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## FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH.

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”—  
Psalm 23:6.

SAINT Paul speaks of the full assurance of hope and of full assurance of faith as being the proper conditions for the Lord's people. ( Heb. 6:11; In:22.) And this is the thought expressed by the Prophet in our text—full confidence that he who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. ( Phil. 1:6,) But how few Christians, comparatively, have this full assurance of faith; how few can say, surely, undoubtedly, goodness and mercy shall follow me henceforth through life, and, by God's grace, I ultimately shall gain the heavenly kingdom and the glorious things which God has promised to them that love Him! The few who can enter fully into sympathy with the Apostle and Prophet in these expressions have therein a great blessing, a great rest of heart which others do not possess. Let us, therefore, inquire why it is that the number who thus enter into the rest of faith is so small. What are the hindrances to the others, and how can those hindrances be removed, that a larger number of the Lord's people may enjoy their patrimony?

The hindrances are of two kinds: (1) Many who are on the Lord's side, and who have been greatly blessed of Him, and who have made considerable progress in the knowledge of the truth, and who are trusting in the merit of the Lord Jesus' sacrifice as the only hope of a future life, and who are thus justified, have, nevertheless, failed to take the second step necessary to their full induction into sonship in God's family and into joint-heirship with Christ to all the exceeding great and precious promises which extend only to those who become His sons. This step, essential to becoming sons and joint-heirs, is the purpose of full consecration—the full surrender of our own wills, including all the aims and objects and purposes of life, and including also all that we have in the way of time, influence, means, reputation, etc. Not having taken this step, not having taken up the cross to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, this large class very properly feels that it is questionable to what extent the Lord's promises, either for the life that now is or for the life that is to come, belong to them. In this they are right, for none of the 'promises, present or future, belong to them, nor to any, until they have come under the terms of a full self-surrender—consecration—presenting their bodies, living sacrifices to God, holy, acceptable, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our advice to these, then, is that, realising the situation, they no longer delay, but hasten at once to avail themselves of the greatest privilege that could possibly be offered, even by the Almighty. If they stand still they are, in the language of the Apostle, receiving the grace of God in vain—failing to use it. (2 Cor. 6:1.) God's grace, as freely bestowed upon those who have come to a knowledge of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, is the grace of the forgiveness of sins, of justification through faith and the very object of this grace is to permit or qualify us to become living sacrifices, acceptable to God's altar through the great sacrifice of our Redeemer.

Whoever, therefore, shall advance thus far and know of his privilege, and yet refuse to present his little all, has failed to be constrained by the love of Christ, has failed to appreciate the divine favor bestowed upon him, and manifests this failure with his neglect to use his opportunities, by his neglect to sacrifice the imperfect fragment of this present life, that he might obtain in exchange the great prize of glory, honor and immortality, and joint heirship with Jesus in the kingdom; such receive God's grace in vain, profiting nothing by it over and above the world, which as yet lies in darkness and blindness.

What should such do? They should at once resolve that to render all they have to the Lord's service is not only a reasonable thing, but an offering far too small—far less than what they would like to render to Him who has

manifested such compassion and grace towards us. And we should feel thus, even if there were no rewards attached to such a consecration of ourselves. But, inasmuch as God has attached great rewards and blessings, we should feel not only that a refusal to accept would be an indication of non-appreciation of divine mercy, but an indication also of a weakness of mind, Of judgment, which is unable to balance the trifling and transitory pleasures of self-will for a few short years, with an eternity of joy and blessing and glory, in harmony with the Lord.

And more than this, the consecrated are the only ones who really fully and truly enjoy this present life, for they indeed have a peace of heart which the world can neither give nor take away—a condition which all the world is coveting and seeking after, but ‘finding not, because they seek it not in the Lord’s way of full self-surrender to Him. We urge, then, upon the class now addressed, that they promptly make their covenant with the Lord, and thus become heirs of His good promises pertaining to the life that now is, and also of that which is to come, and that thus they lay the foundation for entering into “full assurance of the faith” and full assurance of the hope that God’s mercy and goodness shall follow them all the days of the present life, and that they shall dwell in the heavenly home forever.

