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Messengers of God.

“He shall give His angels (messengers) a charge concerning thee, to guard thee in all thy ways.”—Psalm 91: II.

IN the midst of the “perilous times” of this “evil day,” and of the warning voices of the Holy Prophets and Apostles pointing out snares and pestilences and subtle dangers on every hand—and in the midst, too, of a realising sense of the actual existence of such evil besetments and perils—how precious to the saints are the assurances of Divine protection and care and personal love!

Evidently the person referred to in our text as giving a charge, or message, is Jehovah, the Heavenly Father. The Prophet David is prophesying in respect of some person, then future. That person was primarily, we believe, the Lord Jesus Christ, and secondarily, all those whom He has accepted as members of His Body throughout this Gospel Age—the Messiah class, Head and members. The words imply a special care of God over this class. All through the Scriptures they are referred to as those whom God specially loves and specially cares for. Our Lord Jesus is the Only Begotten, the well-beloved Son, and all those who are His members are peculiarly loved. Jesus said to some of His faithful disciples, “The Father Himself loveth you.”

The charge given to the angels we would understand to have a very broad application. The Apostle Paul assures us that the angels of God are ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto and to serve those who shall be heirs of salvation, the saved ones of this Gospel Age. Yes, all of these, because believers in Christ, because at heart faithful, because fully consecrated to the Lord and begotten of His Spirit, are the special and happy objects of His trace, ministered to and served by the invisible messengers. Our Lord Jesus sets forth practically the same thought in His declaration, “their angels do always behold (have access to) the face of My Father.” The Master’s words seem to imply that one or more of these angels have charge over the consecrated ones, the Very Elect.

Our Lord uses a different figure of speech from that of the Apostle, as though He would assure us that these messengers would not be delayed in caring for our interests. They would not be hindered by more important Heavenly business, but would at once have direct access to the Divine presence and attention, so that our interests would have all needed consideration. Our Lord would have us realise that we are of the House of Sons, under Himself the chief Son, hence no time is lost in bringing our interests to the Father. Our interests have first place, our angels have always access to the Father. Before we speak, He knows our minds. Before we realise our own necessities, He has made provision for them. A wonderful watch-care has been arranged. It is hard for us to understand how the Almighty God can give such particular care and attention to our needs. Instead of being puffed up that God has manifested such loving consideration towards us, it should make us feel how little we are, how unworthy of such blessings.

Although the Father makes such use of Heavenly messengers, this by no means invalidates the thought that the Lord’s earthly children are frequently used of Him as ministers, servants, the one of another. Indeed, we may be assured that the invisible messengers are required generally to act through human instrumentalities. Of this we have illustrations in the Harvest work, supervised by our present Lord and His Heavenly hosts, yet in the main carried on by members of His Body in the flesh.

The Apostle Paul has stated that the Lord makes His ministers, or servants, a flaming fire, and intimates to us that any and every agency and power that Divine providence uses is a part of that care over His people. (Heb. 1:7.) In other words, every agency used of God—whether it be fire or electricity or man, or whatever—would be a messenger of God. And whatever would riot be to His praise and work out what He chooses, He is able to restrain—as He tells us (Psalm 76:10).

Overcomers Developed By Trial.

These angels are to “keep- thee in all thy ways” not only in all the affairs of the Church, both individually and collectively, but also in all times; they were kept during the Dark Ages as well as at other times. But this care will not keep us from temptation. None can be of this elect Church unless they have trials. In order to have the overcoming qualities of heart they must have the tests. But the Lord’s promised grace is to be with them for their assistance—not to overcome for them, but to sustain them. His grace is sufficient for us. He does not make up for a poor will; but He does make up for imperfect bodies. If the will is poor, He does not want such in His elect Church. He wants His people to be strong in will—nothing doubting—overcomers.

The next verse of the Psalm from which our text is taken proceeds to say that these messengers which have a charge over the affairs of the Church, Head and Body, will keep the feet from stumbling. In a general way we might apply the term “feet” to some members of the Body all down, in all times of the Age; as we might say, for instance, one member is a hand, and one a foot, etc. The Church, resting on those “feet” members all the way down, throughout the Gospel Age, will be guided aright; they will not be allowed to stumble; for, “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway.” Thus they would be enabled to surmount the difficulties in their path.

