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The Glad Resurrection Day

"Weeping may tarry for the night, But joy cometh in the morning" (Psalms 30:5).

Referring to the words of Jesus on the night immediately prior to his great sacrifice on behalf, of us all, he said, "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14:1 ASV). Within a few hours of uttering these words Jesus was to suffer and die on the cross. How could those disciples believe in him? On the third day they were to learn that Christ had risen from the dead. He was a living Saviour! This he had also predicted on the night prior to his death when he said, "And ye therefore now have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no one taketh away from you" (John 16:22 ASV).

Did Jesus see those disciples again? He certainly did! Appearing approximately ten times at different locations. The disciples in Jesus' day were weak and timid while he was still with them, but after his resurrection appearances to them, and especially after Pentecost, they became strong, confident and full of faith in him. The same has happened to us, since we have learnt to know and love the Lord and to trust in him.

After Jesus' resurrection those disciples at his first advent understood what his death and resurrection would mean for them, and for all mankind, in due time. So, do we when we grasp the wonderful truth -- that Jesus Christ by the grace of God "should taste of death for every man" who has ever lived. Those are the words of the Apostle Paul and he knew the truth which had been revealed to him. He said again "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22 ASV).

Then the Apostle Peter declared that "Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18 ASV). But Jesus has not brought all mankind to God in the present life. Yet another scripture declares, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their

trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:19 ASV).

How many of the world have already been reconciled to God? Very few, we will admit. Christ tasted death for everyone — in every city and country in the world! The majority of mankind are yet to benefit from Christ's sacrifice for them. The words of our risen Lord, through the Apostle John, help us in this matter when he said [I am] "the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades" (Revelation 1:18 ASV).

What did Jesus mean by having the keys of hell? The Bible hell is the condition of death. Jesus went to the Bible hell for all mankind. We call to mind the Scripture in Psalms 16:10, quoted by Peter in Acts 2:31, after Jesus' resurrection—"that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption." which was fulfilled in our Lord's resurrection. "This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses" (Acts 2:32 ASV).

The words of the Psalmist help us further in Psalms 102:19,20, "For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; From heaven did Jehovah behold the earth; To hear the sighing of the prisoner; To loose those that are appointed to death" (ASV).

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What a scene the Almighty beholds on earth today with man's inhumanity to man. Death taking away the human family one by one throughout the world. But God is going to loose the prisoners that are appointed to death, those in the prison-house of death. It is lovely to know that the Psalmist was given that information, by inspiration of God, so long ago, and it's absolutely true.

To illustrate the wonderful resurrection day, when all mankind shall be awakened from the death condition, we have an account given in John's Gospel respecting the resurrection of Lazarus, a dear brother who had passed away while Jesus was absent from the locality where he lived. When Jesus returned, he performed such a marvelous miracle that brought joy and rejoicing to the hearts of the two sorrowing sisters in particular, and also brings hope and encouragement to our hearts, as we accept by faith the lesson God would wish us to take from this lovely incident. We refer to John 11 where the death and resurrection of Lazarus is recorded. When Lazarus became sick the sisters sent a message to Jesus "He whom thou lovest is sick"-hoping, and expecting perhaps, that Jesus would return quickly and cure the sickness. They had become acquainted with the Lord curing people, bringing them back to health and strength. But Jesus did not return, and Lazarus died. Then Jesus said to his disciples with him, "We'll go back and awake Lazarus out of sleep." The disciples replied that if he sleeps, he would do well. Then Jesus said plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

When our Lord returned, he was met by Martha who said—"Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Jesus said unto her "Thy brother shall rise again." To which Martha replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day," Martha had learned that truth from Jesus, no doubt. Then Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead [though he dies] yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth [then] and believeth in me shall never die." The miracle that followed was intended to illustrate just what Jesus had said in respect of all mankind.

When Mary met Jesus, she expressed the same thought as Martha, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." We note the emphasis was on Jesus curing their brother while he still lived; they had not expected their brother to be restored to life, for he had been dead four days. When our Lord asked where they had laid their brother and approached the grave, asking that the stone be taken from the entrance, Martha was apprehensive, saying, "Lord, by this time he corrupteth: for he hath been dead four days." After praying to the Heavenly Father, acknowledging that it was the Father's power that would perform the miracle and that he knew it was God's will that it be carried out, we read that Jesus



The Resurrection of Lazarus

"Cried with a loud voice. Lazarus come forth; and he that was dead came forth." We read "Then many of the Jews which came to Mary and had seen the things which Jesus did believed in him." Can we wonder that they believed on him after such a miracle?

Could there be anything more wonderful than to realise what the fulfillment of that miracle will mean in the Kingdom of Christ, that all mankind shall be awakened from the sleep of death. Lazarus, of course, died again, but we note clearly that he was asleep in death for four days; he had not gone to heaven. Four days, four years, four hundred years, or four thousand years make no difference to the Lord when the time comes to bring mankind back from the prison-house of death, to enjoy lasting life on the restored earth, by obedience to the laws of Christ's Kingdom.

How thankful we are to know of this glorious salvation provided by God, through the sacrifice of His dear Son who "tasted death for every man." From the Apostle Paul we read again in the words of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14, "I would not have you to be ignorant brethren concerning them which are asleep. that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." When we have hope in Christ, we know of a surety that our departed loved ones are in his keeping; they are "asleep in Jesus." Paul continues, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." This is a sure promise that God will bring back from the death condition all mankind at our Lord's second advent, that all may learn to know the Lord from the least to the greatest and accept him also as their Saviour, gaining lasting life on the restored earth.

What a comfort is this gracious plan of salvation God has promised for His human family, through the gift of Jesus to be our Saviour. We do well to remember also that we were all under the sentence of death, but through faith in Christ, we have a certificate for life. Those who, in this life, do not gain a certificate for life will have a full opportunity of obtaining that in the resurrection day. In explanation, previously mention was made of the text by the Apostle Paul, "God was in

Christ reconciling the world unto himself.” But God has reconciled only a comparatively few of mankind unto Himself during the Gospel Age. These, on proving faithful unto death in the steps of the Master, are promised a place in the heavenly kingdom, to reign with Christ, to assist in the restoring to life and blessing of the remainder of mankind who obey the laws of the earthly kingdom. This will be easier to do at that time with Satan bound and the glory of the Lord covering the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Then will be fulfilled the words of Revelation 22:17,

“And the spirit and the bride say, Come.” There will be a Bride, for then the Church will be with Christ for this great restoration work of a thousand years on behalf of all the willing and obedient resurrected humanity. “And let him that heareth say, Come, And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Then shall also come to pass the fulfillment of Matthew 25:34, “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand. Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Honoring Memorial Principles

“This do in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19).

When we come together to observe the Memorial of our Lord’s death it gives us an opportunity as a group of believers to express our deep appreciation for his loving sacrifice. Doing this as a body emphasizes the great things we have in common. It takes us back to the roots of our faith and the great truth of why and how we can stand before God as fully justified sons and daughters. As we remember him, we are also remembering the principles which drove him to offer such a sweet sacrifice.

Proverbs 8:31 provides the sentiments of our Lord in his pre-human experience. He said, “My delight was with the sons of men.” He loved mankind right from the beginning. When the heavenly Father asked him to become the Savior of our race, he undoubtedly accepted without reservation. And so, when we remember him, we remember the great principle of love that motivated him.