But amongst those who are real Christians, and who have made a full covenant of sacrifice unto the Lord, we find many who say, and more who think it without saying—“O that I could feel sure that God’s goodness and mercy would continue with me all the days of my life, and that I should attain unto His kingdom ! O that I might have a full assurance of faith, a full assurance that I am accepted of the Lord, and that by His grace I shall ultimately be an overcomer!” What is the difficulty with this class? Why is it that these do not possess this full assurance of faith? We answer, that their difficulty is a lack of faith in God, and such a lack of faith is not pleasing to God, for “without faith it is impossible to please God.” Such lack of faith, moreover, is a constant hindrance to their overcoming, as it is written, “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” The Christian who has not the shield of faith, and a large one, is continually at a disadvantage before the adversary. 11:6; 15:4,

What Must be done to overcome this lack of faith, and to have an increase of faith ? We answer that, like the Apostles of old, he should pray. “Lord, increase our faith.” And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, each should cultivate faith in his own heart—(a) BY refreshing his memory continually with the divine promises, becoming very familiar with these in the Father’s Word. (b) He should seek more and more to remember that, having made his covenant with the Lord, these promises are his, and in his heart and with his lips he should claim them, as his before the Lord in prayer with thanksgiving. He should claim them as his in his own thoughts, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren.

When trials or difficulties or perplexities arise, he should think of these promises, remembering that they belong to him—because God has promised them to such as love him who have made a covenant by self-sacrifice. ( Psa. 50:5; Mal. 3:17.) He should resolve henceforth to trust the word of the heavenly Father implicitly. Thus, if some seeming accident befall him, let him call to his mind the promise that “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose,” and assure himself that the seeming accident did not have occurred had God not seen a way to make it the channel of a needed lesson or blessing. Let him refresh his mind with the thought that he comes under the provisions of this promise because he loves the Lord, and so loved Him as to make a full consecration of himself to Him thus he is assured that this promise was intended for him.

Let such also remember the language of the Apostle, that if God loved us while we were yet sinners, so that He provided for us the great salvation in Christ Jesus (our Lord, much more does He love us now, since we have been justified through faith in the great atonement, and have made a full consecration of ourselves to Him, and thus come under the terms of adoption into His family. Let him remember, too, that He who has begun the good work changes never, and that if our hearts are still in harmony with Him, if our faith is still clear and firm in the great atonement, if our consecration is still full and complete, so that we seek not our own wills but His will to be done in our affairs, then we may indeed have the full assurance of faith, because, knowing that God is unchangeable, and knowing that we are still in line with His promises and arrangements, we know that all of His gracious providences are still being exercised on our behalf. This is full assurance of faith—full confidence in the Lord.

It is possible, however, for the true Christian who has taken the step of justification and the step of consecration and adoption into God’s family, and who has had the blessing of full assurance of faith—it is possible for such to lose this, if he become overcharged with the cares of this life, cold and indifferent as respects the Lord, His kingdom, His brethren, His cause, etc. Such, of course, should not have a full assurance of faith. God does not intend it for them, but rather intends that if we leave the proper, consecrated attitude we should also lose the joys and consolations which belong to it. And this is not merely as a retribution or punishment, but designed specially to awaken us to a realisation of what we are losing to the intent that such as have “lost their first love” may be revived, may renew their consecration vows, and thus return to the Lord, who will abundantly pardon and restore unto them the joys of His salvation.

So then, reviewing our text. we say that this assurance of faith (that God's goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our lives, and that we shall ultimately, 'by His grace, attain to the kingdom) is for the class mentioned in this Psalm, namely, the hold's sheep—those who are following Him, and who are having the experiences outlined in this Psalm. One of these experiences is that following the Shepherd they are not left to hunger and thirst. but are bountifully supplied in the green pastures and by the still waters of the truth. Moreover, it applies to those who experience the Shepherd's care. His rod and staff, correcting. reproof or guiding them. Such sheep as learn to love and have confidence in the Shepherd and in His guidance. and to take comfort and blessing out of all the afflictions and trials of life which may be permitted to come upon them, realising that they are providential, and for their Blessing—such continue to follow the Shepherd.. continue to have the experiences of sheep. and may rejoice with full assurance of faith that He who began the good work of shepherding- them and leading them out from the by-ways of sin and of selfishness into the full blessing of the heavenly kingdom will continue this work and complete it. if they abide in Him.

## REST IN THE LORD.

Psalm 16:11.