So- all down through the Gospel Age the messengers of the Lord have helped His people over all of their trials. But this reference to the “feet” seems especially applicable to the last members of the Body of Christ. “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace . . . that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth !” (Isa. 52:7.) This would seem to apply to the last members of the Church. This could not have been said all the way down the Age. It is only for us who are living at the present time to say.

These various manifestations of progress that we see, are just beginning. The new regime is only opening. After our Lord shall have delivered and glorified the Church, then He will begin the work with the world. None had the right to say, “Thy God reigneth,” in the past; hut now in the close of the Age this proclamation is made.

Christ’s Presence a Stumbling Stone.

The text seems to imply that the feet members at this time would be in a position of special trial, and be as a stumbling-stone. And this calls to our remembrance that the Lord foretold this, saying, “He shall be . . . for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel” (Isa. 8:14.) This stone was stumbled over in the end of the Jewish Age (1 Peter 2:8.) The Scriptures set forth that Jesus is the Way. The Lord is a Stumbling-Stone in the pathway of many. These passages do not refer to the world. It was not the Gentile nations that stumbled over Jesus at His First Advent, but it was some of the Israelites who were there stumbled. And the text implies the stumbling of some Spiritual Israelites because of the coming of the Lord: in a way totally different from what they had imagined.

So we ‘believe that there are very many good Christian people to-day who are stumbling over Christ’s presence. They thought so and so; they imagined ^Aso and so. And all is so different from what they had imagined and expected that it is just as it was in .the end of the Jewish Age, when the rabbis stumbled.

The question is, why should not the angels’ have charge over all good people,. so that they would not stumble?

Is not this the promise? We answer that the promise is made to all who are of the elect class. But in order to remain members of this Body, they must all stand the trial. It will be a test. Are they willing to have the assistance of the angels—messengers? Are they willing to surmount these difficulties and to remain in the way?

One class will be in a condition to receive the trials in the proper manner; another class will be so self-confident, so overcharged with the cares of this life, and so lacking in spiritual development, that they will not be ready to avail themselves of the services of the angels. This is because God uses as His messengers some whom the world will not be ready to receive.

Parallelism Between Jewish And Gospel Ages.

In the Jewish Age the Lord used some whom the scribes, the doctors of the Law and the chief priests could not accept. at all. If He wanted to use agents, or channels, or messengers, to. teach the people., why did He not choose the learned scribes or the pompous Pharisees of that day? Why did the Lord use as His messengers men who had been fishermen, tax-gatherers persons whom the learned would think entirely unfit as instructors, or teachers? We recall that in the end of the Jewish Age it was written of two of them (and perhaps of them all) that the people perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men (Acts 4:13.) How could it he that God would pass .by some of the most learned of that

day? “Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight” (Matt. 11:25, 26).

So to-day the Lord is using agencies, messengers, that are not acceptable to many whom they approach. And while these are making up their minds to believe, slow .in this ‘because overcharged with the cares of this life, the elect company will be made up. Then the others will say, “Lord, Lord, open unto us.” But the Lord will declare that He cannot recognise them as members .of His Body, the Elect. They will not have shown the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, love necessary. to give them a. place in this Body. ‘So it will be only the Body members who will be lifted up by the messengers and carried safely through the trials and difficulties which will be ‘permitted to test the love, loyalty and obedience. to the will of God, of all who have made with Him a Covenant of Sacrifice-even unto death.

Each one of us has a stewardship somewhere, and some gift qualifying him for it. It may be that we are called to very humble duties; still they are held from God, and constitute a stewardship.-Goulburn.

The Gospel of Hope,

Ye Have Need of Hope.

THE Apostle wrote, “Ye have. need of patience.” We are not contradicting his statement when we add that also, “Ye have need of hope.” Without hope, patience would soon fritter away; and no length or breadth or depth of character could be expected. The very word Gospel is full of hope; for is means “Good Tidings.” Whoever, therefore, would preach. the Gospel should be sure that his message is one of Good Tidings, one of Hope. True, it may be necessary and appropriate at times to say something respecting the time of trouble that we see near. Yet even ‘that subject is to be approached from the standpoint of Good Tidings. To tell about the time of trouble merely to alarm people, would not be to use it as a part of the Good Tidings. If necessary to refer to the time of trouble, we should mention it merely as that dark cloud which for a little season will obscure the dawn of the rapidly oncoming Day of Christ—the Day of blessing and joy—the world’s jubilee—the time of rolling away ‘the curse and substituting God’s blessing.