But there was also the love for his Father. In Proverbs 8, he also said, “Then I was the craftsman at His side. I was filled with delight day after day”

(verse 30 NIV). In this bond between Father and son there was a closeness and intimacy that brought each of them great joy as they worked together to bring God’s creative plans to life.

After the physical work of creation was finished there was another work to be accomplished. The greater work of educating an intelligent creation in the knowledge of good and evil was, in many ways, a more difficult and complex part of creation. The process began with the first test. “Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it” (Genesis 2:17). Failure to obey this simple command began the greatest learning experience the universe will likely ever see. It was love that moved our Lord to become the sacrificial Lamb of God. It was a principle ingrained in everything he did.

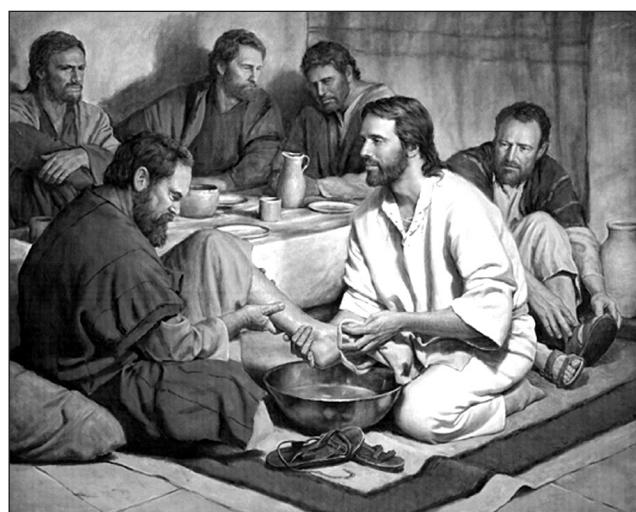
In remembering Jesus, we also honor the principles of righteousness and justice. He came to live a righteous life for two reasons. First, his personal righteousness was required to qualify his life as the ransom price. Second, his virtue established a standard of true godlike morality.

By remembering him we memorialize these good and noble principles. Our yearly gatherings on one night of the year are important. However, a more meaningful memorial of that precious life occurs when our lives are profoundly changed. The way we live the rest of the year proclaims that this special night is not just a formality, but that Jesus has taken deep root in our hearts.

It is most appropriate, then, that our lives become a living memorial to him, that our actions and attitudes imitate him and that when others look at us they see a reflection of him. In that way, we can be a daily memorial of his great life and death.

New Beginnings

God’s instructions for keeping the Passover began with a simple command: “This month shall be unto



Jesus at the Last Supper

you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Exodus 12:2). Prior to the institution of the Passover the Jewish year began in the fall, around September. With the first Passover, God instructed that the year would begin in the spring. The Passover was to mark a new beginning. It is a wonderfully appropriate change. By offering himself as the ransom sacrifice Jesus guaranteed that mankind would have a new beginning, that the first beginning in Eden was not our last hope.

The new beginning for the consecrated of this age started when we came under the blood and became part of the first-born class. Then the springtime of new growth began. We can now look back to our prior experiences and remember that we were once in bondage to sin and death. But the anti-typical Passover Lamb has set us free from these things just as Israel was set free from the slavery of making mud bricks in Egypt. We have been "passed over" (Exodus 12:27) and are now free from condemnation. The New Creature can grow and prosper as the new flowers and green grass of spring exhibit new life. Our new beginning brings rich spiritual growth.

Roasted in Fire

The Passover lamb was to be roasted in fire. This powerful picture depicted the intensity of Jesus' experience on earth. Fully aware of this, the Apostle Paul said, "If you would escape becoming weary and faint-hearted, compare your own sufferings with those of him who endured such hostility directed against him by sinners" (Hebrews 12:3, Weymouth). Jesus endured great hostility.

As intense as the physical abuses were, his sufferings were not limited to the mistreatment before the Sanhedrin or even the scourging and crucifixion. He also endured emotional suffering when, for a time, the Father turned His face away. His heart suffered when he saw disbelief in so many. He was saddened when a man's wealth meant more to him than becoming a disciple of the Savior. Seeing the greed and jealousy of the Jewish leadership created great conflict with them. These were all painful experiences for our Lord. Even the disciples could not relieve his anguish in Gethsemane. Betrayal by a friend was another burning flame that licked at Jesus' heart. These were all part of our Lord's cup of suffering. Being roasted with fire was an appropriate description of his experiences.

He Set His Face Like a Flint

"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Isaiah 50:6).

It is difficult to think that one who deserved so much praise would be spit in the face and have his beard pulled out. Such unjust behavior was meant to demean and ridicule him. But in the next few verses of Isaiah 50 we see how Jesus dealt with such terrible



"I gave my back to the smiters."

mistreatment. He leaves a marked legacy of how to deal with unfair abuse.

"For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore, shall I not be confounded; therefore, have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifies me; who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who is my adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord GOD will help me; who is he that shall condemn me?" (Isaiah 50:7-8).

Throughout his mistreatment Jesus turned his thoughts to God. Setting his face like a flint means he would not allow his resolute feelings to be swayed by his abusers. He thought, "I will not be shamed by these attempts to humiliate me." When God judged his life, he knew the outcome would be vastly different than his experience before these fallen men. His confidence in God helped Jesus endure such tremendous opposition. He understood that in the end he would be vindicated and honored by the righteous judge.

Psalm 22

This Psalm was on Jesus' mind when he quoted verse one from the cross. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" It is interesting to note that the Psalm ends with a phrase similar to his final words when he said, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

"A seed shall serve him ... They shall come and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that, He hath done this" (Psalms 22:30, 31). The Companion Bible suggests that the phrase "He hath done this" is equivalent to "It is finished." He now prophetically looks ahead and sees the saints declaring his righteousness to future generations and that he finished the sacrifice so needful for our redemption.

It is likely that Jesus may have been reciting the entire Psalm as he hung from the cross. Filling his mind with prophetic words of his own experience would have been helpful in dealing with the raging pain of being on the cross for six hours. As we read portions of the Psalm, we imagine the demands of his body for prolonged pauses and moments of rest. Only selected verses are cited below.

“My God, my God, why hath thou forsaken me? ... O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not ... But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praise of Israel. Our fathers trusted thee: they trusted and thou didst deliver them ... But I am a worm, and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people ... Be not far from me; for trouble is near and there is none to help ... I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint: My heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

“For dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet ... I may count all my bones; they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture ... O my Strength, haste thee to help me ... I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee, Praise Him, all you descendants of Israel ... For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him he heard ...

“All the ends of the world will 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 rules over the nations. All the rich of the earth will feast and worship. All they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul. A seed shall serve him; it shall be counted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this” (Psalms 22:1-4,6,11,14,16-19,22-24,27-31).

These words reveal not only great suffering, but amid the suffering the strength of faith is evident. Jesus took great comfort that even unborn generations would hear of God’s righteousness. In this amazing prophetic Psalm Jesus left a legacy of how faith deals with adversity. In his own great struggle, he went to the Father. He asked for help and claimed the promises. He drew courage in knowing of the coming kingdom and that there would be a seed to proclaim God’s name. His prime concern was that God should be honored. With that perspective, he was focused on higher and nobler principles, well worth the physical sufferings he endured.