A precious thought cloth come to us,  
A precious thought that cheers,  
And oft 'twill come to comfort us  
And calm away our fears;

For tho' we tread our ways apart  
In paths as yet unseen,  
The Lord will watch in absent hours,  
While love cloth flow between.

The Lord keep watch in heat and cold  
though we're linked by chains of gold.  
Should precious friends be this thy part,  
And my lot lonely be,

Or you at times are sad at heart,  
And joy o'erflow for me,  
We'll rest in His abiding care,  
Let doubts be ever still;

The gladsome glades and. darksome dales  
Are by His sovereign will;  
And from majestic heights above  
Will flow the blessings of His love.

And though we tread our paths alone,  
And thy road is not mine,  
Yet coming to the altar throne  
My soul shall meet with thine;

He'll keep us 'neath His holy wings,  
He'll keep us ever near,  
His love and power will be our shade  
So we may never fear,

For God will watch—and thee and me  
Will in the end His glory see!

# EVIL

Keep clear of personalities in conversation. Talk of things, objects, thoughts. The smallest minds occupy themselves with persons. not needlessly report ill of others. As far as possible. dwell on the good side of human beings. There are family boards where a constant process of depreciating, assigning motives, and cutting up character goes forward. They are not pleasant places. ( Joe who is heal thy does not wish to dine at a dissecting table. There is evil enough in man. God knows. Hut it iS hot the mission of every young man and woman to detail and report it all. Keep the atmosphere as pure as possible. and fragrant with gentleness and charity.—John

## PEOPLES PAPER.

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# ADELAIDE CONVENTION.

ONCE again the Easter Convention at Adelaide has Proved to be a season of rich spiritual refreshment and blessing. The friends of the Adelaide Class had been praying and watching for the Lord's blessing in connection with the arrangements for the meetings. and the general expression of opinion by those who attended the meetings was that this occasion, in respect to real helpful Christian fellowship, was quite equal to, if not better than. previous gatherings of a like nature.

The Memorial of our Saviour's death was kept on the (good Friday evening, and a blessing was realised as we once again observed the simple remembrance of our Lord's death for us. As we partook of the emblems of His broken body and shed blood, we realised once again the preciousness of the sacrifice of Jesus, and that all our hopes of life and blessing are centred in the fact that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." We realised, too, what a great favour has been given to the members of the Body of Christ who have been invited tut follow ill their Master's

footsteps, to share in His sufferings in the present time: and also to share in the honours of His Kingdom if faithful to their covenant of sacrifice to lie broken with Him.

The Convention meetings began on Easter Saturday. and a Bible Studs. 1 Thess. 5:16-25 proved to be an hour well spent. It was pleasing to note how the friends came along well equipped with appropriate Scripture references, the reading of which served to comfort and strengthen our hearts. The same thing could also be truly said of the two other Bible Studies which occupied the afternoon of Easter Sunday and Monday. A portion of Rom. 12 ch. was chosen; verses 9-15 being considered ,01 Sunday afternoon. and verses 16-21 claimed our attention on the Monday. This beautiful portion of Scripture seemed to he much appreciated by those attending these meetings. The spirit of brotherly love was manifest in a very marked degree, showing that the heart's desire of the brethren is to attain to the mark of perfect love in all its various features of kindness. patience, meekness. gentleness. lowliness. etc. It was a pleasure to have with us some brethren from Melbourne, Victoria and New South Wales, as well as some from nearby country districts. It had been arranged to spend the Easter Monday with the Gawler Class. and as some from that class had visited us (01 the Sunday, a goodly number of the Adelaide friends took advantage of the opportunity to return the visit, and very happy time of spiritual refreshment and blessing was realised on the last day of the Convention—Easter Monday.

A Praise and Testimony Meeting, a discussion on "What Is a True Christian?" and addresses on "Stand Fast," "Watchfulness," "Walk as Children of Light." and "The Hidden Life with Christ," gave additional interest to the meetings, which concluded with the Love Feast, at which the friends bade each other good-bye with hearty handshakes and good wishes, and the singing of those well-known and beautiful old hymns. "Blest be the Tie That Binds our Hearts in Christian Love," and "God be With You Till We Meet Again." It should also have been mentioned that to those classes and friends who had kindly thought of us by sending messages of Christian love and Scripture greetings, the same was returned, and Rom. 12:9-12 was the passage of Scripture chosen by this Convention as a greeting to our brethren in Christ. who had remembered us in thought and prayer on this very happy occasion.