“The Whole Creation Groaneth.”

The majority of the world and also of the Lord’s consecrated people have plenty of trouble in the present time without being terrorised needlessly in respect of the great day of trouble. Let us remember that, additionally, the world has a latent fear respecting the future. They have been told by distinguished religious teachers and by musty creeds that nearly everybody was damned in advance to spend an eternity of torture. And although this is no longer outwardly preached to intelligent people, and no longer would be believed, nevertheless insinuations are often thrown out; and a secret fear lurks in the mind lest there should really be some, thing terrible awaiting the masses after death—a Catholic Purgatory of awful severity, if not the endless torture of Protestantism. Much of the present day tendency toward intoxication with pleasures and travels, as well as with alcoholic intoxicants, is the result of an attempt to get away from fearful forebodings—to substitute more pleasant and happifying thoughts.

What the world specially needs is what .the Bible alone can give. Bible students alone are qualified to introduce others to this comfort of the Scriptures. More and more, therefore, it should be our aim to bind up the broken-hearted and to say to the weary and heavy-laden, “Come to Christ, and find relief and rest. .Come now, and see who is the great Burden-bearer for all who become His followers. Then look beyond the present and see how, in harmony with the Father’s gracious arrangement, He Will eventually scatter the blessings of Restitution far and wide. Behold the Love of God, which constraineth us ! Cast away your fear of Him! Draw nigh unto Him through Christ, and He will draw nigh unto you.”

As there may be proper times for telling something about the time of trouble coming, which will inaugurate Messiah’s glorious reign, so there may be proper times for telling the wayward that those who sin shall suffer; that walking in the ways of sin they are walking away from God; that the end of that way is death; and that “whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” But these features of the Divine Word are not so necessary to be repeated every day; for mankind instinctively know that sin leads to suffering of some kind, and that righteousness sooner or later brings its reward.

What the world needs most is encouragement to turn away from sin, to realise the sympathy of God for the rebellious family of Adam, and to know of the arrangement which God has made whereby He will have mercy upon all, through

Christ. We need to follow the Master's course when He declared, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." We need to tell those who see and hear what a blessing they enjoy.

It is necessary at times to point to the narrow way of self-sacrifice, self-denial, suffering, which the followers of Jesus must take if they would share with Him in His Kingdom glories, honors and immortality. But they "will find the narrowness" of the way, even if we should not tell them. No one can walk in the narrow way, no one can follow Jesus, without knowing the truth of the statement, "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

What then shall we tell the people? Oh, give them also the Message of hope, the Message of joy, the Message of peace! Let us draw the attention of the brethren to the blessed privileges that are ours, rather than frequently to point them to the trials and hardships of the way. But what are the privileges of the Christian, if through great tribulation he must enter the Kingdom? They are, oh, so grand! It is his to know the joy of sins forgiven; and many need to have this told them over and over again, that they may fully appreciate it. It is his to know of the Heavenly Father's Love and care—matters so easily forgotten in the stress of life. These assurances of the Word need to be repeated over and over: "The Father Himself loveth you." "God is for us." "All things shall work together for good to them that love God."

As these promises of God's Word abound in our hearts, they promote the fruits of the Holy Spirit; joy and peace come in, such as the world can neither give nor take away. The peace of God, which passeth all human understanding, thus gradually comes more and more to dwell in our hearts; and so thankfulness results. Thankfulness in turn leads to more joy and praise, and to more sympathy for our fellows—for our families and for the world. Thus the Christian finds himself growing in grace, knowledge and love.

"Think On These Things."

All this is in full accord with St. Paul's advice:- "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are . of good report; if there be any virtue, 'and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8.) • Following this course then—of preaching the Gospel of Hope—we are following the Master and the Apostles. . They had so much of this spirit of hope, trust, confidence, love, joy and peace, that they could rejoice in tribulation; and 'they did, so. The Apostles even sang praise to God that they were accounted worthy to share in the sufferings of Christ, that they might also share in His coming glories.