As this Psalm reveals some of his thoughts on the cross, the possibility also exists that he continued to Psalm 23, some of the most meaningful words ever written. How precious to think that our Lord likely took comfort in these words:

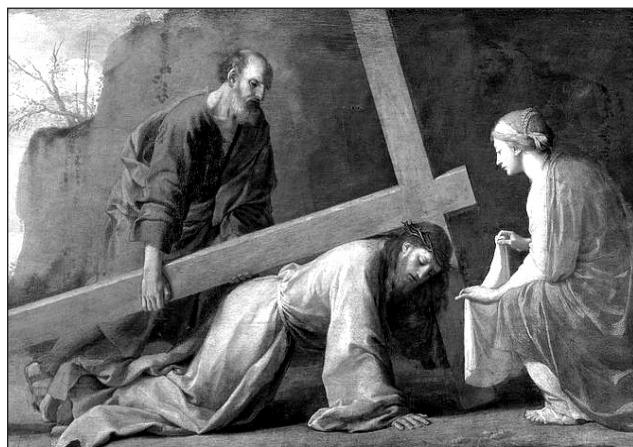
“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”

As Jesus struggled to breathe with his back lacerated and hands and feet tearing at the nails, he could still say with confidence, “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.” And, “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou are with me.” His faith is truly inspiring as we contemplate these prophetic words.

Not a Bone Broken

An intriguing aspect of the Passover is the fact that not a bone of the sacrificial lamb was to be broken (Exodus 12:46). This was fulfilled in John 19:33, 36. “But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs ... For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: ‘Not one of his bones will be broken.’ ”



Though much abused, not a bone was broken.

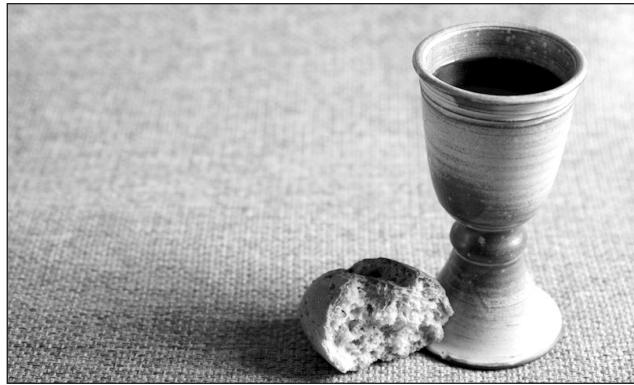
Why was it so important that none of Jesus’ bones should be broken? The answer is found in the 34th Psalm. “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all. He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken” (Psalms 34:19,20, English Standard Version).

The Psalmist reveals that unbroken bones represent the hope of deliverance. Jesus’ hope of deliverance became a reality when he was raised from the dead. His hope of providing the ransom price was not in vain. When providence entered and his legs remained unbroken God provided an indication that his hope was genuine and could not be destroyed by his enemies.

We, too, have unbroken bones. We are given great hope through our understanding of how the atonement process works. What a privilege to know these things. The Apostle describes the stability that hope provides when he said hope is an anchor of the soul rooted in heaven. It is “both sure and steadfast” (Hebrews 6:19).

This Do in Remembrance

As we remember our Lord's sacrifice, we honor the principles he stood for. His sacrifice was a great expression of love. His perfection brought a righteous offering to God and set an example of perfect obedience. While enduring the flames of oppression he turned to God for help and would not be moved. He understood the tremendous benefit that would result from his sacrifice and how the Father would be honored. For these reasons, we are privileged to remember him.



Five Smooth Stones

1 Samuel Chapter 17

The story of David's victory over Goliath is a very famous one. David was a humble lad and the youngest among eight brothers. Historically the Philistines had always been a thorn in the side of Israel and were an ominous foe. It took the strongest and bravest to stand against such an enemy.

It is worthy to note that the terror which the Philistines were able to inflict was due to their use of the giant named Goliath from Gath, who appeared every evening and morning for forty days. This individual was just under eight-foot-tall (240 cm), he was broad and powerful in proportion and his armour weighed five thousand shekels = 157 lb (or 71 kg). During the forty days Goliath had challenged Saul's army to produce a man to meet him in single combat. The losing side was to submit to the other, without any further fighting. The more the Israelites looked at the Philistine champion on display every day, the less this challenge appealed to them. 1 Samuel 17:8-11. They were in a complete state of panic over the issue.

David enquired, "For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?" (verse 26). David's words must have raised an eyebrow or two of the soldiers. It had been a long time since they had heard the praises of God on their lips and a faith that would give them the victory. Saul heard of this and gave orders for David to be brought before him.

Saul said "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth" (1 Samuel 17:33). It appears that Saul, king of Israel, was afraid. His was an understandable concern, but David was undaunted. From his previous experiences he had learned how strong and dependable was the Lord's protecting care. Although David was unskilled in military warfare, he had dexterity and physical capabilities.

When Saul questioned David's ability to fight Goliath, David replied "Your servant was tending his

father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued it from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God." 1 Samuel 17:34-36. David was not about to be discouraged, his faith was in Jehovah God and that his God would take care of Goliath.

Apparently, David spoke with such confidence that Saul made a sudden decision and authorized him to go against Goliath. "Go and may the Lord be with you" (1 Samuel 17:37). The challenge was a serious one, for if the Israelites lost, they would become servants of the Philistines. The very fact David was brought to the king's attention indicated that the people were awed by his spirit.

Next, Saul took off his own armour, that was a replica of that used by the Philistines and fitted it on David with the heavy bronze helmet. David girded his sword over his armour and tried to walk. But he found that his movement was greatly impeded by the unfamiliar apparel. He looked at the sword in his hand and threw it on the ground. He took off the armour piece by piece and threw them down also. "I cannot go with these" he said "for I have not tried them" (1 Samuel 17:39). "The Lord has no need of such weapons," he remarked. He was not accustomed to them. Instead he chose to rely on his proven familiar implements and his faith in God. Most likely the soldiers and King looked at this shepherd lad with increasing interest as he made his way down the hill side. They saw him pause and stoop as he crossed the brook at the bottom of the hill.

It is worthy to note that David specifically "chose five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in his pouch, and his sling was in his hand" (1 Samuel 17:40). David

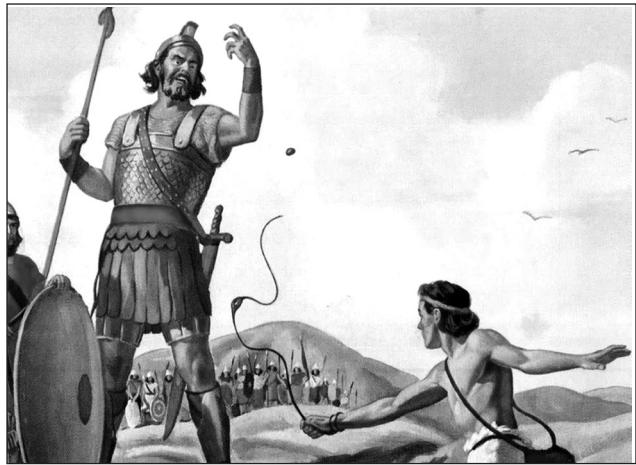
did not just pick up any stones from the ground. He chose them very carefully as he knew they would have to fly through the air towards the giant. If the stones were flat, they would resist the wind and might deviate not striking the target at all. These stones were taken from the brook, they had been smoothed over time and were aerodynamically sound because the water was constantly moving over them.