## MEMORIAL SERVICE.

The Melbourne friends gathered at 45 (1 Little Collins Street) on Saturday evening, April 12th, to celebrate the anniversary of our Lord's Death. Several visiting brethren from other parts also partook of the emblems, and a very helpful and encouraging service it proved to be. No doubt, all present sincerely and earnestly desired to continue faithful to their Lord and I lead by giving utterance to their covenant of sacrifice, to be broken with Him, as they would seek to fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of the Anointed One.

We have pleasure in stating that the address of that evening will appear in our next issue, and trust that it will be helpful to others also.

## Question Box.

Question.—Is there any reason for supposing that the saints during the approaching age cannot or will not reveal themselves visibly to mankind? If not, how will the world know them individually, if they are forever concealed from view?

Answer.—There would seem to be the same reasons for believing that the overcoming saints who are to sit with Christ in His throne, will be seen no more by the world, as there are respecting our Lord, who said, "Henceforth the world seeth Me no more." Such is Paul's reasoning (2 Cor. 5:16, 17). "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." The only ones promised to see Jesus are those "new creatures," of whom I John 3:2 writes, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be (like), but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Paul had a glimpse of the glorified Jesus and was blinded by the sight, it was more gloriously bright than the sun at noonday. He says it was as though he had been born before the time—as those he had been resurrected, and, the Lord "as He is." "Who, being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person upholding all things by the word of His power, when he had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. 1:3.) Our Lord has been highly exalted, and has received the divine nature — immortality—and the Church are promised this same wonderful reward. God has not been seen by any human eye, and there is no reason to think that our Lord since His glorification will be, nor is there any indication that the Bridle of Christ will either. The Scripture, which reads, "And every eye shall see Him," refers to the eye of faith and intellectual discernment, just as in many other Scriptures, such as, "We see Jesus made a little lower than the angels, etc." (Job. 2:9), and "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. 5:8). As for the second question: "There has never been occasion for Jehovah to appear to man, yet He spoke and was recognised by our first parents in the Garden of Eden. There would seem to be no reason for Christ or the Bridle to appear. They yielded human nature up as a sacrifice with all its relationships, and any communications necessary would be likely to be carried out by the great multitude which serves before the throne. However, such questions are not vital matters, and we know that whatever may be, the Divine arrangement will be perfect, and all His creatures in heaven or on earth will find complete satisfaction and enjoyment.

# Correspondence

Queensland. 1930. Dear Brother:—

Loving greetings in our dear Redeemer's name. thank you for your letter, and also for volume 1 of Revelation by the same mail.

Re your remarks in regard to some becoming heady. To my mind it shows a lack of God's holy spirit, or else one does not realise one's own nothingness, and realise something of the infinite grandeur of the living God. Even a study of nature or any branch of natural science ought to keep one humble. The whole trouble seems to come from the error of comparing oneself with other poor members of the fallen race. instead of keeping one's gaze on our one perfect pattern, the Lord Jesus Christ. We must lie humble to get spiritual knowledge, and in my observation of men I find those who are proud in their own conceit, are not open minded enough to learn anything hardly.

I early learnt from the Scriptures that "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." My own experience has been a good illustration of it. ' two eldest brothers were good athletes, cricketers, etc., and when I was thirteen I won nearly all the prizes at local sports. The night after the sports I prayed most earnestly that God would keep me humble! He did in a way that I did not realise till years afterwards. MY health got very poor, so I did no good at sports after. Now I call see if I had retained good health I probably may have become 0 champion runner, but suffering ill body may have made me seek the Heavenly things. with the careful instruction of my dear mother. who was an earnest, consecrated Christian. So my loving Heavenly Father drew me that way and showed ire a far better race to run. even for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

I thank you, clear Brother. for your kind thoughts. which are mutual, and for all the brethren in Christ our all.

With much Christian love, from your brother in the glorious hope of our calling.

H. A. J.

April 6th, 1930. Berean Biblical Institute.

Dear Predict in Christ:—

I wish to write and thank you for the "People's Paper" being duly received, and to tell you of my appreciation of its articles on Bible subjects.

The stand you have taken on the manner of our Lord's return seems most appropriate at this time, and may you still closely follow the Lord's guidance along truly Scriptural lines.