Let us then, dear brethren, realise that the world has tears and sorrows enough, and fears aplenty. Let us more and more use our time, strength, talents, joys, etc., in relieving the poor world of its mental distress. Harken 'to the words of Jesus, "God' shall wipe all tears from all eyes." "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." As it will be God's great work in the future, through Christ and the Church, to wipe away earth's tears, let us chase away some of those fears at the present time. Thus we shall help to prepare the way for the world to come back into fellowship with God by and by, for the faithful of the present time to walk more carefully in the footsteps of Jesus and to encourage one another in the good way.

BIBLE STUDY MEETINGS.

The friends of the Adelaide Class extend a hearty invitation to each and all in those parts who may desire to join them in their Bible Studies.

The meetings are quite unsectarian, and are held each Sunday afternoon and evening, also mid-week, in Liverpool Buildings, Flinders Street, Adelaide.

For further information address the Class Secretary, Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Forest Avenue East, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, South Australia.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF RESTITUTION TIMES.

A request was received recently for copies of the picture in fulfilment of Isaiah 11:6; with which many of our friends will be familiar, and these are now in stock in three sizes for all who may desire them.

The prints are well worth framing; the picture itself being in the following sizes:-5 x 3; 7 x 44; and' 9 x 5I. The prices are 6d., 9d. and 1/- each, posted.

“A little while” for patient vigil keeping,
To face the stern, to wrestle with the strong;
“A little while” to sow the seed with weeping,
Then bind the sheaves and sing the harvest song.

“A little while” to keep the oil from failing,
“A little while” faith’s flickering lamp to trim;
And then the Bridegroom’s coming footsteps hailing
To haste to meet Him with the bridal hymn.

And He who is Himself the Gift and Giver,
The future glory and the present smile,
With the bright promise of the glad “forever,”
Will light the shadows of the “little while.”

Jane F. Crewdson.

PEOPLES PAPER.

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

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to “Peoples Paper” is overdue.

“A VOICE FROM SWITZERLAND.”

WITHIN recent months a booklet bearing the above title has been circulated amongst some of our brethren, and it has been thought well to bring it more particularly before the minds of our readers at this time. Originally printed in German the work was published by Bro. Dr. W. Hodler, of Switzerland, entitled, “Das Tier,” and being so well thought of by Bro. J. G. Kuehn, of New Jersey, U.S.A., he had the translation carried out with the willing assistance of interested helpers for the benefit of ‘the English brethren as a whole.

In this booklet the writer takes up an explanation of Revelation 17 and 13, and deals extensively with the Roman Empire—the “beast”—with its various “heads” .’kingdoms---. (upon which the “woman”—the Roman Catholic Church—sits) showing ;that these, commencing early in the Gospel Age, have continued down into our own day, as one has given place to the next, and so on, in fulfilment of this important revelation.

The following rather lengthy extracts from the work are set out with the object of prompting all the interested to a careful study of these things, so that none may be in darkness concerning the momentous times in which we are living. While all that is expressed in the booklet may not be correct in every detail, there is surely much that will commend itself to the sincere student of God’s Word:—

“At the time the Revelator’ sees and describes these things the sixth ‘head’ is in control and a ‘seventh’ is to come and is to continue a short space The head is the seat of the central nervous system and of the will; from it the entire organism is controlled and its action directed. A ‘head’ is, therefore, a very fitting picture of that power in Europe which occupies the leadership, the chief nation. We would observe here that during the Christian phase of the Roman Empire Rome itself did not continue to be the head’ or centre of government of Europe, but was succeeded by various other countries or kingdoms. Each successive principal ruling power was outwardly marked by the fact that its head bore the imperial crown of Rome, the only exception being that of the sixth head, which, however, we shall find is in full harmony with the Scriptures.

“During the Christian phase of the Roman Empire the following powers constituted successively the heads of Europe, historical proof of which will be given in the following pages:—

(1) Byzantium, or Constantinople, from 312 to about 500 A.b. (2) The Kingdom of the Franks, from about 500 to 900 A.D. (3) Germany, from 900 to 1250 A.D. (4) Austria, from about 1273 to about 1659 A.D. (5) France from about 1659 to 1815 A.D. (fall of Napoleon.) (6) England, from 1815 to about 1925 A.D.

