the Father’s sight. And thus we abide in Him by doing His will, which is the Father’s will, and thus Father and Son and the church, the bride, are all one—in spirit and in truth.

Our Lord’s words (Vs. 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.” This is not a petition, but a declaration of the Lord’s will, as though He were saying, Father, I understand that this is Thy will in respect of these My followers, and I will it also, acquiescing in this great and liberal arrangement which Thou hast made. I will be glad to have My followers ultimately on the same plane of glory with Me, and that they may there be blessed by seeing and sharing the glories Thou hast conferred upon Me whom Thou hast loved always even before the foundation of the world—even before the arrangements were made for these My disciples.

The closing words of the prayer are beautiful and give us an insight into the Lord’s confidence in the Father and fellowship with Him. He knew the Father, and so He declared respecting us that this is the highest evidence that could be granted us for our acceptance with the Father and of our participation in the life eternal which He has provided, namely, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” Our Lord declares, “O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that

thou host sent me.” And I have made known unto them Thy Name, Thy character, Thy greatness, Thy goodness, Thy love, Thy benefactions, and will make known still farther as they are able to bear it, as they grow in knowledge of the truth, that the love wherewith Thou host loved Me may be in them and I in them.

How wonderful is this love of God and love of Christ! How impossible it seems for us to measure its lengths and breadths and heights and depths! Those who have accepted the Lord as their Redeemer and have entered into covenant relationship with Him, giving Him their little all and accepting from Him a participation in all these blessings of His provision, if ever cast down because of weakness or opposition or what not, should call to mind this great love which the Father has for us and which the Son shares, the love which not only redeemed us while we were yet sinners, but which since then has called us to such wonderful blessings and privileges, making us joint-heirs with Christ our Lord, if so be we suffer with Him—this love will not be lightly turned away, this love would chasten us rather than permit us to fall away into the second death; this love will finally deliver, either in the little flock or in the great company, all who continue to trust in Jesus and continue to hold the faithful Word. But in proportion as this love of God dwells in us richly, in proportion as Christ is enthroned in our hearts, in that same proportion we will have a responsive love which will delight to do those things which are pleasing in our Father’s sight and acceptable to our Lord, and in the same proportion we will be loth to do anything which would bring a cloud between the Lord and our souls. Let us, then, have fresh courage because of what we discern of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love divine, and let this love of God constrain us to greater zeal and devotion to Him and to His cause.

Convention News

THE Easter Convention at Adelaide was once again a time of helpful fellowship and spiritual blessing. We give thanks to the Giver of every good gift for the blessings bestowed upon us as we met together in our dear Redeemer’s Name. It was a pleasure to welcome our visiting brethren from Melbourne and Geelong, as well as from country centres in Victoria and South Australia, and also Brother Parkinson from California, U.S.A.

The assistance of various brethren who served as speakers and Class leaders was much appreciated; and we offer our humble thanks to God for the help received, not forgetting the loving services of the Sisters who provided refreshment for us all at the tea table. We know these various services are rendered as unto the Lord.

The Bible Studies, which we regard as our most helpful form of meeting, were in Heb. 4: 9-16; Col. 3: 1-10; and 2 Tim. 1: 7-14. The topics of the addresses by the brethren were, “Being Not Ashamed”; “The Power of God unto Salvation”; “Especially unto the Household of Faith”; “The Grace of God”; “Cain and Abel”; “Thoughts on Revelation”; “The Exodus Picture”; “Veiled and Unveiled Faces”; “Consecrated Thinking”; “Quietness and Confidence” and “Fire, Water and Dirty Clothes”.

The Fellowship, and Praise and Testimony Meetings gave opportunity to express our thanks and praise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for His continued goodness and mercy. The “Hymns We Love and Why” session was entered into most heartily.

It was a pleasure to receive some messages of greeting from various Classes and individual brethren, and to the brethren everywhere the words of the Apostle in 1 Thes. 5: 16-18 are sent as a Scriptural message with the Christian love of the brethren in Convention.

The Convention closed with the Love Feast, and singing “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 to God for His blessings, and requesting His continued blessing upon each one, and upon the Israel of God in every place. “Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”

Memorial Observances

Melbourne

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly gathered on the evening of April 19th to observe the Memorial of our Lord’s death, in accord with Jesus’ request when He instituted this simple ceremony on the evening prior to His great sacrifice as our Passover Lamb. Two prior studies on the Memorial helped to refresh our minds on the importance and sacredness of the occasion, the annual observance being clearly indicated when our Lord’s sacrifice became the antitype of Israel’s annual sacrifice of their Passover Lamb.

Throughout our service the appropriate hymns—437, 345, 180, 2 and 414—from “Bible Students’ Hymnal” were sung with thankfulness to God. Prayers of gratitude for the gift of our Redeemer were offered to our Heavenly Father, and also on behalf of all dear brethren everywhere. Scriptures were read from Matt. 26: 17-75; 27: 1-50, and an address covering the type and antitype of the Memorial proved helpful in impressing the solemn privilege the Lord’s people have in participating in sacrifice with their Lord, if so be they may also participate with Him in the heavenly kingdom. After prayer upon the emblems these were gladly partaken of in remembrance of Christ’s sacrifice, and demonstrating our desire to walk faithfully in the steps of Christ’s sacrifice, by His grace and strength.

Geelong

A small number of brethren gathered at Geelong in the evening of the 19th April to “do this in remembrance of Me”, as our Lord requested His disciples to do on the night of His betrayal and crucifixion. During the service three hymns were sung (437, 148, 42 in “B.S. Hymnal”), several selected passages were read from the 6th, 18th, 19th and 20th chapters of John’s Gospel. Prayer was offered for the Lord’s realised goodness to us, and request that we be so guided by God’s spirit to more deeply than ever appreciate the sacrifice of our Lord, and the privileges of service opened to us as a result. This service during this age leads us into “filling up that which is behind of Christ’s sufferings”, but in the next age to association with Him in the glorious reign of His Kingdom. After the address was given by one of the brethren, we partook of the emblems of bread and wine.

Adelaide

We are thankful that our Lord Jesus left His disciples the simple Memorial of His death on the night before He died. He said—“Do this in remembrance of me.” What a lovely reminder this is that all our hopes of life and future blessing are dependent upon the faithful carrying out of that contract which began at Jordan with His—“Lo, I come to do thy will, O God”, and was consummated at Calvary with His expression of loving trust in His heavenly Father—“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit”, and the triumphant cry—“It is finished.” The beloved Apostle Paul reminds his brethren that “as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup (at the appropriate season each year) ye do show forth (proclaim) the Lord’s death, till he come.”

Our small Class at Adelaide has been privileged once again to keep the Memorial of our Saviour’s death for us, and for all mankind. Our thoughts and prayers were for those who were unable to be with us, and for the Lord’s consecrated people throughout the world. Our prayer is that we may be faithful in the days that are before us; daily abiding in Christ, feeding upon His Word, trusting in His righteousness, and relying upon His promised grace to help in every time of need. John 16: 33; Heb. 12: 1-3; 4: 15, 16.

Perth

The Perth Ecclesia celebrated our Lord’s Memorial on the evening of 19th April. We were again reminded of our dear Lord’s life of sacrifice, terminating at Calvary, which opened up the new and living way to life eternal. The emblems reminded us of how our Lord’s body and life-giving blood was given as a means of purchasing and releasing poor, fallen humanity from the prison house of death.

In reverence we pledged our continued allegiance to our Lord and Saviour as the bread from Heaven which gives life to the world; but especially to the household of faith who are the firstfruits unto God. Gladly we continue to follow Jesus and be immersed into His death—to drink of His cup and have our bodies broken with Him. Many beautiful thoughts were brought out which have kept us loyal for so long to our Lord, and will still impel us to serve our Master unto the end.

Sydney

The celebration of the Memorial in Sydney was a solemn, yet happy event as we looked back upon the victorious sacrifice of our dear Redeemer. The Leichhardt Class of quite a number and the Class from West Ryde combined, and the brethren from Canberra and Mudgee participated. A very good address was given dealing with the type and antitype, and prayers were offered in thankfulness for our Saviour, and on behalf of our brethren everywhere. We feel a rich blessing was realised by all. Doubtless world conditions create an atmosphere of apprehension, but happy are those who are buoyed up with assurances such as Psalm 46.

Queensland

Two small groups of brethren met for the Memorial in Brisbane and Toowoomba, each enjoying the presence of visiting members for the special occasion. From Brisbane—“After prayer we had a Scripture reading explaining the meaning of the Passover, which was a beautiful picture of our Passover Lamb. We explained everything in two languages, Polish and English, to satisfy all who were present. After breaking the bread and drinking the wine we

sang an hymn and departed in accord with the Scripture record.”