Here a few of us will observe the memorial of our Lord's death for us, and the whole world of mankind: our high privilege also of being counted in His secondary sacrifice. filling up what is behind of the suffering of Christ.

Praying the Lord's rich blessing on the work of lifting up a standard for the truth.

Your Brother in the Church's One Hope,

D. R. J.

Victoria. April, 1930.

Dear Brother, Christian Greetings.

It is now so long ago since I intended to send for the "Foregleams," and as things have not improved am% I will not send for the little books for the present. but will wait till conditions improve, if "God sees good." and I will send this little donation for the Tract. Fund. or where it may be needed. in His service.

Easter is now nigh at hand. and the observance of the great Memorial. Dav all who partake realise the solemnity of the keeping of it. and what it means to us. Surely we would benefit spiritually if we do our best and humbly look up to our Lord for guidance and strength. I should love to be there. too. but as it cannot be. I will endeavour to keep it here with faith bridging the distance between.

God's richest blessing be with you all.

With Christian love to all the brethren of like precious faith, From Your Sister by Grace. K.E.

## The Second Presence of Christ.

Continued from April Issue.

We still have for further consideration the Lord's parables, "The Tares" and the "Ten Virgins," as indicating the work of gathering the saints out of all the systems of error during the second presence of Christ; and it will be noticed that in neither parable does the separation begin before the Lord has come.

All ten virgins were pure ones, they were Christians, they were interested in the Lord's Return, they had all gone out to meet Him. That does not mean that they had gone to any particular place to meet the Lord, but they had their minds exercised in the study of the Bible; they were watching. They, no doubt, represent those who in Miller's day and since have been "looking for I-Us Coming." There are two classes mentioned, wise and foolish, and evidently such trials or tests which the Lord permitted, through the misunderstanding of truth in 1844, and many others since that time, are for the very purpose of separating the wise from the foolish. Some get discouraged through these tests, and lose heart and become drowsy, and some seem also to have excitable dreams, and are led away by vain fancies and imaginations. What light they started out with flickers and dies, and they have no oil in their vessels, they are short of the Holy Spirit in their hearts to "guide them into all truth, and teach them things to come." Ultimately they appear to secure oil for their lamps, but too late to enter the marriage chamber. The door had been closed, the elect had been completed, the Bride had made herself ready and entered the joys of her Lord.

It is not for us to try and discern to which class any one may belong, but it is the part of wisdom for us each to examine our hearts and see that we have "oil in our vessels." We may gain a good deal of intellectual knowledge and discern something of the trend of events so that we may be expectant, even go out to meet the Bridegroom, and yet be sadly short of the Holy Spirit. It is not sufficient that we have been begotten of the spirit; we are leaky vessels, and need continual refilling.

This is the principal work we have to do; without it we shall be failures. If we have the Holy Spirit in our hearts, the Word of God, being prayerfully studied, will surely shine clearer and clearer, and reveal the presence of the Bridegroom. Not only so, but the fruits of God's Holy Spirit in our hearts will be manifest in our lives, in love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. (Gal. 5:22-23.) Or as Peter (2 Pet. 1:5-11) puts it, "Add to your faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. . . . If ye do these things ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

WHY HE KNOCKETH.

"When He cometh and knocketh they may open unto Him immediately."—Luke 12:36.

From the Parable of the Young Nobleman, also that of the Wedding Garment ( Matt. 22), and from Luke 12:37-48 and other Scriptures, it would appear to be manifest that the Lord would be present, judging among His people and otherwise preparing for the establishment of His Kingdom. while yet unknown to the world. He would bring to a conclusion the work of the Gospel Age, separating the "wheat from the tares," and finally gathering the perfect body

of Christ, the full number of His elect, the fact of His presence being known only to those watching and listening for His “knock.” It is to such that He has promised to “gird Himself and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.”

This feast is a spiritual one, and indicates that the Lord “will bring forth things new and old” out of the store house. And the promise is that those watchers who are themselves refreshed by the truths specially revealed by the Lord when He has returned, are to be engaged in the service of providing these “things new and old” out of the store house, to all who are faithfully watching, to such as have ears to hear. And the Lord said, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season. Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. a truth I say unto you that he will make him ruler over all that he Bath.”—Luke 12:42-44.

