



Volume XLVI No. 4 MELBOURNE, AUGUST—SEPTEMBER 1963 Price— Sixpence

## The Great Things of God.

THIS is indeed an important subject. From “Psa. 19:1-4, in Leeser’s translation, we read, —”The heavens relate the glory of God, and the expanse telleth of the works of his hands. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech, there are no words, their voice is not heard, but their melody extendeth through all the earth, and to the end of the world their words.” These are lovely words indeed, referring to God’s wonderful noiseless creation, the heavens and the earth. Think of the mighty planets going their course without ostentation or show or commotion of any kind. It is an example indeed, showing God’s mighty works in such a marvellous way that we are able to behold with our eyes.

In agreement with the Psalmist’s words are the thoughts in the hymn “The heav’ns declare Thy Glory, Lord,

Through all the realms of boundless space.  
The soaring mind may roam abroad,  
And there Thy power and wisdom trace.  
But not alone do worlds of light,

And earth, display Thy grand designs; - ’Tis when our eyes behold Thy Word We read Thy name in fairest lines.”

Yes, God’s Word, His great gift to us, is the means of revealing and manifesting His wonderful character — His justice, love, mercy and power — to us, His human family, here on earth. So, indeed, we read His name in fairest lines when our eyes behold His Word, and beholding, of course, intelligently, in a way we are able to see the great Plan of God linked together, as it were, step by step through the ages.

Thinking of the Psalmist’s declaration of praise and thanksgiving for the Lord’s great goodness, speaking for himself and also prophetically of the David class of this Gospel Age, let us read from Psa. 31:19. “Oh how great is thy goodness, ‘which thou hast laid up for them that fear (reverence) thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men.” We should trust not in princes of this world, but in the Lord. “Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.” This is a helpful message of comfort and encouragement from the Psalmist, who had the spirit of God in his heart, and poured out these lovely words of praise and thanksgiving to God.

Further, from Psa. 32:1, 2, we read —’Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.” We have this lovely passage quoted in the New Testament too, revealing the great favor and blessedness of those who receive justification by faith as they trust fully in the merit of Christ. “Blessed is the man whose sin is covered.”

The Lamentations of Jeremiah also has a helpful message for us, as we read,—”It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.” (Lam. 3:22-26.) Surely this is a lovely message for us, that the Lord’s compassions fail not ; they are new every morning. “Great is thy faithfulness.”

The meaning of the Hebrew word from which we derive our English word “great” is in keeping with our idea of what the word means. It means, “Abundant — in quantity, size, age, number, rank and quality.” “Great is Thy faithfulness,”

indeed! Meditating on the words —"It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed," our minds think upon the greatest of God's abundant blessings to us. This we find revealed in the symbols of Revelation in chapter 5:6—"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne . . . stood a Lamb as it had been slain." We well know this lovely symbol pictures "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Further, in Rev. 13:8, we read of the "book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Just to think of that—"the Lamb slain from the of the world," in God's GREAT Plan of the Ages. In other words, God determined that His Son should provide the sacrifice for fallen humanity, even when there were no human beings at all. God's greatness was able to discern that man would disobey and fall, that the rest of mankind would come forth "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," and God's love and mercy, on the basis of His justice, reached out even at that time to provide the means of salvation. Surely this is the greatest gift, the greatest truth that any have been able to appreciate and grasp during the whole history of mankind; that Jesus was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," in God's wonderful Plan of salvation.

In James 1:17 we have a helpful thought also. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." What a wonderful consolation to know that once God makes a promise, it is absolutely sure of fulfilment to all eternity! God determined away back there at the foundation of the world that He would provide this great sacrifice, His only Beloved Son, and there is no shadow of turning in the whole transaction, from beginning to end. We find that the ancient prophets definitely foretold the events of our Lord's first advent,—that Messiah would come to Israel, be rejected, be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, be mocked and contradicted in every possible way, and finally crucified. Also in the prophets we find His resurrection foretold. We are assured by both the Old and New Testaments that these things actually happened; we know of the verity of these things. They are the great things of God that have been fulfilled. God tells us of many great things yet to come to pass, and we are just as sure of their being fulfilled as we know of the past things being accomplished. That is the assurance we have from James,—"Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

The Father of lights will lighten every man who cometh into the world, in due time. He lit up the whole universe, as it were, when He said, "Let there be light." The Lord is also shining in a very marked manner into the hearts of those who come to Him now. Later on everyone will know Him, from the least to the greatest. All these things are included in this message in James. Amongst all the good and perfect gifts from above, from the Father of lights, we know His best and greatest gift was His gift of Jesus to be the Saviour of the world.