From Toowoomba—”Our Lord said, as often as you do this, you do it in remembrance of me, so in obedience we did just that. We had some Scripture verses on different aspects of the Passover and the Lord’s Supper and spoke on them, and with prayers and hymns the occasion was a blessing.”

Pilgrim Ways Ended

WORD is to hand from Adelaide, South Australia, advising that two of our brethren have finished the pilgrim way there since our last issue of “Peoples Paper”, the information being as follows:

Our dear elderly Sister Lucy Kirkwood has finished her earthly course, having reached the end of the pilgrim way on March 12th. Our Sister who was in her 97th year had been rejoicing in the light of present truth for over 50 years, and it was always a pleasure for her to meet with the Adelaide Class whenever possible.

Sister Kirkwood was steadfast in her faith and trust in the Lord, and looked forward to the time when Christ will be the Ruler among men. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” “They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.” (Mal. 3: 17.)

Our dear Brother Pulleyne reached the end of the pilgrim way on May 8th. Brother Pulleyne received the message of “present truth” at Murray Bridge, South Australia, some 50 years ago. For some years he had attended the Adelaide Class, and was much loved and appreciated by all who knew him.

Our brother had been in failing health for some time, and had shown Christian fortitude and patience in bearing his infirmities. His steadfast faith enabled him to look forward to Christ’s Kingdom, and to the glorious hope of being with Christ, and sharing in the blessed work of dispensing the blessings of that Kingdom to all the families of the earth. Our sympathies are extended to Sister Pulleyne, and to the members of our brother’s family. Rev. 14: 13; Rev. 20: 6.

Correspondence

Dear Frank and Ernest.—Thank you for sending me the copy of the discussion several weeks ago; I quite enjoy listening to these discussions and find much help in them. Would you send last Sunday’s discussion on “The Truth About Hell”, also the two previous discussions entitled “The Truth About Immortality”, and “Divine Intervention in Human Affairs” and booklets. Sorry about my subscription to the “Peoples Paper” expiring, and I am enclosing \$5.00 to cover same and to help with the broadcasts each Sunday. What a difference to living when we know Him, whom to know is life everlasting. Sincere Christian regards.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs.—Thank you for your so prompt reply to my request for copies of your broadcast talks and the booklet “God and Reason.” With the other literature you kindly sent I have enough to keep me studying, and enjoying, for some time. Will you please send a copy of the booklet, “God and Reason” to my sister—as I am sure she will be interested in its contents too. Today’s “talk” was super, as always, and I do enjoy the “plain talk” and get new views on hard to understand portions of the Bible in all your broadcasts. Thank you and God bless. Sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Friends.—Thank you very much for your kind letter, also for all the literature I have safely received including the book “Divine Plan of the Ages.” I have thoroughly enjoyed all this good reading and have now started on the book which has been most interesting and hard to put down. Once again thanking you for all your kindness and help. Wishing you always God’s richest blessing on your good work, and may it help to bring many to the knowledge of the Truth. Yours most gratefully in Christ.

Dear Sir.—Having found time to delve into the “Peoples Paper” magazines you sent me earlier this year I remain very impressed. Not only has logic a high position, but expressive Christian writings are found throughout the pages. I would therefore like to subscribe to it. During the week a Biblical question kept riding on my mind and I hope that you can answer it for me. I realise now that the Book of Genesis was written by Moses in the time of Jewish predominance, but what of Gen. 2: 2, 3? It clearly states that God blessed the seventh day; then why don’t Christians (besides seventh day adventists) observe the sabbath on the fact that God made it a holy day? Yours in Christ.

(The mistaken idea that the creative days of Genesis were 24-hour days gives a wrong impression that God rested on the seventh day of 24 hours. It is well to remember also that not until the Israelites were delivered out of

Egypt was the sabbath day first given to Israel as a day of restExod. 16: 23. This was hundreds of years after the creation of man in the Garden of Eden. For a full explanation of the sabbath subject, the booklet “Christ’s Thousand Year Kingdom” is most helpful; the chapter on “The Christian’s Sabbath” deals with the matter very clearly in harmony with the Scriptures as a whole. This booklet is supplied at 15c, post paid.—Berean Bible Institute.)

“MOST HOLY FAITH”

Any of our friends having a copy of “Most Holy Faith” not being used and are willing to dispose of it are asked to communicate with this office, stating the price desired.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

Geelong, 3GL, 222 N. Sundays 10 a.m.



Volume L111 No. 2 MELBOURNE, APRIL—MAY, 1970 Memorial Participation

IN reviewing Mark's Gospel, chapter 14, verses 12 to 16, we find detailed instructions from our Lord to two of His disciples to prepare for the important Passover at the close of Jesus' earthly life, in response to their request--"Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?"

We see at once this was the annual Jewish Passover that the disciples of the Lord asked about and for which they prepared. They could have asked the same question and prepared similarly on previous Jewish Passovers, for this would be the fourth Passover since Jesus began His ministry. The first Passover would have been about six months after Jesus had entered upon His ministry. The second would have been one and one-half years later; and the third two and one-half years after He commenced His ministry of laying down His life for Israel, for His Church and for all mankind.

We call to mind that the prophet Daniel stated that Messiah would be cut off "in the midst of the week." That was in the midst of the seven-year prophetic week, a year represented by a day. (Dan. 9: 26, 27.)

In Mark 14: 17, 18, we read—"And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me." This would be a terrible shock to the disciples, except to one, the betrayer himself, who had previously entered into an agreement with the Jewish chief priests to deliver Jesus to them, as shown in Matt. 26: 14-16. These verses read, "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him."

Previous to this, on more than one occasion our Lord had tried to prepare the disciples for the time when He would be betrayed and put to death, but they seemed unable to grasp this even when told so plainly, as in Matt. 17: 22, 23—"And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men; and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry." Again, in Matt. 20: 17-19, we read—"And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him; and the third day he shall rise again." There was one consolation in both these Scriptures, and that was, "the third day He shall rise again." But even this failed to register with the disciples. The Lord's efforts to condition the minds and hearts of His little band to His death seemed to fail. They could not grasp it; or perhaps they thought He was talking in parables. They did not wish to hear it anyway, to think that the Master would be treated as He described.

But why do we think the Lord needed to reveal beforehand that Judas would betray Him, as verses 20 and 21 in Mark 14 seem to show? The reason seems to be fully explained in John 13: 26-30,—"Jesus answered, he it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spoke thus unto him."

We understand the words, "Satan entered into him" to imply that Satan entered fully into Judas then. Satan had been working in his mind for months at least along the line of betraying his Master. But now, when the Lord gave him the sop at the Jewish Passover and he was about to depart from the little group, it says Satan entered into him, meaning Satan fully captivated the life of this man at that time. The record continues,—"He then having received

the sop went immediately out; and it was night.” This means that the power of darkness and Satan entered into this man fully; he went out to actually betray the Lord, as he had covenanted before with the priests.

From this record we see that it was necessary that Judas leave the company of Jesus and the eleven Apostles before our Lord gave them His memorial. In John 13 where we read that Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, verse 11 states, “He knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.” Then in verse 18 of this same chapter Jesus said, “I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.” Our Lord was quoting from Psa. 41: 9, where we read prophetically, “Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.” Obviously God had put into the mind of the Psalmist those very words that would be fulfilled when the betrayer went out to actually betray our Lord on that fateful night.

How pathetic are the words of Psa. 55: 12-14, describing prophetically our Lord’s feelings towards His betrayer. “For it was not an enemy that reproached me: then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.” Then verse 16, “As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me.”

When Judas departed on his mission of actually betraying his Master, the Lord proceeded to institute the Memorial of His death, which was to take the place of the annual Jewish Passover in the minds and hearts of the true disciples of Jesus from that time onwards. And so we read in Mark 14: 22, “And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.” This unleavened bread is a beautiful symbol, depicting the purity and perfection of our dear Lord, and was a picture of putting away sin. The Jews were instructed to have no leaven in their homes for seven days. These seven days depicted completeness. Now the Lord took this bread, saying, Take it, this represents my body. It depicted in the minds of the disciples the perfection of Christ Himself. Heb. 7: 26 says, “For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” “Take, eat”—appropriate the merit of Christ, bringing justification by faith; appropriating His complete perfection; appropriating it by faith means justification. As we have it stated in Rom. 5: 1, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

When our Lord gave this Memorial of His death to His disciples, He did not at that time explain the deeper meaning of the emblems. This He gave through the Apostle Paul later, by revelation.