David went onto the field of battle with only the tools of his shepherd's trade: his staff, sling and shepherd's bag. The shepherd's staff was an aid for the sheep, but in close quarters and in the hands of a skilled shepherd it could be easily used as both a defensive and offensive device. Nevertheless, this was the mark of his trade and he would not go into battle without it. The small bag usually draped over a shoulder carried daily provisions and probably his sling. He had not been equipped with anything else when he defended his flock against a lion and a bear (verse.34). That is why he carried only these into the battle.

The Philistine warriors looked on attentively as David crossed the intervening space, uncertain what the shepherd lad was doing between the armies. It was a little while before they realised that the lad was there to challenge their champion.

Encounter with Goliath

As the Philistine champion approached, preceded by his shield bearer, he looked about for his adversary and then he saw David as only a small, ruddy lad. "He disdained him, for he was but a youth, and ruddy, with a handsome appearance" (1 Samuel 17:42). Some challenge, he thought! A total mismatch from Goliath's viewpoint, it seemed so pitiful as to insult his dignity. "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods (1 Samuel 17:43). The rhetorical question of Goliath was, "Am I a dog?" This wording does assist the identification of the symbols, for dogs are elsewhere used to represent Gentiles, and Goliath represents the Gentile kingdoms (Matthew 15:26, Luke 16:21, Philippians 3:2, Revelation 22:15).



David and Goliath

When he approached within voice distance, Goliath mocked David "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field." (verse. 44). It is worthy to note that David did not immediately launch his stone at his foe, but first he delivered a message and then the stone (verses 44-49). The first part of the message stated his confidence in the God of the armies of Israel and a stronger weapon than that of any sword and spear.

David then delivered a prophecy that Goliath would be slain that very day and that his carcass would be given to the fowls of the air and the beasts of the earth. Finally, he declared this would be so that the nations may learn that God does not suffer Himself to be mocked but will take up the cause of his covenant people. "The battle is the Lord's and He will deliver you into our hands." After the message, David drew out only one of the smooth stones.

A sling and stone in the hands of a skilful shepherd is truly a lethal weapon. Many in the tribe of Benjamin could throw such sling stones to a hair's breadth we are told in (Judges 20:16). This stone hit its mark and Goliath reeled back and slowly collapsed in a heap. David's slung stone had struck him squarely above the eyes on the only unprotected part of his body. Since David did not have a sword he ran to the Philistine, drew Goliath's own sword and severed his head from his body. The Philistines were shocked at the sudden and unexpected fate of their champion. They took one look and ran in panic.

Goliath's taunts of 40 days had finally come to an end (1 Samuel 17:16). So often in Scripture a period of 40 represents a time of testing and trial. So here the 40 days of taunting may refer to the Gospel Age, during which the Gentile powers have proudly presented themselves as powerful defenders of the present order of Satan who is the prince of the world presently.

Why Five Stones?

A question comes to mind if the selected five smooth stones have any significance? As if it is just incidental, then why record it so precisely in Scripture? After all, one stone completed the mission, so what then were the other four stones for? There are maybe two possibilities. The first is that they may represent the five books of Moses (the Pentateuch). Today these are known as the Torah. In David's time they were the bread of life and the word of God.

Certainly, David delivered his message with the confidence based on the records of these five books. Some notable examples and promises where God gave deliverance to his people are: Genesis 14:20, Exodus 14:14, Exodus 23:27, Deuteronomy 1:30, Deuteronomy 3:22. So it is a stone (a word) from the brook (of truth) that can smite the enemies of the Lord. While we are armed with the whole counsel of God, the right message at the right time will silence the oppressor.

Goliath's Four Brothers

The second suggestion is that Goliath had four brothers. According to Israel's laws, blood vengeance was allowed by the family of the murdered. This is mentioned in several places in the Scriptures and detailed in Numbers 35:9-34. The act of revenge was most likely practiced also by the Philistines. So, if Goliath's brothers were to descend on David following Goliath's death, he had a single stone for each one of them also.

To determine that there were four next-of-kin involves a detailed examination of two scriptures. The first is 2 Samuel 21:15-22. The second is 1 Chronicles 20:4-8. In the 2 Samuel account there are four individuals listed as "born to the giant of Gath." We can deduce that this was Goliath's father, for one of them is assumed to be the brother of Goliath. The persons listed are: (1) Ishbibenob, (2) Saph, (3) "the brother of" (is supplied) Goliath, and (4) another unnamed son who had six fingers and toes on each extremity.

But there appears to be a copyist problem in verse 19. For if it is read that Elhanan slew Goliath the Gittite, then that would imply there were two giants named Goliath, or a mistake in saying he was slain by Elhanan instead of David. To reconcile this with 1 Chronicles we note that the translators supplied the added words: "the brother of Goliath."

As 1 Chronicles 20:5 clearly states that Elhanan "slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite." The brother's name is given in this verse. We also have on record the death of another unnamed giant with the six fingers and toes, apparently the same one that is recorded in 2 Samuel. So, we have three of the four brother's names. One of them is Lahmi, who is clearly identified as a brother of Goliath. Goliath whom David slew must have been the fifth brother, but having died first he was not listed among the four who were slain later.

Therefore, it is a reasonable assumption that David picked up just five smooth stones to account for Goliath and each of his four brothers should they seek to revenge. The beauty of such a proposition is that by faith David did not overstock his arsenal. He had but one stone for each of the enemies of God. He knew that each stone would be guided to its mark if necessary. However, in the record of 1 Samuel 17:49-50 we find that by just the first stone the enemies of God were scattered, and the Israelites prevailed.

The first lesson is that David drew stones of truth from the five books of the word of God to face his enemy. The second lesson is that David's faith was sufficient that each stone would be directed by God. So, we see in David a picture of the antitypical David, Christ at his second advent.

The word of truth is the weapon of our returned Lord. Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword and

piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

Goliath's Threat

Goliath's threat to David was, "I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field." David replied: And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD's" (1 Samuel 17:44-47). This wording is very suggestive of Revelation 19:17-21.

"Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in mid heaven, Come, assemble for the great supper of God, so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.

"And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh."

This last phrase of Revelation is precisely what David prophesied of Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:46. So we see in David the vindication and victory over the godless forces of our day that Christ brings to Israel, both natural and spiritual. There appears to be something prophetic regarding of the end of the age, in the account of David and Goliath.



John on the isle of Patmos

We Will All Fall Asleep

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall all fall asleep, but we shall not all be changed, in a moment”
(1 Corinthians 15:51, 52 RVIC).

This is a familiar text, but the rendering above is a surprising one — surprising, in that it differs notably from the common version rendering. However, as the RVIC footnotes show, this reading is well attested.

Upon close inspection, it seems vital. The common version says “we shall not all sleep.” However, the Greek word for “sleep” here, *koiuethesometha*, means not a state of repose, as in sleep, but the act of falling into sleep — “fall asleep.” It is Strong’s word number, 2838, another form of the word *ekoimethe*, Strong’s number 2837, which was used to describe the death of Stephen in Acts 7:60, “he fell asleep.” This describes not the state of death, but the act of dying, falling into the sleep of death.