In Jude 3 we have an instructive thought in connection with God's greatest gift. "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." We may ask, What is common about the wonderful salvation through the sacrifice of Christ? "This common salvation." Nothing, indeed! But it is provided for very common people; that is fallen people. The meaning of the word "common" is—"That which is shared by all, profane." "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." This "common salvation" is a salvation for all people who have come short in the sight of God. So Jude is telling us about this great provision for all mankind—the "general salvation" is the term we would now use. On the basis of God's rich provision for the whole human race, Jude exhorts us to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints —the hope of the heavenly inheritance for those to whom he wrote in his day, and to us in our lifetime.

This faith once delivered to the saints is beautifully presented to us by Paul in 1 Cor. 15:1-4,—"Moreover, brethren,

I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you . . . by which also ye are saved . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." What a wonderful presentation from Paul! Hence we see in Rev. 14:1, this Lamb of God exalted to Mount Zion above, because He was faithful unto death. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." This is a lovely picture of the victorious Lamb of God. Of course, when John wrote this, the Lord was exalted to the right hand of the Father, in the express image of the Father's person.

The Lamb pictured is to connect it with the Lamb of God, the great sacrifice of Christ, so there is no mistaking this message regarding the greatest of all God's gifts.

And with Him are these 144,000, having the Father's name written in their foreheads. What of this 144,000? The Apostle, in Eph. 1:3-5, states—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children (sonship) by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Just to think of that,—God having determined that there should be this Bride of Christ, those who would be worthy to be associates with Christ in

the wonderful kingdom reign. What a wonderful inspiration it is for those who are able to grasp the privilege and so run as to obtain, by the Lord's grace, a place in this wonderful called-out class,—”chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” Not in our own worthiness, but in the worthiness of Christ. That is why it is said they are chosen in Him; in His perfection. His perfection covers them so long as their hearts are really devoted and they are doing their best to walk in the steps of the Master who has gone before.

4 “Having predestinated us.” Some people have the idea that each individual of mankind is predestinated from birth to be either saved or lost. Of course that is not Scripturally true; what the Apostle is saying here is that the Lord has predestinated a class. We see this 144,000 on Mount Zion—He has predestinated that there should be that number of sons in the Bride class, as well as the Great Company. These are predestinated as a class. Who is going to make up this class? “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” The selection of this class is “according to the good pleasure of his will.” Of course it is His good pleasure. “The Father himself loveth you.” “Fear not, little flock, it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” It is the Father's delight that there should be associated with His dear Son this company selected from humanity, from the lengths and breadths of the whole world, over about 2,000 years of this Gospel Age. Some people may say, Why only 2,000 years? What about the previous 4,000 years of human history? Christ was the first one to be begotten to the heavenly kingdom, and only since that time has the invitation gone out to any to be associated with Him in this wonderful high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This is God's good pleasure; this is His will. Happy are we if we accept God's will and devote our lives to His service, to the privileges He grants us, that we may by His grace be able to overcome and to be associated with our Lord in this Kingdom to come.

In 1 Pet. 1:2-9 there is another lovely presentation from another Apostle, in agreement, of course, with the others. Here Peter is writing to those who are “elect according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ . . . which according to his (God's) abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” Indeed, it is abundant mercy! As we saw from Lamentations, it is only because of His mercy that we have any hope at all. This is the spiritual hope, which is invigorating, inspiring. “As I live, ye shall live also,” our Lord declared. And this begetting is “to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time,” Could anything be more beautifully expressed? This language, like Paul's, is wonderfully presenting the spiritual truths to us that we may realise how true and gracious they are. There is no variableness or shadow of turning with these promises. (See also verses 6-9.) If this message does not touch the hearts of those who are called of God, what will? There must also be the spirit of God to put life into the message, and this is what the Lord's people receive. They receive His spirit, and that makes them really thrilled with this message, this great salvation of God.

2 Cor. 1:21, 22 is also a helpful message. Paul says, “Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts.” Yes, Paul is stating that the members of this church are sons of God ; not sons of Jesus. No, this is a direct new creation of God. God is the great Heavenly Father, and our Lord said prior to His ascension, “I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God,” linking His disciples with Himself in respect of their relationship to the Heavenly Father above. That is a lovely thought, indeed. So we have it here ; it is God who anointed us, and has also sealed us. God seals with the holy spirit in the hearts and minds of His children, so that they may belong to Him more and more as they progress along the Christian way. They are His to begin with, but He wants them to become more and more devoted to Him.