Mark 14: 23 reads, “And he took the cup (of wine) and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them; and they all drank of it.” Here again the fruit of the vine pictured our Lord’s life, His blood shed for us. His disciples again appropriate the merit of Christ by faith in His shed blood, and this brings justification by faith. When the Lord gave the understanding of this Memorial to the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 11, we notice both in respect of the bread and the cup His words were, “This do in remembrance of me.” (Verses 24, 25.) These words of information were given to the Apostle Paul by revelation. It is wonderful how God gave so many of the deep secrets of His Word to the Apostle Paul directly; God revealed them to him in a miraculous way. *We* need to keep in mind that primarily this Memorial is in remembrance of Christ, as a Memorial of Christ our Passover -Lamb, as Paul states in 1 Cor. 5: 7, 8—“For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

“Keeping the feast” here refers to the whole of the Christian’s life, pictured by the seven days of unleavened bread which Israel observed from the time they were given their Passover in Egypt and which was kept annually as a memorial of their great deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

Thus far we have seen that our Lord’s Memorial, which He intended should take the place of the Jewish Passover each year, once a year, was to be kept in remembrance of Christ. “This do in remembrance of me” were our Saviour’s own words. Many people throughout the world do keep the Lord’s Supper in memory of Christ’s sacrifice on their behalf, and receive a measure of blessing by so doing. However, after the Day of Pentecost, when the holy spirit came upon the Lord’s followers, a deeper insight into Christ’s Memorial was given. This is found in the words of 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17. “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.” The word “communion” means “common participation”. By giving the bread and wine to His followers, Jesus impressed the privilege to partake or participate in the very things those emblems symbolised. Participating in the broken bread means to be also broken with Christ. As His life was broken and sacrificed completely, so He says, Be also broken with Me as My followers. It is a common participation. The cup of blessing which we bless, and the bread which we break, are both emblems

picturing our participation in the experiences through which Christ passed. This is for His little band of consecrated followers only, those who, by His grace, are invited to walk in His steps of sacrifice. Writing to the saints in Christ Jesus in Philippi, Paul says, “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.” (Phil. 1: 29.) This is the deeper meaning in the Memorial for those whom the Lord is drawing unto Himself now, to be members of His body, His own Church, in glory. Here we see clearly the thought of participating with Christ in the experiences which brought about His broken body and shed blood.

It may be asked, How is this possible? Our Lord’s words in Luke 9: 23 show how this is not only possible, but the Master issued this invitation as being essential to accept for all who would be His faithful followers—”If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” We realise that the Lord is not giving a command. He is presenting an invitation to those who delight to walk in His steps. Comparatively few of mankind have accepted this invitation. Comparatively few have been called of the Father to Jesus for this very purpose. These are the privileged ones who gladly walk in the steps of Christ. All others of humanity are to be blessed as subjects of the wonderful kingdom of Christ, for which we also thank God. But this Memorial is given only to His own little band, His body members, His church, His Bride who shall share in His heavenly glory.

“If any man will come after me,” if any human being will take up his cross daily and follow Him. This means fellowship in Christ’s sufferings. Paul explains this in Phil. 3: 10, 11—”That I may know him (Christ) and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” He is speaking here of the chief resurrection, the first resurrection. We know all mankind will have part in the general resurrection, but this is the First Resurrection, the chiefest of all resurrections by knowing Christ, His power, fellowship in His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death. It means even being accounted a fool for Christ’s sake. “We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day”, Paul declared in 1 Cor. 4: 13. Our Lord was treated as such, mocked and scourged and railed upon, when He was on the cross. The very One who was saving the railers and mockers from death suffered thus. We see in 2 Cor. 4: 10, 11, the example of the Apostle Paul, who was such a devoted and faithful disciple when he walked in the steps of Christ —”Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.”

From Rom. 8: 18, 17, we read—”I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” “If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” We see what a privilege it is of being invited into the fellowship of Christ now, to use up our strength now for Christ’s sake.

After our Lord gave the Memorial of His death, we read in Mark 14 from verse 27, “And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spoke the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.”

Then came our Lord’s crucial Gethsemane experiences, His apprehension and mock trial. Then came also Peter’s testing of his own assurance that though all should be offended at the Shepherd being smitten, he never would. As Jesus predicted, the once brave Peter who sought to defend his Master with the sword, when asked quietly if he were not one of Jesus disciples, denied that he was three times. What a situation for Peter, what a dilemma to be in! However, Peter’s true repentance restored him to the Lord’s favor following the resurrection of his Lord and Master.

Peter’s denial and overcoming has meant victory to many Christians since, who have also denied their Master. We have all surely denied the Master, haven’t we? Because his heart was right, Peter’s victory was complete, by the Lord’s grace and strength. Jesus forgave him in His commission to “feed His lambs and feed His sheep”, at almost the last appearance of our Lord before His ascension. Godly sorrow indicated his repentant heart and greater suitability henceforth for service in the Master’s footsteps. No doubt he proved faithful unto death, in accord with his own words to us in 1 Pet. 5: 10—”But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” As with Peter, so shall it be with everyone who depends fully on the Lord’s grace and strength in the days ahead. As Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Adelaide Easter Convention

The Adelaide brethren are arranging for their Easter Convention this year from Good Friday to Easter Monday (D.V.), in Manchester Unity Building (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the secretary—Mrs. R. Jordan, 14 Newark Road, Torrens Park, South Australia, 5062.

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$11.50.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM *Australia, 3101.*

Eventide

"Abide with us . . . for the day is far spent." (Luke 24. 29)

WHAT a change that Stranger's conversation had made in the demeanour of those two down-cast men who had left Jerusalem for the quieter scenes of their village home. Hopes dead, faith shattered, expectations gone—a melancholy state of heart and mind indeed! "We trusted"—despondent words! not "we trust"! "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel" (Luke 24: 21). And now all the fair hopes of Israel's redemption lay dragged in the dust, decayed, withered, dead! The glorious dawn, at one time deemed so near at hand, was now enshrouded in deepest midnight gloom, and none could give assurance now that Israel should at any time be redeemed. And if **He**, of all the sons of Israel, had failed to bring deliverance, who, among her waiting hosts could hope to break the foreign yoke?

He in whom they had trusted had been laid away in a borrowed tomb, and there their shrivelled hopes lay too. Even the excited words of some womenfolk in Jerusalem, that they had seen Him alive again, had not rekindled the spark of expectancy and hope—for them the disappointing affair was over and done with, once, and for all!

With an Eastern freedom and courtesy that stranger had joined Himself to their company, and for a while had listened silently to their tale of woe. Then in a quiet re-assuring way He insinuated Himself into the conversation to make their grief-shocked minds begin to work again. Slowly His "Whys" and "Ought nots", interspersed with reasoned explanations, began to take effect, as emotion and understanding began to "burn" within. As He walked and talked with them along the way the miles rolled by and their journey was all but at an end. At the fork of the road that lay just ahead He would bid them a friendly adieu, and go on alone, for "He made as though He would go further."

Had they tired of His company? Had His searching words probed too deeply and left a wound, or a sting? Had He dominated them too long? No! not a bit of it. The burning fires within their souls had kindled goodwill to such a traveller and made them long for more such conversation. Would He come and stay the night with them? At least He should not go forward without an invitation to their abode!

He did go in with them to their quiet home—then came the Revelation—and He was gone! Withered hopes revived again, a new joy gripped their hearts, as their travel-stained feet began the journey back to Jerusalem again. Wonderful journey—and yet more wonderful Guest!

Not alone on life's pilgrim journey was that walk from Jerusalem. We too have had our melancholy walks. We too have felt the chill of withered hopes, of disappointing expectations, and of over-powering frustration. And there may be amongst us some who made as if to withdraw to some distant "Emmaus" home, and let the whole thing go by. It is so easy to go aside, like some wounded animal, and there in loneliness lie down and die.

But we were precious in His sight. He, "watching over Israel", saw our melancholy plight, and came out upon our outward way to revive our withered hopes, to fan anew our flickering love, and to make our hearts burn within us by the way. How? By some word spoken to us in loving confidence, by some good word in a re-assuring article, or by some sincere warm-hearted clasp of a welcome hand. Some dear servant of the Lord, himself at rest in God, walked out on His behalf and talked with us, and that was all! But it was enough. And then the invitation went forth again—"Come in to me, dear Lord. Abide with me, as the evening shadows fall." Let the sweet-voiced poet give tongue to our desire:

"Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,

The darkness deepens, Lord with me abide,

When other helpers fail and comforts flee.

Help of the helpless, oh abide with me.”