Thus, with the word “not” in the 1 Corinthians 15:51 phrase, before “all fall asleep,” Paul would be saying that not all the saints would die. That would fit nicely with the mistaken view of the rapture, and perhaps that is the reason the text was changed at some time, away from the original intent of Paul.

With the word “not” omitted in this phrase, Paul’s words affirm that all of the saints must die in the flesh in order to be raised to life in the spirit. A little reflection indicates that this text, in the original, before becoming corrupted, is unique. It is the only text in the New Testament that declaratively affirms that all of those called to a heavenly reward must die in the flesh, in order to receive their life in the spirit.

The word “not” does appear in the text, but not in the phrase discussed above. The word “not,” in the better manuscripts, appears in the next phrase: “we shall **not** all be changed in a moment.” Those who die after the return of Christ are changed “in the twinkling of an eye” when they die. But those who died long ago, before the return of Christ, required to rest in the sleep of death, awaiting the end of the age.

In 1 Corinthians 15:52, Paul used the word “raised” for those who died earlier and slept, awaiting the resurrection. He uses the word “changed” for those who remain until the return of Christ, and thereafter complete their course. “For the trumpet shall sound, and the **dead** shall be **raised** incorruptible, and **we** [the living who continue into the presence of Christ] shall be **changed**” (1 Corinthians 15:52).

That all the saints complete their course in death is consistent with Jesus’ promise in Revelation 2:10, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

Augustine of Hippo

Of interest to us here is that this same understanding is reflected in one of the revered figures of Christian history, Augustine of Hippo. He was born on November 13, 354, and died on August 28, 430. He is the well known author of a Christian classic, *The City of God*. The Church had already slipped in doctrine by his day. But on this point, Augustine affirms the proper view.

This has been brought out in recent years by some studies by Br. Robert Virgil, of the San Francisco ecclesia. Following is an engaging piece from personal correspondence from Br. Virgil, above three years ago.

“Concerning Augustine’s view that it is necessary for all saints to die, even if they survive into the time of the Lord’s presence, see *The City of God*, Book XX, section 20. This reference system should work regardless of which edition you use.

“Augustine also uses the manuscript variation of 1 Corinthians 15:51 — “we shall all sleep” — and says, ‘not even the saints shall be quickened to immortality unless they first die, however briefly; and consequently they shall not be exempt from resurrection which is preceded by sleep, however brief.’

“On another subject, he has something to say about what you have been studying from the books of Samuel. In the same source, Book XVII, Sections 4 and 5, he comments that the deaths of Eli and his sons, and their replacement by Samuel, pictured the change in the priesthood from the Aaronic line to that of Christ. He even explains that the reason why Samuel was merely a Levite, but functioned as a priest (contrary to the Law) was to show the typical nature of the account. The real priest would be Christ Jesus.

“Augustine’s work is certainly a mixed bag. He is responsible for a false conception of individual predestination which was later picked up by Calvin. But, he also worked to develop the doctrine of “original sin,” which, if we do not use the term, is a vital part of present truth and helps us to explain the ransom.

“Brethren would do well to consider that truth can be gleaned, not just from the old Protestant commentators, but even from some Catholic sources. God was at work in the wheat field, even if it had been overgrown with tares.”



Augustine of Hippo



Berean Bible Institute Inc.

"They searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so"

Report of Activities 2018-2019

Once again, with the support of our Members, our Heavenly Father has blessed us by the continuance of the activities of the Berean Bible Institute Inc (BBI) to serve the Lord's people and to use any opportunities for public witness. The Institute maintains contact with Members, Brethren and the general public by means of the Peoples Paper and the provision of other Bible Student literature and the website australianbiblestudents.org

The committee also moved to create an attractive new website. This also will be under the review of the editorial committee. The website was expanded to include the history of the Bible Student Movement worldwide, and the history of setting up the BBI in Australia, continuing the work begun by Br. C. T. Russell. One of the features included hearkens back to the days of Br. Russell himself, namely: "To us the scriptures clearly teach." It will be familiar to brethren in many lands.

Distribution of Printed Material and DVD

These items are distributed in response to requests to advertisements in the print media. It has been a busy year with requests coming from many countries of the world and most states in Australia. Several requests were received from people in New Zealand. Other countries include Papua New Guinea, Canada, England, United States of America, Portugal, Philippines and Nigeria. Those who request follow up booklets or information have their details passed on to the local ecclesia's.

We send a couple of booklets with the requests and wait for the person to respond. On several occasions we have then been able to provide a PDF so that a group could print the booklet locally. With modern technology many of the younger people prefer this as they can have the booklet on their phone to read. A total of 494 booklets were distributed during the year, 455 booklets in English, 37 in Chinese and 2 in Spanish. 4 sets of *Studies in the Scriptures* were set out. 38 DVD's were sent out from requests including 16 sets of "Photodrama of Creation"

Printing

Owing to the high cost of postage from the USA, it was decided to print some of the booklets locally. A new booklet, *Before Herzl There was Pastor Russell: A Neglected Chapter of Zionism*, was printed with permission of the author. This booklet was sent to

several Jewish Congregations together with a new booklet entitled "Israel's Prophetic Destiny"

Website "australianbiblestudents.org"

It was noted that the new website has generated increased interests for literature. It was noted that the searches from overseas include Canada, United Kingdom, France, New Zealand, Poland, Germany and USA. The good news is that people are spending time viewing the different pages. The average monthly views were 500.

Financial Statement 1/10/2018-30/09/2019

Income Categories

Convention	10,802.00
Donations	3,075.97
Interest	69.28
Investment Income Ing	4,508.73
Accrued Income Ing.....	4,535.35
Subscriptions	60.00
Total Income.....	23,051.33

Expense Categories

Advertising	\$ 2,296.00
Book Purchases	0.00
Convention Expenses	12,038.50
Office Expenses	284.85
Post Box	135.00
Postage	3,537.57
Printing.....	1,494.99
Public Liability Insurance	1,370.34
Total Expense.....	21,157.25
Surplus / Loss.....	\$ 1,894.08

Overseas Activities

The BBI acts as agents for the Dawn Bible Association, Pastoral Bible Institute, and the Bible Students Fellowship in England. Where needed the committee members aided these groups as well as for the Bible Resources (Chicago) in the distribution of *How to Study the Bible*. Literature was also provided to newly interested people in Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, Philippines, Korea, and China.

A New Service

A new service was offered to brethren that are spread throughout Australia and around the globe. It is an opportunity for brethren to join four online studies during the week (Friday Night, Saturday Morning and two studies on a Sunday). Five different Brethren take turns in leading the studies. The purpose is not to replace regular class meetings but to provide a

service to isolated brethren and small classes which use this service to supplement their meetings.

We give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the privilege of serving the brethren and the opportunity to bring glory to His name. We ask an interest in your prayers for the continuing work of the Institute.

Berean Bible Institute Inc. Committee

Is Patience Your Friend And Constant Companion?

“Faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13).

Patience is one facet of love and an important one at that. When patience and love are combined it makes a powerful and beautiful combination.

Psalms 37:7 tells us, Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. Verse nine of the same Psalm says, Those who wait on the Lord shall inherit the earth. This is indeed a wonderful promise. Will this be our future?