This spiritual feast appears to be what was indicated by the 1335 days of Daniel, “Blessed is he that Nvaiteth and cometh to the 1335 days.”—Daniel 12:12.

In this 12th of Daniel, three periods are particularly mentioned 1260 days (time, times and a half) , 1290 days, and 1335—which are to be counted from the setting up of the desolating abomination, and the taking away of the continual sacrifice. This event would appear to be about 539 A.D., when both items mentioned in Daniel 12:11 became facts. Papacy assumed civil control, and the mass was instituted, as though the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ, offered “once for all,” was not completely satisfactory and all availing. These three periods appear to terminate respectively 1795-99, 1825-29, and 1874. The 1260 days or years reaching to 1795-1799 marked the time when the Papal power, which had so long trodden down the saints of the Most High, was broken, and the Pope was taken prisoner by Napoleon and carried to France. Thus the saints of God were relieved from Papal persecutions. With the greater liberty, the truth of God’s word began to shine, Bible Societies sprang into existence, and the work of cleansing the sanctuary went forward. The great Reformation under Zwingli, Ecolampadius, Melancthon and Luther had started the cleansing by rebuking the abuses and errors of Rome. Wesley had followed in preaching faith and true holiness. Sanctification was his chief theme. By 1825 there was the Campbellite or Church of Christ movement, also the Millerite movement, which awakened the Christian world to great expectations regarding the Lord’s return. A clear understanding of the doctrine of the ransom seems to have been attained, and a class has ever since 1846 been separated from the nominal churches.

It would seem to be about 1825-29 that the preaching respecting the Lord’s return drew together those who “loved His appearing.” It was as though the Parable of the Ten Virgins there had the commencement of its fulfilment, as already stated.

Ever since that time God’s watching people have been permitted to have experiences which have proved and tested their faith, and evidently divided class from class.

The great “shout” or proclamation which was promised has been accomplishing its purpose, and calling out those who “have ears to hear” to go forth to meet the Bridegroom. Then even among those who are represented as ten virgins there have been experiences which have no doubt been the means of demonstrating to which class each watcher belongs, the “five wise” or the “five foolish” virgins. The whole ten virgins represent Christians—pure ones—justified, cleansed by the precious blood of Christ. Not only are all Christians, but all are interested in the Lord’s return. They desire to meet Him and have some knowledge about His coming, yet there is a difference among them; five are wise. having not only a knowledge of God’s Word, “the lamp to our feet,” but they have a good supply of oil in their hearts and minds; these could readily adjust their minds and hearts to an appreciation of events and recognise the “signs of His presence,” and so enter into the joys of the near approach of the Kingdom, and enjoy the feast which the Lord had promised to prepare for those whom He would find faithfully watching.

The five foolish lack the supply of oil in their vessels, are short of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, and, therefore, have not the appreciation of events or a Scriptural understanding of the signs of the Lord’s presence, and, therefore, fail to enter into the feast. This first test of the. Harvest time soon came. Mr. Miller had predicted the second presence in 1844, and expected the Lord to come with “outward show” and to be seen by all. It was evidently expected that our Lord would appear with a human body instead of as He had said, “the Son of Man cometh not with outward show,” but “in power and great glory, and all the holy angels with Him.” They had overlooked the fact that Jesus was “put to death flesh, but quickened spirit,” that “flesh and blood (human nature) cannot inherit the Kingdom of

God.” that “though we have known Christ (-• the Apostle) after the flesh, henceforth know we Him no more.” and that even the apostle John was ignorant of what our Lord was like in the glorified condition. “We know not what we shall be like, but we know that. when He shall appear we shall be like Him, and see Him as He is.” (1 John 3:2.) So the

Christians of this Millerite movement suffered a great disappointment, which began the operation under the Lord's providence of separating the two classes of virgins. This was the commencement of the Harvest work, beginning first among the Lord's own consecrated people.

## THE HARVEST AT FIRST ADVENT

There were evidently similar testings in our Lord's earthly sojourn, which was during the Harvest time of the Jewish Age.

It was the message that a new Age was about to open, and that Messiah had come, which at once separated the "Israelites indeed" from the nominal system. Then, as our Lord began to speak of the way of the Cross, of taking up the Cross and denying oneself, some withdrew; and when He talked of giving His flesh for the life of the world it was a stumble to some. "Then a question arose about whether Christ could come out of Gallilee. "Hath not the Scriptures said that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was, and so there was a division among the people because of Him." (John 7:41-43.) "Some said He is a good man, and others say, but lie deceiveth 01.2 people." (John 7:12.)