In the maturing experience of every true child of God there comes at last—sometimes earlier—sometimes late—a deepening sense of Christ-consciousness. It is the expression of a deep inborn desire for Someone on whom to rest implicitly and with confidence. In the earlier years of life, when one’s mental powers are at their prime, the need for this arbour of repose may not be so keenly realised. It is only when the brain with its reflective and retentive faculties begins to fail, and to function less capably, that the desire for something that is central to every element of Truth begins to assert itself. It is then that the maturing saint begins to feel his need of the abiding Presence of the Lord. Thenceforth the need is more for “Him” than “It”. The constant prayer of such a heart will be:

“I need Thy Presence every passing hour;

What but Thy Grace can foil the tempter’s power?

Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?

Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.”

And as the last shadows of the eventide begin to fall across the way, surely he can sing:

“I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless,

Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness,

Where is death’s sting? where grave thy victory?

I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.”

But the Lord awaits the invitation to enter in and be our abiding Guest. He will not thrust Himself upon us unso-
licitated. He “waits” to be gracious—but He awaits our solicitation.

“In life, in death, O Lord abide with me”—be that our “evening” prayer.—(From “Bible Study Monthly”,
England.)

One Solitary Life

HE was born in an obscure village, the son of humble people. He grew up in that small town and worked with His father in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He was only thirty-three when the opinion of the tyrants and ill wishers turned against Him. Some of His friends deserted Him.

He was turned over to His enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While He was dying His executioners gambled for His clothing. When He was dead He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen centuries have come and gone and He is the worshipped figure of the human race and the leader of mankind’s progress.

All the armies that ever marched. All the navies that ever sailed. All the parliaments that ever met. All the kings and rulers that have ever reigned put together, have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that ONE SOLITARY LIFE.—Selected

“I Pray for Them.”

(John. 17: 15-26.)

ON the night of the institution of the Memorial of His death, our Lord, so far from being concerned wholly with Himself and His approaching crucifixion, was specially thinking of and praying for His disciples. The closing verse of John 16th chapter records His words of admonition, “These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye may have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” These words spake Jesus and lifted up His eyes to heaven in prayer for His disciples, saying, “I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given me; for they are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep

through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.” John. 17: 9-11.

Our Lord’s entire life furnishes an illustration of what the Apostle commends to all the church in the words, “Pray without ceasing.” Our Lord evidently was always in that prayerful attitude of heart, which was filled with thankfulness to the Father in respect of all of life’s affairs, which recognized His guardian care, which trusted Him, confided in Him, and in every distressing circumstance looked to Him to over-rule and to cause all experiences to work for good. But our Lord’s constant attitude of prayer without ceasing did not hinder His more particular devotions when He turned aside from the affairs of life to speak to the Father in secret—sometimes briefly and sometimes spending a whole night in the mountain solitude. Though He loved His disciples they were not yet begotten of the holy spirit and could not fully understand matters from His standpoint. The Father alone was able to comprehend the full situation, and hence the very isolation of our Lord from all human help drew Him the nearer and the oftener to the Father in prayer.

So it is or should be with the Lord’s followers. Proportionately as we grow in His character likeness we will similarly pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord, realizing Him as the center of all our hopes and ambitions and joys. And similarly we will avail ourselves of the privilege of more formal approaches to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Similarly also, in proportion as at times we may find that our dear ones either of earthly or spiritual relationship are unable to sympathize with our experiences, we may be profited by such lack of earthly sympathy in that the experiences will send us the more frequently to the heavenly Comforter from whom we will derive the greater blessing and joy.

In this prayer, as elsewhere throughout the inspired Word, a sharp line of distinction is drawn as between the church and the world. A great loss is sustained by those who do not see this, for it wonderfully assists in the “rightly dividing of the Word of Truth.” “God so loved the world;” Jesus “by the grace of God tasted death for every man,” and was a “propitiation for the sins of the whole world”, yet He is not of the world, and those who become His disciples are not of the world. “Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world.” The losing of the clear line of distinction between the church and the world has been a serious injury to true Christianity.

The world has appropriated some of the promises and customs and ceremonies which more or less resemble or counterfeit the graces of the church, and this is called civilization, and thus a large proportion of the world are today mistakenly recognized as part of the church. This is to their disadvantage, for not discerning that, those who are of the church must be begotten again, that in the resurrection they may be born again, they are merely deceiving themselves. It is a disadvantage also to the true church, the true followers of the Lord, whose new nature must contend with the weaknesses of the flesh, and whose flesh seeks to justify itself by common custom, and to claim that to go much beyond the common standard is to be fanatical, extremists. The Lord’s people need to remember that, judged from the standpoint of the world and the nominal church, they must be extremists if they would come up to the standards set for them by the Lord and the Apostles—standards illustrated in the lives of Jesus and the Apostles, in their self-denials even unto death.

Our Lord prayed not for the world, because the Lord’s time for dealing with the world had not yet come—would not come until after the selection of the church, the body of Christ. He prayed for the Apostles especially, because they would be His special representatives in the world, and His prayer included also all of the five hundred brethren who up to that time had believed on Him with sincere hearts. Not only so, but (verse 20) He extended the petition so as to cover all of a similar class even to the end of the Age—all who should believe on Him so thoroughly, so sincerely, that their faith would separate them from the world to be His disciples, His followers in the narrow way in very truth.

“I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” We are not to say that the evil is good, we are not to say that the world has become saintly; it is still evil. Christendom is practically in the same condition today that Judaism was in when it crucified the Lord and persecuted His followers. There is an outward gloss or veneer that in many cases is hypocritical, an outward form of worship, a drawing near with the lips while the heart is far from Him, busy with fashion and dress and pleasure and money-making idolatries, if not with grosser sins. Our Lord prayed that His true followers might be kept by heavenly power free from such conditions—out of sympathy with them, not of them. And we believe this has been true all down throughout this Gospel Age. We believe that the Lord’s prayer has been fulfilled, and that His scattered little flock, the branches of the true Vine, have flourished in heart, spiritually, keeping up a separate life entirely, from the nominal system, which is only a part of the world. We believe that the same is true today, and that these in the world but not of it are now, in the harvest time, being called out of Babylon, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues.”

The prayer, continuing, points out two things—first, how the Lord’s followers will be kept, and, secondly, why they will be kept. (1) They will be kept because they are not of the world, because they have reckonedly died to the world and sin and been begotten again of the spirit to newness of life. (2) They will be kept in the world, but not of it, by the power of the truth in their hearts. The truth will sanctify or separate them. Not any truth, but the truth of the divine revelation respecting the divine character and the divine plan, and their relationship to these. Summing this all up the Lord declares, “Thy word is truth”—the truth which alone sanctifies and separates my disciples from the world.

The truth has a sanctifying power in the heart because it fills the longings of the heart. Every heart has talents and appeals which demand operation, activity. Something must be supplied to meet the hungerings and thirstings of these various talents and qualities of the mind. If the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word be not received into the heart to satisfy its cravings or longings, it will feed upon other things; and the world, the flesh and the devil are all crowding upon it, offering various attractions, some of which will be received if the heart be not filled and kept filled. Thus our Lord’s parable represents a heart swept and garnished, with the devil cast out, and then that heart, still empty, is represented as being re-entered by seven devils. Our hearts need not only to be cleansed from sins of life, through faith in Christ, but they need also to be filled with the Lord Himself; and our Lord, who calls Himself the truth, furnishes to our hearts various truths as foods, as nourishment, as filling our hearts and satisfying our cravings, and by thus filling He sanctifies those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and thus separates them completely and keeps them separate from the world, its spirit, its hopes, its aims, its ambitions.

Have we love for righteousness? We cannot hope to find it in the world, nor hope to establish it here under present conditions. We are obliged to admit that nothing short of God’s promised kingdom can establish righteousness; hence our hearts as Noah’s dove, return to the Lord as the center and fountain of righteousness. Have we a desire for peace and joy? Our past experience in the world convinces us that, while the whole world is seeking for happiness, it has not found it. We who have found the Lord have found the secret of happiness, the Christian’s secret of having every day a happy one. Do we long for power and influence that we may exercise them for good? The Word of Truth assures us that it is impossible to find them in present conditions, but that we shall, if faithful, attain to power and glory, honor and immortality, in the first resurrection, and that then our grandest hopes and ideals will be realized in the kingdom blessings that will come to all the families of the earth. Do riches seem attractive to us? The Scriptures hold out the true riches, and assure us that in following the Lord all things are ours by faith now, and shall be actually ours by and by, when we become our Master’s associates in the heavenly kingdom.

Our Lord declares “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.” It is evident enough how the Father sent the Son, who left the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. He was made flesh and dwelt among us; but in what sense are we sent into the world? Of course the apostles were specially sent ones, but all the Lord’s followers are sent in a sense or degree. We are not sent until we are separated from the world to be His in heart and mind and in truth. Then He gave us a commission or a message, a work to do in the world in His Name and for the cause which He represents, namely, the cause of righteousness. So, then, the true followers of the Lord are ambassadors for God, representatives for Jesus. As He was in the world so are we in the world; hence He calls upon us to walk as children of the light, to oppose sin in ourselves, and to use our influence in all proper ways in opposition to sin and in favour of righteousness and truth and right.