We have a foretaste, or prepayment, of the spirit. We read of our Lord, that God gave not the spirit by measure unto Him. No, He gave it to the Lord Jesus in full measure, but He is not able to do the same to His imperfect followers.

But He is able to implant more and more of His spirit into the hearts which are more and more yielded to Him.

In John 17:6-11 we have part of our Lord's prayer to the Father. After instituting the Memorial of His death He gave those lovely chapters of John 14, 15 and 16 to His disciples, and now His wonderful prayer to God is so helpfully recorded too. “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gayest me out of the world.” He manifested Jehovah's name, representing the character of God. The great attributes of God which make up His character are indicated here. “Thine they were and thou gayest them me ; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.” They knew that the great Eternal One above was the power behind all that the Lord said and did. All His teachings, miracles, doctrines, were not His own, but the Father's. He had the Father dwelling in Him, so He was able to interpret everything the Father desired of Him. “For I have given unto them the words which thou gayest me ; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.” How often He told His disciples and the multitude that He was the “living bread” that came down from heaven! In other words, they could appreciate the merit of Christ and enter into full consecration, and by the Lord's favor, pass from death unto life, being translated from the kingdom of darkness into the

kingdom of God's dear Son. "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." At that time our Lord was not praying for the world. The world's time will come later. Even now, the Lord is not dealing particularly with the world; He has left them to *go* their way and have their experiences with the sinfulness of sin. At that time He was praying for His disciples,— "For they are thine." They belonged to God. "And all mine 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." In a few hours He would be taken, betrayed, taken before the Jewish council and finally condemned and crucified. "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." One in heart, one in purpose, one in ambition, one in spirit; this lovely oneness of heart is indicated here, and the Lord is praying that it should be so between His followers as it was between Himself and the Father. What a oneness it was ! Surely the great things the Lord was communicating here reached into the hearts of the disciples ! With His glorious resurrection and the receiving of the holy spirit, they were so invigorated, so possessed and guided by the spirit of God, that nothing could hinder them in the slightest. That is surely the heart condition also of all who truly love the Lord today.

When we meditate on the greatness of God's compassion and love in this wonderful call of the Church to be the Bride or body of Christ, we truly do not wonder that the Apostle described it in Heb. 2:3, as "so great salvation." "So great." "So great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." The meaning of the Greek word translated "great" in this text in Hebrews is—"in magnitude, so vast." It fills us with wonder, love and praise, when we comprehend the fact that God has been drawing out, during this Gospel Age, a people for His name who would walk in the footsteps of Christ, and be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Great as were the prophets of olden times, they were not invited to inherit this "so great salvation." They were invited to an earthly inheritance, which will be not as great as the spiritual kingdom, but this earthly phase of the kingdom will also manifest forth the goodness and condescension of God.

To help the called ones gain this "so great salvation" we have some wonderful assistance, as described in 1 John 2:1. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." We have an Advocate, one standing alongside to assist. This is a lovely thought! Not one who is a Mediator, who needs to bring together two opposing parties, but an Advocate who stands alongside to assist, to make up for shortcomings; one who makes intercession. That is just what we need along the way, a sympathetic High Priest, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." Surely it is a great privilege to remember this, that our prayers are offered through the merit of Christ, this Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, in the Father's plan "slain from the foundation of the world," but now on Mount Zion, in glory.

Heb. 2:16, reading from Weymouth's translation, gives us a helpful thought in this connection. "For assuredly it is not to angels that he is continually reaching a helping hand, but it is to the descendants of Abraham." We know who the descendants of Abraham are from the context of this chapter in Hebrews, and clearly described in Gal. 3:29,— "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." So it is not only "so great salvation," but so great assistance also, -which God has provided for all who are seeking to so run as to obtain the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