Being patient is not always easy. At times it can be hard, as it may apply toward others, but also even if nobody is around to see our actions and behavior. This may be even more difficult if one is in a hurry and little things are not going as we want or need them to go. As noted in 1 Peter 2:20, if ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

Are our actions acceptable to God?

When we are being tried and the trial includes a test of patience, do we thank God for the trial and ask Him to help us to be patient? If He does help us, do we rejoice and thank Him for His help?

The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 2:7 for those seeking to be with Christ in glory should observe and note that they who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor, and immortality, [shall receive] eternal life.

Thus, if we add patience to our lives, we will be more acceptable to others and to ourselves, as well as to God and Jesus. May the Lord guide us, and may He help add patience with persistence under his direction and care to His GLORY. Amen!

“Oh, Who Shall Roll the Stone Away?”

A nameless chill pervaded all the air,
On that gray morn, long centuries ago,
As through the city's narrow streets there crept
Two women on their way to Calvary.

The fragrant odors of sweet spices told
Of their sad errand to the tomb of Him
They loved. And as they neared the garden where
Their blessed Lord was laid, a sudden fear
Took hold upon their eager, loving hearts —
The sepulchre was hewn from solid rock,
A great stone had been rolled before the door,
And sealed with Pilate's royal signature —
They felt their weakness, and in anguish cried,
“Oh, who shall roll for us the stone away?”

But faith grew bold, they urged their faltering steps —
When lo! they found an Angel from the Lord
Had rolled away the stone, and sat thereon!

Thus often, when with loving zeal we seek
To serve the Lord, a great fear chills our hearts,
The *door of opportunity seems closed*,
And in our weakness and distress we cry,
“Oh, who shall roll for us the stone away?”
But when with faith and courage we press on

*We find the Angel of the Lord hath gone
Before, and lo! the stone is rolled away!*

POW91

Contacts

Berean Bible Institute, Inc.

is the contact for the following organizations:

Dawn Bible Students Association

Publisher of "The Dawn" Magazine
dawnbible.com/content.htm

Pastoral Bible Institute

Publisher of "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom"
herald-magazine.com/

Bible Fellowship Union

Publisher of the "Bible Study Monthly"
www.biblefellowshipunion.co.uk

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

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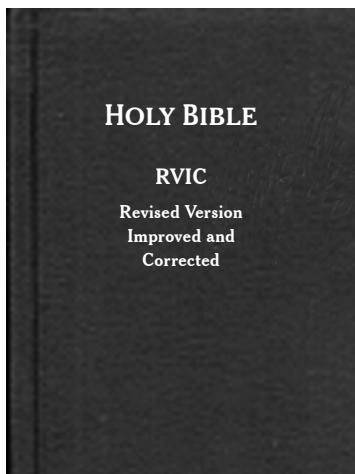
The Bible Teachings

On the Covenants, Mediator, Ransom, Sin
Offering and Atonement.

This book was published by the Berean Bible Institute during the 1970's and set out the teachings from the Bible on topics which so eluded many in the Christian world. The insert in this edition of the Peoples Paper covers the next part of this 274-page book. For Brethren who would like to read more of the content it is available through the Berean Bible Institute's official webpage.

www.australianbiblestudents.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/The-Bible-Teachings-on-the-Covenants2.pdf

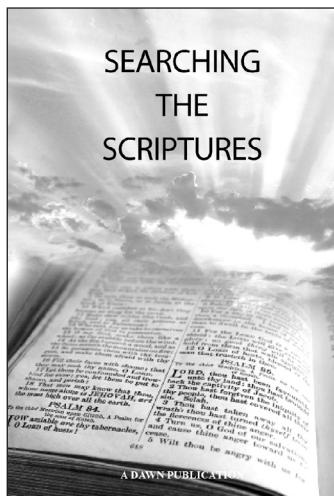
New Bible Available



Revised Version Improved and Corrected

Why another Bible?
The ideal translation
of the Bible
should accurately
preserve the words
and thoughts
expressed in the
original language;
it should also be
understandable
and in as familiar

wording as accuracy allows. This Bible has many footnotes explaining why the translators have made changes to the text which makes it an excellent study Bible. The Bible has been sent to the printer and should be available in May 2020. If you interested in more information, contact the BBI Inc.



Free Book Offer

Searching the Scriptures

This 350-page book examines the power of the scriptures in bringing forth God's wonderful plan of the ages in simplicity and in truth.

The Date of Memorial

Tuesday 7th April 2020 (14 Nisan) after 6 pm

For details on locations where the memorial will be held in Australia, email enquirybbi@gmail.com
If you are isolated or unable to attend in person, you can contact the Berean Bible Institute for a Memorial Kit that will be provided free of charge.



Conventions

Sydney Bible Students Convention

May 8-10, 2020

For more information, Email —
australianbiblestudents@gmail.com

Alexandra Headlands Convention

September 25-27, 2020

For more information
Email: darryn.greenhalgh@hotmail.com

The Bible Teachings (Part Six)

On the Covenants — Mediator — Ransom — Sin Offering — Atonement

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Scriptures Leave No Doubt About Church Sharing Jesus' "Cup"

However, some may oppose this and claim that we do not drink, do not partake of the sufferings of Christ, the Scriptures leave no doubt about the matter. They declare of the symbolic Cup that Jesus, after He had supped, gave it to His disciples, saying, "Drink ye all of it" — not only must all partake of my Cup who would be my disciples, but drink all of it, leave none of it. The drinking of the Lord's cup, the sharing of His sacrifice, must all be accomplished during this Gospel Age; none of it is to be left for the future. There will be no sufferings of Christ during the Millennium; there will be no drinking of this Cup. By that time "the glory to follow" will have been ushered in, and under the reign of righteousness thus instituted there will be no sufferings for righteousness' sake, but only for evil doing, because the reign of righteousness will have commenced.

Sharing Christ's Glory Depends Upon Sharing His "Cup"

Let us remember, moreover, the Lord's words to the other disciples who made special request that they might sit with Him on His throne, the one on His right hand and the other on His left. He said, "Ye know not what ye ask; can ye drink of the Cup that I drink of?" Only those who drink of His Cup may sit with Him in His throne; only those who share in the sufferings of Christ will share in His glory, honour and immortality; only those who are thus partakers with Him are members of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, through which the blessings will pass to the Natural Seed in due time, and through them to all the families of the earth. "If we be Christ's (His disciples indeed), then are ye Abraham's Seed and heirs according to the promise"— according to the highest feature of that promise, the spiritual feature (Galatians 3:29).

"Mercy Through Your Mercy"

We have already shown from the Scriptures that it is part of the Divine program that the natural seed of Abraham shall receive its blessings through the Spiritual Seed— Messiah, the Head and Church His Body. We have already shown that this Great One is to be the Mediator of the New (Law) Covenant, which will bring to Israel actually the blessings hoped for under the old law Covenant, of which Moses was the mediator. We have seen how and why this Spiritual Messiah, Head and Body, will be able to do for Israel and all who come under that New (Law) Covenant far better things than Moses, mediator of the old

law Covenant could do. We have seen that the New Mediator has something to present to Justice on behalf of Israel — something to give to Israel; namely, earthly blessings, earthly rights, earthly restitution to all that was lost in Adam. We see that these were secured by Jesus through keeping the law; that He surrendered them, or sacrificed them in His obedient death, and that He gave them to the household of faith during this Gospel Age on condition that these earthly blessings should not be retained but sacrificed by all whom He would accept as members. How we see that it is these same earthly blessings that are to be dispensed during the Millennial Age, first to Israel and, secondly, to all people under the New (Law) Covenant.