(To be Continued)

Thoughts on Genesis 6:3

THE following from England appears in the “Reprints, page 6323, and will no doubt be of good interest to our readers.

At a Berean Study here recently an explanation of Gen. 6: 3 was asked for. Not finding it explained in the Volumes we investigated with the help of Strong’s and Young’s Concordances and Professor Bush’s notes on Genesis, and found that the Hebrew word “ruach”, translated “spirit” in this instance, is the same word translated “spirits” in Psa. 104: 4 and has the same thought as the Greek word “pneuma”, translated “spirits” in 1 Pet. 3: 19 and applied to the angels. Would we be justified in using the word “spirits” (plural) in Gen. 6: 3? Especially seeing that the word “strive” from the Hebrew word “dun”, is only once thus translated, and has the thought of to rule, in the sense of to control as a sovereign, and that the word translated “for that he also” is from the Hebrew “be-shag-gam”, which as a primitive root means to stray or to sin with more or less apology, is also used only once.

If this is so, would it not corroborate the inference of Heb. 2: 5, that the first dispensation was under the control of angels? A suggested rendering therefore would read thus: "And the Lord said, My spirits shall not always rule man: for they have strayed away (while being) in flesh; yet their days (of ruling) shall be one hundred and twenty years (longer)."

Understanding that God does not strive with sinners and that the words "he also" imply others than man being flesh, together with the fact that the one hundred and twenty years referred to evidently did not apply to the age limit of man, since Noah, his sons and even Terah lived after the Flood much longer than this period, would this not tend to support the suggested interpretation? It seemingly is in complete harmony with the context. Additionally, as it stands in the Authorized Version the text gives no real reason for what God was about to do; for it merely says, "For that he also is flesh", a statement which appears superfluous if applied to man, but which if applied to the sons of God on account of what they had done by straying away or leaving their "first estate" as Jude says, would be a real reason.

Question Box

Question—Acts 12: 15, "It is his angel." Spiritualists quote this text in support of their theory that the personality still continues to live in the spirit world after death. What is meant by the expression?

Answer—The thought would appear to be that Peter may have sent a messenger (Aggelos) with a message to the saints gathered at the house of Mary, the mother of Mark. The word angel simply means messenger; it may be a human messenger, or a spirit messenger, like the order of angels. The angels on the spirit plane of existence were in existence long before man was created. Man was never made to be an angel, but he was made to dwell on this earth, and it is only a superstition of the dark ages that at death man changes to be an angel.

There is another thought that possibly may have been behind the expression "it is his angel." The angels are spoken of as being "ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation," and again, in line with this are the Lord's words concerning His saints, "their angels do always behold the face of my Father in heaven."

If the thought had been that Peter's spirit was there, the word "aggelos" would not have been used, but "pneuma," or "phantasma"; the word "aggelos" could never be used to refer to the spirit of man.

Question.—What is the best answer that one can give to those who claim that the early chapters of Genesis are not to be taken literally but allegorically (i.e., that there was no Adam and Eve)?

Answer.—The Scriptures are so plain on this matter that it seems impossible for anyone to accept them as the Word of God and doubt the actual existence of our first parents. The 5th chapter of Romans is sufficient reply in itself, to any who recognize Paul as an inspired Apostle of the Lord. Verse 12 reads, "As by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men." Verse 14. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," and every verse down to the 19th contrasts the sin of Adam and its universal effect upon the race, with the righteousness and death of Christ, by which means justice is to be satisfied, and all accepting such means of grace are to be justified. A similar statement occurs in 1 Cor. 15: 21-22. "For since by man came death, by man comes also the resurrection of the dead, for as in Adam all die, so all in Christ shall be made alive again." It is an absurdity to suppose that the whole race of mankind could be condemned to death in a supposititious man. It is absurd to think that a supposititious man could sin and that justice could condemn all men to death because it was supposed that a supposititious man had sinned. No one can doubt the fact that all are born in sin and under condemnation to death—"by sin came death and death passed upon all men."

There is no doubt regarding the existence of Jesus Christ, and that He died for all. It is unreasonable to suppose that Paul was placing a real Jesus in opposition to only a fancied Adam. As certainly as there was the one man on whom was laid the iniquity of us all, there was also the other man, Adam, by whom all were born sinners. Only because all were included in the sin of Adam can all be included in the redemption affected by Christ.

Paul corroborates the reality of our first parents, 1 Tim. 2: 13, 14. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression"; also 1 Cor. 15: 45, "The first man, Adam, was made a living soul." That is surely again quite sufficient for any Christian.

In Jude 14 we read Enoch was the 7th from Adam. In Luke 3: 38, tracing the genealogy of Jesus back to Adam, we read, "the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God."

In the fifth of Genesis we have the statement that Adam lived and had a son named Seth, when 130 years of age, and also that he lived for 800 years after that, and died, being 930 years old.

Surely no Christian believer can for a moment doubt such plain inspired testimony. Those who cast doubts on such definite truths may be “Higher Critics or Evolutionists,” but they can have no claim to the name of Christian in the New Testament sense, for if they were not included in the one man’s sin they cannot be saved by the perfect Man’s sacrifice; they cannot then have exercised faith unto salvation.

Regarding other matters in the early chapters of Genesis,—In what possible way could the statement of creation be an allegory? The very order of creation is recognized now by scientists, being corroborated by Geology, etc. Then also the deluge is a known fact, also attested to by Geology and ancient history.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at \$9.50.

MEETING THE MASTER FACE TO FACE

I had walked life’s way with an easy tread,
Had followed where comforts and pleasures led;
Until one day, in a quiet place,
I met the Master face to face.

With station and rank and health for my goal,
Much thought for my body, but none for my soul,
I had entered to rise in life’s big race,
Till I met the Master face to face.

I met Him, and knew Him, and blushed to see
That His eyes, full of sorrow, were fixed on me.
I faltered and fell at His feet that day,
While my castles melted and vanished away.

Melted and vanished, and in their place,
Nought else could I see but the Master’s face.
And I cried aloud: “Oh, make me meet
To follow the steps of Thy wounded feet.”

My heart’s now fixed on God’s Plan for men,
I lost my life to find it again;
Because one day, in a quiet place,
I met the Master, face to face.
Anon.

Passover Memorial 1970

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 19th April. It is the privilege of the Lord’s people to observe this memorial at this season “In remembrance of Christ.”

Memorial Services

Melbourne—Sunday, 19th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide—Sunday, 19th April, at 6.15 p.m., at Manchester Unity Building (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Perth—Sunday, 19th April, at 6.45 p.m., at 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).

Sydney—Sunday, 19th April, at 6 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 280 Dalhousie Street, Haberfield.

Books Available

“God’s Promises Come True”—\$2.20.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages,” Cloth bound-80c; paper covers-55c.

“Emphatic Diaglott,” New Testament—\$2.20. “Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages—\$1.10. “Tabernacle Shadows”-68c.

“The Book of Books,” Reviewing the Bible as a whole—\$1.10.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy”-15c. “Manner of Christ’s Return”-15c. “Christ’s Return”-15c.

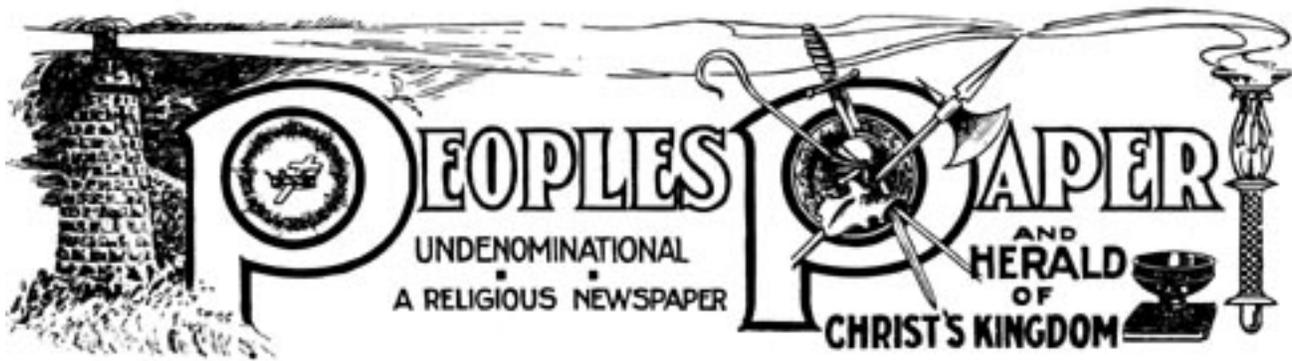
“Some of the Parables”-15c. “Hope Beyond the Grave”-15c. “God and Reason”-15c.