“The seventh ‘head,’ according to our understanding, will be Italy. We are inclined to think that we are already living in the epoch of the seventh ‘head.’ Italy will -be revealed as such by the assumption of the imperial crown of Rome, an event more or less expected by the world to-day.

The Eighth Head.

“We read that after the seventh, an eighth ‘head’ will appear, which will then be the original ‘beast’ in its entirety: ‘And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.’ This can only mean that after the rule of the seventh head no single power will again have the leadership of the other more or less independent States of Europe, but that a combination government will be created for all Europe. This government will be neither democratic nor a European parliament, as dreamed of by a few political enthusiasts to-day; but one of the seven named leading powers will use its position to bring all Europe into dependence to it. The Scriptures tell us that this will not be brought about by war or conquest, but by a voluntary agreement with the heads of the other States. We believe that Italy will bring about this creation of an autocratic Pan-Europe; and with it the Roman Empire would have returned to its starting point—an undivided unity, with the City of Rome as its governing) centre.

“Who can fail to see that this very thing is the goal in the mind of the present rulers. of Italy, and which is giving such impetus to the Fascist striving for power? Thus Italy’s aspirations may, indeed, find fulfilment. The Roman Empire will then occupy a position of power never before attained: it will lord it over the whole world.

“But the Scriptures also state that this is the very condition that must precede the utter and final ruin of this empire.

The Beast Which Was and is Not.

“The Revelator tells us that his view of these events falls into the period when the ‘beast’ is not We understand that John describes these things as taking place at the beginning of the Lord’s day—the period of transition to the Millennium. ‘He (finds himself carried down in spirit to the period of the sixth ‘head’ —the British Empire—as we shall see from other Scriptures, at the end of this period, just before the seventh ‘head’ is to attain dominion and the development of the ‘beast’ which is about to ascend out of the abyss (v. 8, Diaglott) begins to appear. This was not the case until after the world war. Thus, the year 1920 is about the date indicated as the period of time from which the Revelator views the course of events. This assumption is seemingly supported by Rev. 11:18: ‘And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come.’ We think that this verse speaks of the world war as already in the past, and that the second part—Thy wrath is come’—is about to be fulfilled.

“England as the ‘Sixth Head’ outlasted the world war, coming forth victoriously from it. It even increased. outwardly, having secured for itself a large portion of the former German colonies. But immediately after the close of the war signs of dissolution appeared in this great and powerful system. England had to grant such far-reaching independence to Ireland and to other dominions that it is a question, if these would be found at her side in a future war. India and Egypt, the foundations of Great Britain’s commercial power, seem to be especially endangered now by emancipation movements.

The Seventh Head: Italy.

“To-day we certainly are living in the time of the ‘Seventh Head’s’ arising, concerning which the Revelator says that ‘he must continue a short space.’ “In October, 1922, Fascism attained power in Italy by a revolution. With it came the dictatorship of Mussolini, which restored order in that country, so deeply disordered by incessant strikes and lockouts, and plunged into anarchy through the Socialistic rule, taking a new political course of a strongly-marked nationalistic and imperialistic character. Mussolini became the father of a new political doctrine, having discarded the democratic and liberal doctrines, which had constituted the ideal power of the Anglo-Saxon epoch. This new political faith finds day by day a greater and a more unconditional following. among authoritative politicians in all Europe. Mussolini makes no secret of the fact that he holds Fascism to be of universal importance Surprisingly early does the seventh ‘Head’ step forth with aspirations to a renewal of the Roman Empire, as if it knew that it must make haste, because it was allotted only ‘a short space.’ The idea seems to belong to Mussolini himself. ‘We shall,’ said he, ‘make Rome the spiritual city, the pulsation heart, the living soul of the Italian Empire, of which . I dream.’ And this • Empire is not thought of simply as a national Empire such, for instance, as the German Empire of the last century, but as a renewal of the old Roman Empire. -

The Ten Horns of the Beast.