On another occasion when He spoke about "Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood bath eternal life," etc., we read that many therefore of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it." And "from that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him." (John 6:41-67.)

Thus it was that there were such truths sent out and such conditions permitted as would separate the wheat from the chaff. While the wheat was gathered into the Gospel Garner, the chaff was tied more tightly, in sectarian bundles, ready to be burned at the conclusion of the Harvest time, in the destruction of Jerusalem A.D. 70.

In the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares ( .tt. 13:24-30), the Lord indicated that there would be a similar Harvest time at the end of this Gospel Age. He says, "Let both grow together until the Harvest" (elsewhere He explains "the Harvest is the end of the Age"). "And in the time of Harvest I will say to the reapers, 'Gather ye together first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into My barn.' "

## PRESENT DAY HARVEST EXPERT EXPERIENCES

Ever since the Millerite movement there have been just such experiences and proclamations of truths which have separated those who "have ears to hear" any news of the Bridegroom's Coming, and who "love His appearing Kingdom." Strong truths have been permitted to come to God's people, and discussions and disputings have clone their work. Sometimes it has been trivial personalities which have led astray. Sometimes differences on matters of order or on truths which are not vital have turned some away, and what light they possessed has become darkened and their spirit has become bitter, and, finally, they have seemed to lose faith and hope, and the light that was in them has become darkness. Very generally the difference of thought is not so much the cause of separations as the wrong spirit that is engendered in the discussions. Thus the lack of oil in the vessel is indicated. Sometimes it may be that more important truths have caused divisions, and sometimes error has been made to look like truth. "Light has been put for darkness, and darkness for light."

The Lord foretold that there would be such delusions and sections, saying "Many false prophets (teachers) shall arise and deceive many" ( Matt. 24:4. 5. 11. and 24). "In so much that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." The whole matter depends upon our having "oil in the vessels," i.e.. the Holy Spirit in our hearts and earnestly seeking the guidance of God's Word, which is the lamp to our feet.

We would note that all this Harvest work is to take place after the Lord of the Harvest has arrived and also before the great time of trouble, when "The fire of the Lord's jealousy shall devour the whole earth" (Zeph. 3:8-9), in which the bundles of tares are to be destroyed.

The indication also is that, prior to this burning, the "elect" shall have been gathered home to lie with the Lord in the heavens.

Another parable found in Matt. 22:1-14 seems to take in the whole Gospel Age from the time the Gospel feast was prepared. John had introduced the Bridegroom (John 3:29), who had come to purchase His bride. The feast was spread, the fatlings, the antitype of the bullock (Lev. 16) and other types was slain; then the feast was ready.

The invitation was first to the leaders of Israel; few came, then the invitation was extended finally to all nations. Then

the King comes in, the Lord returns, and the first thing He does is to inspect the guests. All who have entered the guest chamber have accepted the wedding garment, and therefore the Lord's query, "How tamest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?" This denotes that some even after being justified by faith and entering the Christian way, would, through one cause or another, lose faith, and trust in their own "filthy rags" as righteousness. They became agnostics, and are cast out of the Gospel favour and go into outer darkness.

Thus it would appear that the Scriptures indicate a progressiveness respecting the second advent of Christ. There is first the winding up of the work of the Gospel Age, preparatory to the opening up of the Kingdom Age. The Church must be all complete, the dead in Christ shall rise first, then those that remain are 'to complete their course and be also caught away at the moment of death, to be with the Lord in the air. (1 Thess. 4:17.) The present "prince of the power of the air" will be dethroned and bound, along with all his evil spirits, the wicked angels who have been operating in Spiritism. Spiritism will not be able to operate when the Kingdom of Christ is established.

So long as Satan's power in the earth abounds, so long as the evil spirits which have been operating with him since

Noah's days can deceive humanity by personating departed friends, through mediums, called witches in olden days, in the seances and by other means in Christendom, and by medicine men, Devil priests, etc., in heathen lands, we may know that Christ's kingdom has not been set up. Probably the cessation of these evil practices, by the "angels that left their own habitation" (Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4), will be one of the first evidences that Christ has taken to Himself His great power and commenced His reign on the earth.