Where Are the **Dead?**”-10c.

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“Seasons of Refreshing”

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

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

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

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

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

years to receive seasons of refreshing in the day of the general resurrection, when the times of restitution for the earthly kingdom were operating? It surely would be strange if that were true.

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

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

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

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

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

The same Greek word for "presence" in Acts 3: 19 is found also in Heb. 9: 24. This is a lovely verse telling us about our Lord's resurrection and ascension to heaven. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." God had given His Son to be the Saviour; He had been faithful unto death, and had ascended into heaven to appear in the presence of God for the Lord's true people. This is the same word "presence" which indicated "out from the presence of the Lord" seasons of refreshing would come to those whom Peter exhorted to repent and be converted.

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

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PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM Australia, 3101.

Convention News

THE Annual Convention arranged by the Melbourne brethren proved a helpful and refreshing season once again over the four days of the Christmas season. We are thankful to the Lord for His blessings throughout the gatherings, and it was a pleasure to welcome visiting friends from interstate and country parts of Victoria, the attendance being quite good throughout the Convention days.

The gatherings consisted of Bible Studies, Fellowship Meetings and addresses by various brethren, and a film screening. The passages for the Bible Studies were—1 Tim. 6: 6-11; 1 Tim. 6: 12-16, and Heb. 12: 22-29. During these studies many helpful lessons for the Christian life were presented, giving encouragement to all in attendance to press on in the privileges and opportunities of discipleship which are very great favours indeed in these last days of the Gospel Age.

Some helpful addresses by the brethren were presented on the following topics—"Perfecting of the Saints"; "The Name Above Every Name"; "Times of Refreshing from the Presence of the Lord"; "Knowledge and Wisdom"; "Not Known After the Flesh"; "Thoughts on Revelation"; "A Light in the Night"; "The Voice of God Down the Ages"; and "A Contrite and Humble Spirit." Notes on these addresses as well as the other sessions of the Convention will appear in the Convention Notes expected to be available shortly.

Messages with greetings and Christian love were received from a number of Classes and brethren throughout Australia, and overseas, and were appreciated by the gathering at the first Fellowship Meeting. Opportunity was also given for personal testimony to the Lord's goodness in appreciation of the blessings received through the truth, and God's overruling providence in the lives of the brethren. The "Hymns We Love and Why" session was also an enjoyable time of praise to the Lord, the Giver of every good and perfect gift. The film screened on the last day of Convention—"The Return of the Exiles"—was disappointing, not being up to expectations as a public witness, but we were glad to compensate to some extent a number of the public who attended by providing a booklet to all who left their names and addresses. The text of Scripture in 1 Tim. 6: 12-14 was sent with Christian greetings from the Convention to all who had sent messages, and to all who love the Lord in every place.

Our Polish brethren in Melbourne were gladly welcomed to the Convention again, though the language difficulty hindered their entering in at all sessions. The Love Feast on the final evening of the Convention, during which the loved hymns, "Blest be the tie that binds", and "God be with you till we meet again", were sung heartily, and the closing prayer of thanksgiving to God and asking His blessing upon all His dear people everywhere, concluded a helpful Melbourne Convention for 1969.

Commentator on Hebrews

THE general design and purpose of the Epistle to the Hebrews is, to preserve those to whom it was sent from the danger of apostasy. Their danger on this subject did not arise so much from persecution, as from the circumstances which were fitted to attract them again to the Jewish religion. The temple was still standing. The morning and evening sacrifice was still being offered. The splendid rites of that imposing religion were yet observed. The authority of the law was undisputed. Moses was a lawgiver, sent from God, and no one doubted that the Jewish form of religion had been instituted by their fathers in conformity with the divine direction. Their religion had been founded amidst remarkable manifestations of the Deity—in flames, and smoke, and thunder; it had been communicated by the ministration of angels; it had on its side and in its favour all the venerableness and sanction of a remote antiquity; it commended itself by the pomp of its ritual, and by the splendour of its ceremonies. On the other hand, the new form of religion had little or nothing of this to commend it. It was of recent origin. It was founded by the Man of Nazareth, who had been trained up in their own land, who had been a carpenter, and who had had no extraordinary advantages of education. Its rites were few and simple. It had no splendid temple service; it had none of the pomp and pageantry, the music and the magnificence of the ancient religion. It had no splendid array of priests in gorgeous vestments, and it had not been imparted by the ministry of angels. Fishermen

were its ministers; and by the body of the nation it was regarded as a schism, or heresy, that enlisted in its favour only the most humble and lowly of the people.

In these circumstances, how natural was it for the enemies of the gospel in Judea to contrast the two forms of religion, and how keenly would Christians there feel it! All that was said of the antiquity and the divine origin of the Jewish religion, they knew and admitted; all that was said of its splendour and magnificence they saw, and all that was said of the humble origin of their own religion they were constrained to admit also. Their danger was not mainly that which arises from persecution. It was that of being affected by considerations like these, of relapsing again into the religion of their fathers, and of apostatizing from the gospel; and it was a danger which beset no other part of the Christian world.

To meet and counteract this danger was the design of this epistle. Accordingly the writer contrasts the two religions in all the great points on which the minds of the Christians in Judea would be likely to be affected, and shows the superiority of the Christian religion over the Jewish in every respect, and especially in the points that had so much attracted their attention, and affected their hearts.

He begins by showing that the Author of the Christian religion was superior in rank to any and all who had ever delivered the Word of God to man. He was superior to the prophets, and even to the angels. He was over all things, and all things were subject to Him. There was, therefore, a special reason why they should listen to Him, and obey His commands, chapters 1 and 2. He was superior to Moses, the great Jewish lawgiver, whom they venerated so much, and on whom they so much prided themselves, chapter 3. Having shown that the Great Founder of the Christian religion was superior to the prophets, to Moses, and to the angels, the writer proceeds to show that the Christian religion was characterized by having a High Priest superior to that of the Jews, and of whom the Jewish high priest was but a type and emblem. He shows that all the rites of the ancient religion, splendid as they were, were also but types, and were to vanish away—for they had had their fulfilment in the realities of the Christian faith. He shows that the Christian's High Priest derived His origin and His rank from a more venerable antiquity than the Jewish high priest did—He was typified by Melchisedec, who lived long before Aaron; and that He had far superior dignity, from the fact that He had entered into the Holy of Holies in heaven. The Jewish high priest entered once a year into the most holy place in the temple; the Great High Priest of the Christian faith had entered into the Most Holy place—of which the former was but the type and emblem—into heaven. In short, whatever there was of dignity and honour in the Jewish faith had more than its counterpart in the Christian religion; and while the Christian religion was permanent, that was fading. The rites of the Jewish system, magnificent as they were, were designed to be temporary. They were mere types and shadows of things to come. They had their fulfilment in Christianity. Christianity was the substance of what in the temple service was type and shadow. By considerations such as these the author of this epistle endeavours to preserve them from apostacy. Why should they go back? Why go back from the substance to the shadow? Why turn away from the true sacrifice to the type and emblem? Why linger around the earthly tabernacle, and contemplate the high priest there, while they had a more perfect and glorious High Priest, who had entered into the heavens? And why should they turn away from the only perfect sacrifice—the great offering made for transgression—and go back to the typical sacrifices of animals which were to be renewed day by day? And why forsake the system that was to endure for ever—for that which was soon to vanish away? The author of this epistle is very careful to assure them that if they now rejected the sacrifice of the Son of God, there was no other sacrifice for sin. It was God's great provision for the satisfaction and cancellation of the guilt of mankind. It was not to be repeated. If that were rejected there was no other. The Jewish rites were soon to pass away; they could not cleanse the conscience from sin. Persecuted, then, though they might be—reviled, ridiculed, opposed—yet they should not abandon their Christian hope, for it was their all; they should not neglect Him who spoke from heaven, for in dignity, rank, and authority He far surpassed all who in former times had made known the will of God to man.

A Light in the Night

(Convention Address)

(John 9: 1 -7; Psa. 12: 1, 2.)

WE have often heard the phrase quoted which forms a part of John 9: 4, “the night cometh when no man can work”, and in this day we often wonder if it is not all but upon us. In a sense it is probably true that a “night” comes in the experience of many individual Christians. As an example, one Bible commentator who wrote extensively during a long life time, had to lay down his pen before his aim to comment upon every book in the Bible was finished, because of near blindness. For many other Christians a long life of service has ended in a “night

time”, because failing health or other circumstances cut short their activities.