“Daniel had already seen the vision of the ‘beast with ten horns,’ evidently pictured at the time of its full development, at the time of the end. He records in chapter 7, verse 24, that the ten horns are individual powers into which the universal empire of the ‘Beast’ splits up. ‘In Revelation 17:12, we read in greater detail: ‘And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received’ no kingdom as yet, but receive power as kings one hour with the Beast.’ This definition evidently points to dictators. Therefore, when the ‘Beast’ ascends out of the abyss then the ‘ten toed’ kingdoms (Daniel 2:42) of the fourth world—empire., the individual European States—will be ruled by dictators. (The number ‘ten’ need not be taken literally, but points to a .multiple expressed by ten.)

“We see these dictators spring from the ground as if by command, in recent years. After Italy we saw Spain - and Greece (where it is temporarily discarded), Portugal, Poland, Hungary, and finally Jugo-Slavia, openly pass over to dictatorships. But these exist in many countries in a more or less covered manner, as in Bulgaria, Rumania and Turkey. Yes,. even Germany, France and England are gradually preparing for dictatorships. We do not mention Russia, although it, too, is a dictatorship; because that country, as the ‘land of the North,’ occupies a position apart from the ‘Beast’—the Roman Empire.

.(‘In more recent times Germany has certainly passed to a dictatorship, and with respect’ to France, the following cutting from the Melbourne ‘Herald,’ of October 25th, is of interest: ‘Complete confusion has followed the defeat of the Daladier Ministry on its Budget. The task of the President (M. le Ilrun) in arranging a Ministry is unusually difficult. Probably France will eventually settle down to a national union coalition Government. The only real alternative would be a dictatorship, of which everyone is talking. There would be little opposition dictatorship, if a real leader could be discovered.’)

The Solidarity of the Ten Horns and the Beast.

- "In verse 13 we read: 'These (the ten horns) have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the Beast.' 'This would indicate that the European dictators will join themselves to the 'Head' power of the Roman Empire. The individual rulers will find it to their interest, to support vigorously the Roman dictatorship, or at least to lean upon it, just as tyrannical governments in the past have mutually supported each other. An intimate covenant of friendship between Italy and Spain has been signed; Jugo-Slavia has suddenly shown a striking friendliness, recently toward its chief competitor in the Adriatic—'Italy.

"Thus, in an altogether 'peaceful' manner, a universal European Empire may again be formed under the leadership of Italy. The .Revelator .even mentions a giving up of power to the 'Beast' on the part of the dictators. This would mean the resurrection of the Roman Empire in its ancient form. This epoch is designated by the Revelator as 'The Eighth Head.'

"While the democratic powers did .not succeed in bringing about a real league of nations or unity of purpose, it seems to be given to the dictator-ruled Italy to bring the other dictator States together into one uniform State under its own leadership. The present 'League' will probably not even be considered as a basis for this union. It is entirely foreign to the character of the 'Beast,' . being an institution brought forth by a pacifist, democratic spirit, and will probably wholly disappear. The unity pointed out in verse 13 will be brought about by an agreement between the dictators—by setting aside all right of co-determination and discussion on the part of the nations—since it could hardly be accomplished otherwise. This community of interests, which is well supported historically and logically, is also outlined in verse 17: 'For God hath put it in their (the ten horns) hearts to fulfil His will and to agree and give their kingdom 'unto the Beast, until the words of God •shall be fulfilled.'

"Even He is the Eighth" (Head).

"With this new formation of a United Europe under one supreme ruler, the 'Beasts would, then have returned to its original state. We read that the eighth head is one of the seven already_ mentioned. Italy, the seventh head, would doubtless become the central government of this giant empire. Rome would thus again be the centre of the civilised world. A telegram by Mussolini, addressed to the Mayor of Rome, on October 31st, 1923, is significant: 'You know what we want. Rome must again, as in the days 'of old, become the city of cities—the Eternal City—just as she was in her golden age.'

(In this connection the following report from the Melbourne "Argus," of August. 1st, is interesting:—"(hie of the most salient and dominant characteristics of life in Italy to-day is the wave of nationalism, which is sweeping through the country," said Mr. R. A. Shaw, a graduate of: the Melbourne University, who returned from Italy yesterday. "'Italy for the Italians' is now the keynote of politics, and the creeds of national unity and independence are being fostered in every breast. Although foreigners receive every courtesy, they are not over welcome."

"This devotion to national interests is finding an outlet in many unusual. but highly interesting channels," Mr.