The Bible teaching respecting the second presence of Christ and the work which He will first perform at His return has been somewhat hidden through a poor translation of the Greek word "parousia" in the New Testament.

#### THE WORD "PAROUSIA"

The word occurs in the following texts, and in each case it should be properly translated "presence," not "coming"

Matt. 24:3—"What shall be the sign of thy 'presence?' "

Matt. 24:27, 37, 39—"So shall also the 'presence' of the Son of Man be."

1 Cor. 15:23—"They that are Christ's at His 'presence.' "

1 Thess. 2:19—"What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not ever ye, presented before our Lord Jesus Christ at His 'presence.' "

1 Thess. 3:13—"That He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father at the 'presence' of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Thess. 4:15—<sup>A</sup> which are alive and remain unto the 'presence' of the Lord, shall not precede them which are asleep."

1 Thess. 5:23—"Be preserved blameless unto the 'presence' of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Thess. 2:1—"Now we beseech you, brethren, by (respecting) the 'presence' of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering unto Him."

2 Thess. 2:8 (see Rev. Ver.)—"Then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and bring to naught by the manifestation (epiphania) of His 'presence.' "

Jas. 5:8—"Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts for the 'presence' of the Lord draweth nigh."

Jas. 5:7—"Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the 'presence' of the Lord."

2 Pet. 3:3, 4—"There shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His 'presence'?"

The word "parousia" is twice properly translated "presence" in 2 Cor. 10:10 and Phil. 2:12. These two instances clearly demonstrate that the word "parousia" has the same meaning as is correctly translated by our English word

. 'presence.' Some have suggested that "parousia" mean; "arrival" or "drawing near," but how absurd it would be to say that Paul's "bodily arrival is weak" or to say "beloved as ye have always believed, not as at my arrival only but now much more in my absence."

It should be evident to any unbiassed mind that the general meaning of the word is presence, and when so tram ' fed we find there is a harmony and clearness in the New Testament teaching concerning the Lord's second presence.  
EPIPHANIA.

Another Greek word used in connection with our Lord's second presence is "epiphania," which signifies "brightness" or "manifestation." It is rendered "appearing" and "brightness" as in the following instances:-1 Tim. 6:14. "Keep this commandment without spot, until the 'appearing' of our Lord."

2 Tim. 4:1—"I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His 'appearing' and Kingdom."

2 Tim. 4:8—"There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them that love His 'appearing.' "

Titus 2:13—"Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious 'appearing' of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

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2 Thess. 2:8—"Then shall the wicked one be exposed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the 'brightness' (epiphania or bright shining) of His presence."

#### APOKALUPSIS.

The Greek words apokalupsis and apokalupto, which are also used in respect of the coming of the Lord. signify uncovering or unveiling (as of something previously present but hidden). Apokalupsis is rendered "revealed," "revelation," "appearing," "coming" and "manifestation," in the following texts which refer to the Lord's second presence, power and glory, as these shall be made known—uncovered or revealed to the world.

2 Thess. 1:7, 8—"The Lord Jesus shall be 'revealed' from heaven. . ."

Rom. 8:19—"For the earliest expectation of the creature waiteth for the 'manifestation' of the sons of God."

Luke 17:29-30—"Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed." That is to say, that as soon as the Church has all been taken to be with the Lord, the Son of Man will be revealed to the world in the fiery time of trouble, as the Judge of mankind, who had already been present for some time dealing with His Church, sealing and gathering His elect from the four corners of the earth.

Other texts where this word occurs are:—Rom. 8:18; 1 Pet. 4:13; 1 Pet. 1:4, 5; 1 Cor. 3:13; 1 Cor. .1:7 (trans.: "coming"); 1 Pet. 1:7 and 1 Pet. 1:13. "Hope to the end for the grace that shall be brought unto you at the 'revelation' of Jesus Christ."

Thus it seems that the Lord first comes as a thief, and is unknown to the world or even to most Christians. He makes His presence gradually known to the watchers, and those hear His "knock." Gradually His presence is more and more revealed, and finally there will be the manifestation, the demonstration of His presence in the fiery judgment, in which the present world systems, religious, social and political, will be consumed in preparation for the bringing in of the better day of righteousness and peace tunder the Kingdom for which we have so long prayed, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be clone on earth as it is done in heaven."

To be continued.

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