The portion of Scripture in John 9: 1-7 reveals an occasion during the earthly ministry of Jesus when He was brought face to face with a calamity—a man born blind. He was not the only such poor unfortunate in the world; there were many like him, and Jesus knew that. While Jesus was destined to be the Saviour of the world with power to ultimately correct all such calamity, He knew the hour of deliverance was not yet—a “night” was even now bearing down upon His soul. But while He remained midst earth’s sorrows He was still a “light” in the darkness, and it was His privilege to witness to what He would one day do—“to wipe away of sin each trace.” Jesus explained clearly that this man had not sinned more than other men. His affliction afforded Jesus the opportunity to show what He will ultimately do for all men in due time—in the times of restitution of all things, when His kingdom shall be established.

The death of Jesus by crucifixion truly put out the world’s great light, and it seemed that nature itself testified to it in the quaking earth and rending rocks immediately following (Matt. 27: 51), though even in that commotion the rending in twain from the top to the bottom of the veil of the temple heralded a coming blessing.

Ever since the death of Jesus earth’s “night time” of weeping has continued unabated; any slight alleviation which has been afforded has been through the ministry of Jesus’ representatives in the earth declaring the true gospel. As long as Jesus was in the world He was the light of the world, a light which shone in the darkness, and which the darkness could not overcome until such time in the Father’s plan when Jesus should voluntarily give Himself up as “a ransom for all.” However there has still remained a “light” in the world in the lives of Jesus’ true followers who in Matt 5: 13, 14 are said by our Lord to be the “salt” of the earth, and the “light” of the world.

An interesting point occurs in John 1: 5 where it is said of Jesus “that the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not”, according to the Authorized Version. In the margin, and also in other translations in the alternative rendering appears—“and the darkness overcame it not.” The concordance does not bear out this thought convincingly, though it does not by any means rule it out. The Amplified Version gives the marginal rendering first preference and in its usual full expression renders the whole verse—“And the light shines on in the darkness, for the darkness has never overpowered it—put it out, or has not absorbed it, has not appropriated it, and is unreceptive to it.” There is inspiration in the thought that though the darkness has not appropriated or received the “light”, it has not been able to overcome it, to overpower it, or put it out. Even though the day closes and the “night” seems all but upon us, the true followers of Jesus are still a light in the world.

In this connection we may reflect helpfully upon several verses in the 11th and 12th psalms. What is presented on these verses is a result of meditation upon the work of the commentator to whom reference was made earlier, the one whose labours were halted in old age by falling eyesight. As a child of God the Psalmist takes his stand and refuses to quench his “light”—“In the Lord put I my trust”, Psa. 11: 1. This is the reply he gives to certain advisers who try to persuade him otherwise. These advisers caution the man of God—the wicked are bending their bow. The common weapon of war in those days was the bow and arrow. The bow was large and powerful and needed great strength to bend it sufficiently to adjust the string each end. Generally the foot was used, being placed in the centre of the bow to bend it. Not only were they preparing the bow and arrow, but they intended to attack “the upright in heart” stealthily—privily, in darkness, margin. They had no intention of fighting “fair” as we may say, but sought to catch the upright off guard. In verse 3 the adviser further urges the godly man to “give in”—if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? The man of God did not dispute that the foundations, the principles of truth and righteousness were destroyed. The wholesale fraud and violence which had displaced truth and honesty bore testimony to the fact. The “foundation” upon which a good society and social order could rest was gone; what good therefore could the man of God do. Said the adviser, the best thing you can do is flee for your life. Flee as a bird to your mountain, or as another puts it, “fly to the mountains as swiftly as a bird flies from danger.” In other words, drop your high ideals and conform to the new concept of life around you, or you will surely suffer the consequences; the opponents of truth and righteousness will see to it that you are silenced. The reply of the godly man was—“In the Lord put I my trust . . . the Lord is in his holy temple . . . his eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men.” His attitude was, as the later verses of the psalm show, that the Lord would ultimately vindicate the stand for righteousness he was taking, and put down all wickedness.

The Psalmist, however, despite his faith, was utterly conscious of his present position, and that is shown in the early verses of Psa. 12—“Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children -of-men.” Prior to this he had some companions likewise resolved to hold truth and righteousness, but now, more and more, he was finding himself left alone. He had battled on in company with others against the ungodliness and unrighteousness that has always been prevalent in the world, but now (and this was testing his faith and resolve) the faithful fail from among the children of men. Those who had previously professed to be the people of

God and to love righteousness were now relaxing their influence to discourage the general prevalence of wickedness. Because iniquity abounded, the love of the many for righteousness and truth waxed cold. Godly men failed, grew fewer, not through death, but by giving way to the general speaking of vanity, falsehood and flattery. The commentator says—“When men professing religion become conformed to the world—when they live like other men—when they cease to exert an influence for godliness . . . it is time to call on God with special earnestness for His aid.” Rom. 12: 2, Phillips’ translation reads—“Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God remould your minds from within.”

Psa. 12: 2—“They speak vanity every one with his neighbour”—the topics of conversation had no reality. Do we not find that today when people gather and converse together? Little confidence can be placed on anything that is said in relation to trade and business, nor in the political or the religious world. “With flattering lips do they speak and with a double heart.” The Hebrew meaning is—“with lips of smoothness”—language chosen to conceal deception as carefully as possible. With one “heart” they give utterance to words, while the real heart retains a different sentiment.

A passage with similar meaning is found in Deut. 25: 13—“Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small.” The Hebrew word rendered “divers” has similar meaning to “double heart” in Psa. 12: 2. In Deut. it refers to a dishonourable practice of having two weights—one to buy with and another to sell with.

In regard to flattery the commentator says—“Flattery is the ascribing of qualities to another which he is known not to possess, usually with some sinister or base design.” It is not flattery, therefore, to give a word of praise or commendation where deserved, such indeed may often encourage another in a good work. We need to remember that. Real flattery is praise given with an ulterior motive; it is often a guise to win the favour of one who might not condone, or could expose questionable practices of the one offering the flattery.

Psa. 12: 8—“The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.” The commentator remarks on this verse—“The Psalmist sees a state of things existing in which because of the prevalence of iniquity, the wicked seem to go unrestrained; in which no regard is paid to truth; in which falsehood and flattery abound . . . This appears to be the reason in the mind of the Psalmist why the Divine interposition is necessary . . . It is eminently desirable that God should interpose, for the righteous seemed to have failed out of the earth, and the wicked seemed to be wholly in the ascendancy.”

But despite the pressure upon him the Psalmist himself retains his faith in the Lord and His righteousness. Though he should have to stand alone, the Lord would be his trust. He says in Psa. 12: 6—“The words of the Lord are pure words”—not words spoken with a “double heart.” The day would surely come when things would be set right; the oppression of the poor and the sighing of the needy would be brought to an end.

Reflection upon these psalms reveals a condition rapidly increasing in the world of our day. More and more the godly man is failing from among the children of men; greater and greater become the pressures upon those who have resolved to put their trust in the Lord. Verily, who shall be able to stand? Like the Psalmist it is borne in upon us that of ourselves it is an impossible task. “Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men.”

Every Christian who can say, That is an untrue or impure doctrine and I refuse to acknowledge it; that is a dishonest practice and I refuse to run my business on that line; fashion or no fashion, that is unbecoming attire and I refuse to wear it; or anything else similarly resisting the present trend of wickedness, is still a “light” in the darkness. The

Christian’s witness, or the “letting our light shine” in this day is meagre beside the “light of men” of which Jesus spoke—that of Christ Himself. However, despite the weaknesses of our own flesh and the imperfection with which our light shines, it can be acceptable to God through grace in Christ, and an effective “witness” still to men. To show people how to live a Christian life is a better witness even than telling them about it.

The brighter the light shines the greater opposition it arouses, for the time is not yet when men will turn from wickedness to righteousness. Darkness still covers the earth and gross darkness the people, and though the night when no man may work could soon be upon us, with God’s help we must keep the light shining, though it be diminutive as a night light. One is reminded of the Sankey hymn sung so often in childhood. The words have meaning now

“Jesus bids us shine with a clear pure light,

Like a little candle burning in the night;

In this world of darkness we must shine—

You in your small corner, and I in mine.”

Like the Amplified Version of John 1: 5 concerning the light of Christ—though the world does not absorb it, is unreceptive to it, the darkness must not be allowed to overpower it, must never put it out. Help Lord—help us to stand in this evil day, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. Help us Lord to continue to let the “light” shine and not hide it under a bushel, so that it may continue to glorify our Father in heaven. (Matt. 5: 15, 16.)

They do the least,
Who talk the most,
Whose good designs
Are all their boast;
Let words be few.

They do the most
Whose lives possess
The sterling stamp
Of righteousness;
For deeds are true.