In addition to the gracious heavenly calling, how thankful we are that God has provided in His Plan for some great things for all mankind also. There would be no constraining desire to serve God if all the rest of humanity were left out of His plan. When we gain an insight into the plan of God, probably one of the first things that appeals, before we are able to grasp spiritual things, is the fact that He has provided for the restitution of all things. This appeals to our hearts; it satisfies our longings as nothing else could do. How surprising to find some today still proclaiming the dark- age doctrines of demons, hell fire, etc. But when we find that the things God has in store for humanity are also going to be wonderful, even a paradise restored, surely it gives us a desire to know more about such a Heavenly Father who has such good things for humanity, as well as the good things for His called-out people of the Gospel Age. We can really trust and worship God when we know He has provided for every member of the human race, as clearly declared by the Apostle—"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:22.) What each one does with their life in the resurrection day will depend upon their own will, their own desire for good or evil. God will not force His blessings upon anyone. He does not press His spiritual blessings on any, nor will He do so with the earthly blessings in the next age ; they will be for those who delight to take them from His hand, so to speak.

From Isa. 11 we see that the spirit of God, through His great Son above, will come down and influence the world at large. "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots." This is indicating the great Messiah. "And the spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." (Note verses 1-9 in this 11th chapter of Isaiah.) It is very beautiful language, showing that the Lord's judgment shall be a righteous one. He will lay justice to the line, and righteousness to the plummet. (See also Acts 17:31.) "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.) Could there be anything more expressive? These things could not be more plainly presented to us. God's glory will enter all hearts, and every one will have a full opportunity to gain everlasting life on the restored earth, none being overlooked in the slightest.

In Romans 11, from verse 25 onwards, we have a message which thrills us again respecting both the heavenly and earthly great things. "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery . . . that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." What a wonderful mystery, this taking out of a people for God's name—breaking off the natural branches and grafting in the wild branches. (Rom. 11:17- 20.) The fulness of the Gentiles, of the Bride class, is being made up by as many as the Lord our God shall call, and only those our God shall call. After this fulness comes in, we see from verse 26, "And so all Israel shall be saved," come back to have the full opportunity of knowing the Lord in the earthly kingdom. What they do with that life, will depend upon their obedience. If they obey, they will progress on to perfect life. "As it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." He will be manifest out of Zion, the heavenly throne of the Lord. "For this is my covenant (the New Covenant to be made with natural Israel) unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel (the high calling), they are enemies for your sakes (you Gentiles) ; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." God made promises to the "fathers" that He would give them all these earthly blessings. "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." As we saw in James—there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. God will not repent in respect of His promises to Israel, neither will He do so respecting the heavenly calling.

Verse 30, "For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief ; even so have these also, now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." Yes, through the mercy of the Church Israel will obtain mercy. Through the mercy of Israel the other nations will obtain mercy. Those who will not pass it on, will not have it for themselves. That is God's way of dealing with us, and with all mankind. Each one who passes on the blessings they receive from the hand of God, shall be blessed again. "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. 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!" (See also verses 34-36.) What a wonderful message we have here from Paul! It is language which surely expresses the excellence of this great Plan. He tries to convey from his heart the immensity, the greatness of God's plan which will fulfil the desires of all hearts when they receive from the Lord that which He has provided for them.

The lovely words of Eph. 1:10 so beautifully reveal the consummation of the plan of the ages,—"That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth ; even in him." May we be the more encouraged as we meditate on these great things of God—the great things God has done for us, the great things yet to be fulfilled for us; and the great things He has promised to do for all the families of the earth in due time, all through the sacrifice of our dear Saviour.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM. .

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria Australia

While it is our intention that these 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.

## Undenominational Denominations.

RECENTLY one of our brethren related an incident which prompts these thoughts on the subject of the heading of this article. He remarked that some literature had been forwarded to a minister of religion, thinking it may be helpful, and in reply, amongst other statements, the following opinion was received from the minister. "These undenominational denominations seem to iron out some of the difficulties, but to me they seem to create others."

This is a kindly concession on the part of the minister to admit that bodies of Christians claiming to be undenominational, and quite separate from the churches of which he is a representative, were able to "iron out some of the difficulties" facing people today. Just what difficulties are implied as being "ironed out" is not revealed, but to admit something being accomplished apart from the denominational churches shows quite a healthy outlook.

The further part of the minister's statement, "To me they seem to create others," is quite understandable from his viewpoint, but which is apparently not so healthy respecting his appreciation of Bible truths. Quite often friends have related that after becoming interested in the messages over the air, or read in the literature distributed, and have questioned their ministers about the particular subjects, such questions are not well received: Indeed, time and again such friends have mentioned that as the questioning continued, the visits from the ministers became fewer—the questions on the Bible were certainly creating difficulties for the ministers. What should have been an appreciation of the interest shown by the questioners was rather an indication of resentment. Why should this be? The obvious answer is that the questions were stirring up some difficulties with the church creeds—those traditions formulated often hundreds of years ago and not based on Bible truth. How differently, the Apostle advises those who claim to be teachers of the Bible, by his words—"Sanctify, the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear (reverence)." (1 Pet. 3:15.)