All Israel Shall Be Saved

Notice how the Apostle Paul states this matter clearly, and concisely in few words in Romans 11:25-36. There he tells us that we should think not of Israel as being cast off forever, but merely disfavoured of God for a limited period— during the time of the calling, approving and acceptance of the elect number of spiritual Israel, whose first members were gathered from the Jewish nation and whose completeness is to be made up from amongst the Gentiles. He tells us that when this elect number of Spiritual Israel is complete, God's favour will return to Natural Israel, "Jacob," and then "All Israel shall be saved"— recovered from the blindness and stumbling which came upon them when God thrust them aside until first Spiritual Israel should be gathered. The Apostle explains that then God will fulfil His promise to Israel: "For this is my Covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Thus, the Apostle shows that the New (Law) Covenant promised to Israel, in which their sins will be cancelled and remembered no more, comes at the close of the Gospel Age and not at its beginning.

The Deliverer Must Be Born

The Apostle explains (verse 26) that before the New (Law) Covenant with Israel could become effective the Deliverer must come out of Zion; for it will be He that shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Zion is another name for the New Jerusalem, of which the Apostle says, she is the mother of us all. Zion was typically represented in Sarah, Abraham's wife, who was the mother of Isaac. Isaac was a type of Christ— of Jesus the Head and the Church His Body; as the Apostle declared, "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" — the Seed of Abraham (Galatians 4:28). Zion was again typified by Rachel, Jacob's wife, and the two classes of the Church were represented in her two sons, the first of whom, Joseph, was a child

of promise, the second the child of tribulation—Benjamin. Joseph, who came to the throne of Egypt through much tribulation, typified the Christ, Head and Body. Benjamin, his brother, born of the same mother, the same Covenant, did not reach the throne, but typified the “great company” class, who will have a special relationship and nearness to the Deliverer. Benjamin’s name, “Son of my pain” (Benoni), shows his identity with the “great company”; his mother died in the travail of his birth.

This is again expressed by the prophecy which says, “Before she (Zion) travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to birth (the Head) and not cause to bring forth? (the Body)” (Isaiah 66:7-9).

Entire Gospel Age Required for Birth of Great Deliverer

Zion brought forth the Lord, the Head of the Church, the Head of the Great Deliverer, eighteen centuries ago. Very shortly all the members of His Body will come forth, similarly born from the dead in the “first resurrection.” Thus shall a nation be born at once to the spirit plane, “a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a Peculiar People” distinctly separate from all others of God’s creatures, partakers of the divine nature, higher than angels and men. Then in a great time of trouble the “Great Company” will be born to the spirit plane, though not to the throne and not to the divine nature. Thus, the spiritual children of Zion will be complete, and the blessing will turn to natural Israel.

Israel to be Blessed by Deliverer With Great Company as Servants

The Deliverer born out of Zion, the Christ with the “Great Company” as servants or ministers of the great God, shall begin the work of blessing “Jacob”—natural Israel.

Discerning these things, it is for all who have named the name of Christ, for all who have been accepted as members of His Body and inducted into this “mystery,” to be earnest, to be zealous, in making their calling and election sure, that they may not only come into the Body of Christ, but by obedience to the instructions of the Head they may abide in Him and grow in grace and in His character likeness, and be prepared for birth to the plane of glory, that they may have a share in the work of the Kingdom, making effective to Israel and to the world the New (Law) Covenant for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

They Are Not All Israelites

The blessings of the New (Law) Covenant are distinctly shown to be Israelitish. But this will not hinder these blessings from extending to all nations and peoples and kindreds and tongues. By circumcision of the heart, all who will may come into the Holy Nation which Israel will then be. Thus, it is

written in the prophets, “The law shall go forth of Zion (the heavenly Kingdom), and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (the earthly phase of the Kingdom). “And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths” (Micah 4:2). Thus, all through the Millennial Age Abraham’s Seed will be increasing, in harmony with the prophecy, “I have constituted thee a father of many nations.”

Faith Necessary for Blessing Under New Covenant

But it would be a mistake for us to suppose that God’s blessing under the New (Law) Covenant will come to the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, merely along fleshly lines. On the contrary, we are to suppose that the blessing of the New Covenant will apply first to Abraham and his natural seed who had his characteristics of faith and obedience, and who were developed or proved in the past. St. Paul refers to these, saying, “These all died in faith, without having received the things promised them, God having provided some better thing for us (the Church, Spiritual Israel), that they without us should not be made perfect” (Hebrews 11:40).

Blessings of New Covenant to Ancient Worthies First

“They shall obtain mercy through your mercy,” as the Apostle explains (Romans 11:31). It will, of course, be God’s mercy, but through Jesus Christ, and it will of course be of Christ Jesus, but through the Church—“your mercy.” Thus, will the blessings of God be passed on. The blessings coming to the Ancient Worthies will not be for themselves alone but be passed on by them in turn to all who will come to the faith and obedience of Abraham. Undoubtedly at first this class of faithful ones will consist chiefly of the natural Israelites, but later, as we have shown, it will consist of many people, of many tongues, and of many nationalities. All of these, enlightened by the great Son of righteousness, will be brought to know the great Messiah, and to understand the principles of righteousness involved in the laws of the great Jehovah. These the new Mediator will most clearly set forth to all, until every knee shall bow and every tongue confess and “the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the water covers the great deep, and until there shall be no need for any to say to the neighbour or to the brother, Know thou the Lord, because all shall know Him from the least unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.”

The Necessity for the New Covenant

If the Abrahamic Covenant was all-comprehensive, and included all the blessings which God intended, why was it necessary or expedient to add either the old law Covenant or the New (Law) Covenant? We have already considered the value of the old law Covenant as an addition to the Abrahamic Covenant, hence now we confine ourselves to the consideration of the advantage gained by the addition of the New (Law) Covenant.

Faith Like Abraham's Is necessary

When we read that "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and that Abraham pleased God by reason of his faith, we may know assuredly that none could be acceptable to God as Abraham's seed except such as had similar faith to his. Additionally, as God tested Abraham's faith, and obliged him to prove it by works of obedience, so we may be sure it would be with all who ever will be acceptable to God — that as Abraham's seed they also should have faith attested by works.

A Little Flock

The comparatively few who exercised faith, and wrought righteousness in harmony therewith, up to the time of Christ, are reviewed by the Apostle in Hebrews 11. These were few indeed as compared with the millions of their time. These alone, therefore, could be counted as participants in God's favour because of Abrahamic faith and obedience. During the Gospel Age a similarly small class has been gathered out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue — called by the Gospel message, and tried and proved by the narrowness of the way of obedience. These consecrated ones, and no others, of this age could be acceptable to God for His blessing of eternal life, because these alone manifested the faith and the obedience exemplified in Abraham.

Result If Christ's Work Had Been Limited to Gospel Age

So, then, we see that if Christ, after redeeming the world, had merely sought out of it such as could exercise Abrahamic faith and obedience, and had blessed these with eternal life, the sum total of His work would have been comparatively small. He would have been on the spiritual plane and the others would have received from Him the blessing of restitution, and nothing more.