Passover Memorial 1970

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 19th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "In remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

Melbourne—Sunday, 19th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide—Sunday, 19th April, at 6.15 p.m., at Manchester Unity Building (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

“MOST HOLY FAITH”

Any of our friends having a copy of “Most Holy Faith” not being used and are willing to dispose of it are asked to communicate with this office, stating the price desired.

BIBLE STUDENTS MANUAL.

Copies of these Manuals, otherwise known as Berean Comments, have been published recently by brethren in Chicago, and are now in stock for the benefit of our friends. With nice appearance, bound in strong cloth, with gold lettering, the price is \$4.00, plus postage.

“Who Only Hath Immortality”

Question: How should we understand 1 Tim. 6: 14-16? Is it the Father or the Son who is referred to as the “King of kings and Lord of lords who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto”, etc.?

Answer: We understand that the Apostle here refers to our Lord Jesus. Our reasons for so concluding are as follows:

(1) While immortality belongs exclusively to the divine nature, we are to remember that the Apostle Paul declares that the entire church is called to “glory, honour and immortality”, and the Apostle Peter says that God has given us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these “we might become partakers of the divine nature.” This implies, therefore, that the church of God is to possess this divine attribute of immortality or death-

lessness. But only our Lord Jesus had yet been made partaker of this quality at the time of the Apostle's writing. The church, His body, would not be thus honoured and glorified until their due time, in the first resurrection, when they shall be like Him, sharing His divine nature, glory, honour and immortality, etc.

(2) That our Lord Jesus already possessed this divine nature, and therefore possessed immortality at the time of the Apostle's writing, is fully attested by the Scriptures, which assure us that "as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." This describes immortality, for no other condition of life is inherent life; all other conditions are derived or imparted life. The statement here that our Lord will give this same inherent life to His followers, is in agreement with the Apostle's assurance that all who have part in the first resurrection are raised in incorruption, in immortality (1 Cor. 15: 52, 53); and remember that our Lord's resurrection was the beginning of this first resurrection, and that it could have meant no less to Him, the Head, than it is by and by to signify to the members of His body. We are to remember the same Apostle's declaration that our Lord Jesus' resurrection was as a "first-fruits"; that thus He became the "first-born among many brethren." We are to remember also that the Apostle, in harmony with the above, expressed the desire that he might have a share in "his resurrection", "the resurrection", "the first resurrection", in which all the overcomers are to share—Phil. 3: 10, 11; 1 Cor. 15: 20; James 1: 18.

If, therefore, sharing in "his resurrection" is to bring His faithful members to immortality, our Lord's own resurrection can have been to no inferior condition. Hence, to apply the text in question to the heavenly Father would not be consistent with the testimony of Scripture, that the heavenly Son possessed immortality at the time as well as the heavenly Father.

(1) That the passage in question relates to our Lord Jesus and designates Him the only Potentate, King and Lord, does not imply any disregard or disrespect of the heavenly Father and His attributes, kingship, etc., as the same writer (St. Paul) elsewhere points out. When speaking in similar strain about Christ's kingdom and the subjugation of all things under Him, he says, "It is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him." In other words, comparisons which show dignity and honour pertaining to Christ, Head or body, are never understood to be comparisons with Jehovah, who is beyond all comparison—see 1 Cor. 15: 27, 28.

The correctness of this application is further attested by our Lord's own application to Himself of the same titles—see Rev. 17: 14 and 19: 16.

The Apostle's entire discourse is along the line of showing the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus, His humility and high exaltation, and how servants and all of us should be likewise humble and lowly and faithful to the truth as servants of God, and in due time be exalted—manifested to the world—in glory, honour and immortality in the kingdom.—"Reprints" 2747.

Life's Empty Victories

The following article was written by a regular contributor to a secular newspaper in U.S.A., in 1932. It has been published more than once by the Herald of Christ's Kingdom" to whom acknowledgement is made in reproducing at this time.

AS a man grows older, yet has not reached extreme old age, when, presumably, all his past is mellowed and softened in the pleasant, tranquil light of sunset and both mistakes and right acts are equally overspread by the thought that nothing has mattered much, since the whole thing will be soon over; when he arrives at the stage of life's journey where he reviews the past, not alone for the gentle pleasure of reminiscence, but also to seek guidance for his remaining future, and while he still imagines that it is possible for him to mould his character into the secret ideal which he has all along vainly struggled to perfect, there comes, at least to the man of average temperament, in this pause to review, this moment of rest before he completes his destiny, the thought of how much happier, and better and altogether pleasanter his life might have been had he avoided as he might easily have done, certain complications and conflicts which, at the time, seemed to him mightily important.

When they occurred, he was absolutely certain that the triumph of his opinion was a matter of tremendous consequence; it was essential that he should override the opposition and impress upon his opponent that pre-eminent truth and right of his position; and he went at him, hard and strong, and in the heat of the controversy, which ripened into a feud and perhaps ended in the permanent estrangement of one who might once have been counted a friend, he said or did things which were hard and bitter, and better left unsaid or undone.

Perhaps he gained his point; beat down his antagonist, and sent him, humbled and mortified from the contest, to nurse his grievance ever after, and nourish to the end of his days a smouldering hate of the man who got the better

of him; or worse, to cherish the feeling that he had been hardly used.

Strange it should be that, in his later years, the outcome does not seem to have been of very great consequence. What remains permanently is the memory of the incident, and a regret that it should have occurred.

Looking back, he realises the exact moment when he might have refrained from pressing his man to the limit, have perhaps sufficiently satisfied his self-respect and vindicated the justness of his contention without sacrificing a possible friend. Probably it would puzzle him now to state exactly what it was all about then, this famous victory, but he remembers it was a great fight and he was in it—and he is sorry.

Not sorry that he stood up stoutly in defence of his positive convictions; no man ever regrets that, but sorry that he should have esteemed it necessary to go to such lengths in pursuit of his ends that it put reconciliation and ultimate restoration of friendship beyond the bounds of the possible. He remembers these incidents with vague discomfort. No matter which of the two was in the wrong, he holds himself responsible for the outcome.

Did he convince the other of his error? Scarcely. “He that complies against his will is of his own opinion still.” Did the encounter seriously contribute to the upbuilding of his own character? Hardly, unless it was desirable to encourage in himself the love of fighting for the fight’s sake. His later calm and deliberate conviction is that it was not worth while, and he grudges the vitality and energy he put into it, which might well have been conserved to later, more mature and far better use.

The thing the man remembers at this particular point in his life with the most satisfaction is not such a fruitless contest, but rather the time when, by conceding a point, by some exercise of forbearance in pressing an advantage, he made a friend of his opponent, although they differed irreconcilably. Touching these other encounters, which at the moment it seemed necessary to win, but which in the end were so barren of real gain, he says, somewhat sorely, “Let them be forgotten and forgiven.”

He recalls with secret gratification not his paltry and vainglorious victories, but his flabby and perhaps sentimental concessions: the small foolish, kindly things that he did, rare enough, he admits, but fruitful in pleasing memories. For, after all, we are men tarred with the same stick; more or less good, bad or indifferent, as the case may be, yet all capable of doing something kind for each other. He draws from his past the lesson of tolerance, for the future that is left to him, and resolves, perhaps vainly, but at least for the moment, sincerely, that henceforth, while he may never falter in defense of a principle, he will try hard to so moderate his attacks upon the other man as to leave no sting past healing.

The assets he counts up with the most satisfaction are the friends he finds about him. What they may expect of him is the animus of his future. He will endeavour to be true to them and to his own convictions, but he will avoid the useless multiplication of enemies. This is his hope, as he takes stock of what lies before him.

Perhaps the writer could offer no suggestion to his readers, touching the form which good resolves, customary at this season of the year, should take, that would be better for ourselves and for the world we live in, than that we will lead kindlier lives; that we will be less sure and less harsh in our judgments; that we will refrain as far as in us lies from giving the other man “a piece of our minds”; that we will leave room for him to be convinced of his error, if he be wrong and we right, not through the might of our pounding, but rather through the gradual change in his own convictions; that we will finally try to proceed on the way that we esteem the right and only one with less friction, believing that which is true and right will prevail anyhow, and the surer and swifter if it be not enforced by contention.

In a word, to resolve to make friends, not at the sacrifice of conviction or principle, but by conceding to others the simple right of learning the truth in their own time and in their own way, helped perhaps by our, of course, pre-eminently wise suggestion and example, if truly they be such, but at least not hindered by our overemphatic dictum.

Adelaide Easter Convention

The Adelaide brethren are arranging for their Easter Convention this year from Good Friday to Easter Monday (D.V.), in Manchester Unity Building (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the secretary—Mrs. R. Jordan, 14 Newark Road, Torrens Park, South Australia, 5062.