The fact that the term "undenominational denomination" was used to describe the movement responsible for the literature forwarded to the minister is not a serious reflection. It seems rather like a concession that the movement was not as denominational as the denominational churches. Names given to any movement for the dissemination of teachings are not as important as the teachings themselves. Those claiming to be undenominational should certainly seek to proclaim only that which can be verified from the Scriptures. The prophet Isaiah, speaking for the Lord, gives us sound advice—"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." And again,—"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men." (Isa. 8:20; 29:13.)

The last quoted text is of particular importance with reference to the dark-age theory of eternal torment. Strange as it may seem in this enlightened period of the age, this "precept of men" is still proclaimed in various quarters, and which brings dishonor on the Lord's name and cause. Also, even where this doctrine of demons is no longer preached in the denominational churches their creeds maintain that it is truth. No wonder the minister above mentioned thinks the undenominational denominations create some "difficulties" when they seek to clarify such errors in the minds of people who are alert enough to desire help in that direction. Of course, the majority of people are fast asleep as respects Bible truth, and will remain so until the enlightenment of the Millennial Age, when "God will have all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth"—in the earthly kingdom. (1 Tim. 2:4-6.)

The introduction and progress of undenominational movements are certainly of much interest to Bible students, and some details are available respecting the efforts of sincere servants of the Lord in Australia over more than 70 years past. One of our elderly brethren relates that when a child, and living in one of Melbourne's suburbs, her parents, who were then in the Methodist Church, became interested in the preaching of one, a Mr. Miles Grant, about the year 1893. Mr. Grant, then an elderly man, had come from U.S.A., and made a special effort in preaching the truth concerning hell and the trinity. He had undoubtedly received the Bible truth on these subjects, possibly from the teachings of the author of "The Divine Plan of the Ages" whose messages were proclaimed throughout America and other lands from some time prior to and since 1880. So effective was the preaching of Mr. Grant, as he pointed out the truths of the Bible, that some "difficulties" were certainly created in the churches, for some families were expelled because they attended the meetings where the light of truth was to be found. Those who thus left the churches were also openly declared as "heretics" by those still lulled to sleep by the church creeds. Mr. Grant did not stay long in Melbourne, apparently being on a travelling mission, but the impressions he made and the benefits received by those who thought and studied for themselves were appreciated.

Some years after Mr. Grant's mission in Melbourne, about the years 1903-4, some of the overseas brethren came to Australia with supplies of "The Divine Plan of the Ages" and succeeding volumes, and distributed these helpful "Studies in the Scriptures" throughout the main cities of this land. Amongst these colporteurs was the late Brother

Nicholson, well known to many of the brethren in Australia. This worthy effort undoubtedly laid the foundation for the undenominational work in Australia, for in succeeding years those books found their way into the hands of many sincere folks who were longing for the light of truth—all overruled of the Lord then, and since, in this harvest period of the Gospel Age.

Shortly after the visit by the colporteurs an office was established in Melbourne, and in the year 1909 Brother Nicholson was requested by Brother Russell in U.S.A., to return to Australia and take over the work with the assistance of other willing helpers. Meetings were established in each of the Australian States, and helpful gatherings for the study of the Bible from an undenominational standpoint were conducted, in similar manner to our gatherings today. Periodical conventions were commenced, and which have also continued with great benefit to our time. In 1914-15 the Photo-Drama of Creation, a beautifully arranged film covering the whole plan of the ages, comprising four two-hour parts was received from U.S.A., and shown throughout Australia and New Zealand, creating much interest. A number of friends were brought into the truth by this wonderful presentation for those days.

With the change in the teachings and spirit of the work in America and other lands, following the passing of Brother Russell in October 1916, those who appreciated the benefits of the undenominational movement up to that stage found it necessary to withdraw if their liberty in Christ was to be preserved. The result being, that movements were set up in U.S.A., England, Australia and other lands, to continue the work which had been such a blessing to many for a number of years. The Berean Bible Institute was commenced in Melbourne in 1918, with the same mission which previously had prompted those who appreciated the truths of the Bible above all else in this world, the work in Melbourne being continued by Brother Nicholson with other helpers. It has been our privilege to assist in the work from the Institute also from early in 1929, by the Lord's grace, and in association with others of the Lord's people who truly appreciate the truths of God's Word uncontaminated by the "precepts of men."