Length and Breadth

But note the breadth and length and height and depth of the Divine Wisdom and Grace, which provided a more stupendous plan. Under its provision the "Little Flock" becomes joint heirs with Christ in the heavenly Kingdom as the Royal Priesthood, and the "Great Company" become the spiritual assistants of that Priesthood — the antitypical Levites. And, additionally, by the New Covenant arrangement the great Prophet, Priest, King, Judge, becomes the Mediator between God and the world of mankind in general. He will not deal with them merely on the basis of faith, because in their fallen condition few indeed could be benefited thereby, because few could exercise the necessary faith and obedience. Indeed, as we have seen, the majority of those capable of exercising faith and obedience have already been found. The New Covenant takes over Israel through the Ancient Worthies and incidentally all of that nation and all of every nation willing, under the enlightening influences of the Millennial Kingdom, to come into accord with the Mediator and to be taught

of Him. He will enforce obedience, to the intent that the fallen and degraded members of the race may learn what righteousness is and what justice and love are. He will exemplify to them the rewards of obedience and the penalties of disobedience, that they may learn the benefit of righteousness — and all come to a knowledge of God, not by faith merely, but by demonstrations. It will be after the Millennial Kingdom shall have lifted mankind out of degradation and sin, out of imperfection of mind and morals, that their final testing will come.

God's Law Will Stand Forever

God's law will stand forever. Only the willing and obedient will be partakers of the grace of life eternal; all others will die the "Second Death." But we have every reason to believe that as a result of the Millennial Kingdom, the reign of righteousness, the restitution work, the enlightenment of mankind, the bringing of all to a knowledge of the Truth, many will learn righteousness and become servants thereof, and in full accord with the Divine Law; come to love God with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their being, with all their strength, and their neighbour as themselves.

Value of the New Covenant

Thus, we see how much more can be accomplished by the Seed of Abraham, the Christ, Head and Body, through the method adopted by the dealing of the New (Law) Covenant, and the establishment of the Kingdom, than could have been accomplished without the New Covenant, under the Abrahamic Covenant alone with its terms of faith and obedience.

Apostle Paul Enthusiastic Over God's Plan

Is it any wonder that after having pictured this matter of the rejection of natural Israel, the gathering of spiritual Israel, and the subsequent giving of God's blessings, through Spiritual Israel to reclaim natural Israel, the Apostle should become enthusiastic? Is it any wonder that he concludes with the exclamation, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Who knew of this wonderful, deep, hidden plan of Jehovah? Who counselled Him to make it thus? The Apostle's conclusion is that such depths of wisdom and knowledge and grace prove that the plan of God is superhuman; that no man ever thought out this plan. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than man's ways! Of Him, and through Him, and by Him, are all these things and to Him be glory forever (Z1909, 243).

ANCIENT WORTHIES UNDER FAITH COVENANT

The question may arise, under what Covenant are the Ancient Worthies acceptable with God? Since they died before Christ and the opportunities of spiritual begetting, they were not favoured with the high calling to membership in the Body of Christ, the elect Church. This the Apostle emphasized in Hebrews 11:39,40.

He informs us that they "pleased God," but that apart from us, The Christ, they shall not be made perfect. In the Divine order the Church is to be the first fruits of God's creatures. "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures" (James 1:18). Notice further that the Apostle's list of these includes Abel and Enoch, before the flood, and before even the Abrahamic Covenant was made. It also includes some who lived during the period of the law Covenant, and who were therefore under it. How, then, should we classify these, as respects the three great Covenants, represented by Sarah, Hagar and Keturah?

Distinction Between Abrahamic and Law Covenants

The matter becomes very simple when we recognise the prime distinction between the Abrahamic Covenant and the law Covenant that was added to it. The first was of faith, not without works. The second was of works, not without faith. As the Apostle says, the conditions of the law Covenant were, "He that doeth these things shall live by them" (Romans 10:5). We are also reminded that the Sarah Covenant is of faith and not of works, but that where the faith is right, the works will "attest" the faith, even though they be not perfect; and that if judged by our works we would be condemned. The entire Jewish nation failed in the Covenant of "works of the law;" yet a few individuals of that nation, rising by their faith superior to that Covenant, trusted not in it, but to the original Covenant of Mercy, Grace—the Sarah Covenant. These are the Ancient Worthies mentioned by the Apostle. He specifies that it was by faith they did and endured. According to their works they were condemned by the law Covenant, but according to their faith they were acceptable to God, along the lines of the Sarah Covenant, even though they could not receive their blessing under it, until first the promised Seed should come and the blood of that Covenant be shed. Similarly, Enoch and Abel, because of their faith, were acceptable to God and listed with the faithful of the law Covenant, as in Divine favour, and subject to the blessing of the Sarah Covenant, because, although they lived before Abraham, they trusted God for the grace which He is willing to bestow upon those who love Him and seek His favour.

New Covenant a NEW Law Covenant

The New Covenant will really be a New Law Covenant, or a New Covenant of works of the law. The old or first law Covenant was faulty and insufficient for Israel, not because the Divine law upon which it was based was faulty, nor because it was an unreasonable demand, but because men were imperfect, "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," and already under a death sentence, because of Adam's transgression. The law Covenant had in Moses a faithful mediator, loyal both to God and to the Israelites, but he was incapable

because his own life was forfeited. God has made provision, therefore, that a New Law Covenant take the place of the Old, and has provided a New Mediator, who has already given His life as a redemption price — Jesus, the Head, and the Church, the Body.

The finish of the sacrifice is in sight. The Head and many of His members have already, as New Creatures, passed beyond the veil. Soon the last member of the Body will have been thus "changed" and then the blood of the New Covenant will be sprinkled on behalf of "the sins of all the people" — the people of the Covenant, Israel, with an open door for all peoples to become sharers of their New Covenant blessings, even as we (Gentiles) are now privileged to share the Sarah Covenant blessings which belonged "to the Jew first." That sprinkling will be acceptable to God and efficacious for the blotting out of the sins of the whole world. This is abundantly attested in the Scriptures and in the types of these "better sacrifices" (Hebrews 9:23).

Great Prophet, Priest, Judge, King — Head and Members Cooperate

Forthwith the Great Prophet, Head and members; the Great Priest, Head and members; the Great Judge, Head and members; the Great King, Head and members, will begin dealing with Israel and through Israel with the world. They will rule, bless, instruct and uplift so many as are willing, "And it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hearken to that Prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:23). The New Law Covenant will operate exactly as the Old Law Covenant did, except that the "better sacrifices" sealing it will be fully efficacious, and not need to be repeated from year to year; and the power and glory of its Mediator will be superior, and the results of His works correspondingly great and lasting.

New Covenant a Covenant of Works

This is testified to additionally by the statement of Revelation, which pictures the Millennial epoch, with its great white throne of justice and mercy, before which all the dead, small and great, will stand — for trial; not to see whether they were sinners or not, for that is conceded. All were sinners. Nor will it be to see whether or not God is willing to forgive them, for that is conceded — the sacrifice of Christ will then have been accepted as a full "satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." Their judgment or trial, like ours, will be to determine whether or not they will come into fullest harmony with God, and have His blessing of joy and eternal life, or, otherwise, be "destroyed from amongst the people." They will not be judged according to their faith, because they will be under the New Covenant of law and works. As it is written, "They were judged every man, according to their works" (Revelation 20:13).