It is fitting to mention that the undenominational teachings of the Bible embrace all the subjects contained in the Word of God. While Mr. Grant had the light respecting hell and the trinity, and specialized in these, so to speak, about 1893 here in Melbourne, the understanding of so many perplexing subjects is gained from the Bible with the help of the studies, foremost of which is "The Divine Plan of the Ages." Following a clear understanding that the Bible hell is really the condition of death, comes the truth respecting the resurrection and the "restitution of all things" in the Millennial Age, for all in the Bible hell are to be raised and given the opportunity to obey the laws of Christ's kingdom on earth, and live forever. Surely, the gospel will be "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" —in due time. (Luke 2:10.)

Likewise, a clear understanding of the doctrine of the trinity enables one to progress and grasp the spiritual side of the truths of the Bible, that those who accept the Lord Jesus by faith as their Saviour may then respond to the invitation and consecrate their lives a living sacrifice, becoming spiritual children of God, in hope of the heavenly kingdom. Such also are prompted to investigate and learn about the manner of Christ's return, grasping the fact that we are now living in the "days of the Son of man"—the days of His presence, during which He is conducting the harvest of this Gospel Age, as our Lord declared—"the harvest is the end of the age." (Rev. 14:13-16; Matt. 13:39.)

The doctrines of the Ransom and the Sin-offering are also appreciated and discerned as being part of the wonderful truths due for those who shall be heirs of salvation, the former referring to the valuable corresponding price paid by our Redeemer, and the latter showing how that price is made applicable for the salvation of the world—first for the Church and later for the world at large. The latter doctrine also reveals how the members of the Church class participate in sacrifice with their Head, as members of His Body, as explained by the Apostle—"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." (Col. 1:24.)

How thankful we should be that the undenominational movements have been in our midst, by the Lord's overruling, for more than our own life time in Australia, as well as in other lands. Thus we are enabled to hear and appreciate the truths of God's Word which alone can free us from all bondage to creeds and systems of men, which hinder rather than assist the true followers of the Master. We can well understand why the Lord is calling His people out from the systems of Babylon (mother and daughter systems), in these closing days of the Gospel Age, the harvest of the age. (Rev. 18:1-5.) While those being called are described as "My people," it is not to be understood that they are "in the truth" while in Babylon, but rather they are the Lord's in heart condition, and need to respond —to "come out of her" — to be worthy to grasp the truth, and become "sealed in their foreheads" in preparation for the kingdom inheritance, by the Lord's grace.

(The study "Divine Plan of the Ages" is highly recommended to all who appreciate the truths of the Bible.)

## Books Available.

“Most Holy Faith”-22/- “God’s Promises Come True”-22/-

“Emphatic Diaglott,” New Testament-19/”Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages-11/- “Tabernacle Shadows”-6/9.

“The Book of Books,” Reviewing the Bible as a whole 11/-.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages,” Cloth bound-5/6; paper covers-3/6.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy”-1/6. “Manner of Christ’s Return”-1/6. “Christ’s Return”-1/6.

“Some of the Parables”-1/6.

“Hope Beyond the Grave”-1/6

“God and Reason”-1/6 “Where Are the Dead “-1/-.

The above prices include postage on single copies; more than one copy less in proportion to postage rates.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4,

Melbourne, Vic., Australia.

## MOTTO FOR. EACH DAY “THREE GATES OF GOLD”

“Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.”

“Let the words of my mouth be acceptable in thy sight.”

Let every thought thy lips would utter pass three gates of gold  
But, if through these it fails to pass, then let it not be told;

And o’er each gate in silver letters written thou wilt find,

Above the first one, “Is it true?” the second, “Is it kind?”

And “is it necessary?” o’er the third one and the last.

Then guard thy thoughts, let none escape, save those these gates have passed!



Bible Student's Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

"Hymns of Dawn Music Book."—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

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

Revised Standard Version Bible,-1952. Copies of this Revised Bible are available, and will be found helpful for comparison in Bible study. Bound in strong cloth covers 50/-: in red rexine 60/-.

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

#### CHILDREN'S HYMNS

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

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Tuesdays 10 a.m.