Shaw continued. "Emanating from Mussolini, a strong movement is afoot which has as its principal object the return to the spirit of ancient Rome. Guided and strengthened by the glorious past of the ancient Empire the Italian people hope to advance to an even. more glorious future. There are manifestations of this spirit all through Italy, where the names of scores of small towns have been changed: from the Italian to the Roman equivalent. The town of Presto, in the province of Salerno, is a typical example of this remarkable movement, the name - having been changed to the Roman, Paestum. Mussolini himself is anxious to resemble a Roman Caesar.")

The Beast Goes into Destruction.

" 'And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth (head), and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition' (verse 11.)

"It is here indicated, as it is also in verse 8, that this resurrection of the Roman Empire takes place in the universal empire of the end, in order that in the purposes of God He may at one blow make an end of everything contrary to Him and to His power. Thus the Seed of the woman will bruise (literally 'crush') the serpent's head" (Gen. 3:15).

The book goes on to show how the closing scenes in the great world drama may be expected to work out according to the Lord's will and in His due time for the establishment of His kingdom. of righteousness which will stand for ever.

We believe that a careful study of this, booklet of 90 pages will be found profitable. by 'all the:, Lord's people,

-who are rejoicing in the truth and looking for-Ward to the fulfilment of all. that our Lord has spoken in His wonderful revelation through the faithful Apostle.

Copies of "A Voice From Switzerland" are expected to arrive very shortly and may be had by all desiring them. The price will be just sufficient to cover the cost and postage.

Correspondence.

New South Wales, 5/10/33. Berean Biblical Institute,

Dear Brethren,—

I am herewith requesting a copy of "Herald of Christ's Kingdom," and also would like to know of your publications and prices. I wish to mention here how grateful I am to have been led to read "Desolations of the Sanctuary," as without such help I could never have been restored to the sweetness of the truth as when Brother Russell served us.

For the past few months I have been seriously troubled with the Rutherford doctrine; could see it was not the Master's voice, and yet was unable to extricate myself from the terrible force of its arguments and threats. For the past few weeks I associated, and on two occasions assisted in distributing their literature, supposing that such obedience was essential, but terribly worried all the time.

I am very relieved to know that the Lord has a means and place for comforting those who will not follow the stranger nor take part in the misrepresentation of our Father's name. I would like to mention the name of. the Sister who loaned me the book, "Desolations." I will be visiting her shortly, as she lives near at hand.

I have now broken off all connections with the Watch Tower Association, recognising that the truth and proper spirit of the Lord's people is not with them.

Thanking you again as the means of allowing me to regain the freedom of the sons of God, and thanking Him who is thus reaching out to such as me by this means. That many thus imprisoned will be ultimately delivered is our confidence, for we know that the Lord knows those that are His.

Your brother in Christ, P.A.

Dear Friend,—

I can truly say that the "People's Papers" are among some of the "fat things" to my soul. Every word is helpful, and I will pass them on to any whom I find will have the mind for them. Enclosed is a small offering to help on the work. When it is possible I will send more.

I have often wondered just what, "wheresoever the carcass is there will the eagles be gathered together," means, and from the reading of the October copy of the "People's Paper" I was delighted to find an answer to my quest, viz., that when Jesus returns to His people one is to be taken and the other left. Where Lord? Answer: To be taken out from the nominal professing churches to be gathered together around the carcass" like the "eagles" gathered together, feeding on the Word of God. We are (if faithful stewards) taken out one by one and waited on by the Master, who will make us sit down to feast on the fat things of His Word.

Dear friend, I have the assurance of my salvation and have learnt to yield to God for victory over self, but I am hungry for a clearer understanding of the Scriptures. However, I am reading carefully the Bible, and am very interested and helped day by day. I am not yet quite clear of the manner of the Lord's Second Coming, but am prayerfully studying the subject.

I thank you for your help and cheer.

Yours in Christ Jesus, R.E.F.

[The booklet, "Christ's Return," deals with the important subject of the manner of Christ's return and manifestation. Its cost is just 4d., or sent free upon request].

South Australia, Oct. 20th, 1933. Dear Friends,—

I am enclosing stamps, and shall be very pleased if you will send me a copy of "Mythology Explained," price 3d.

I have been hoping to have sent a subscription for the "People's Paper," which you have so kindly been sending me; but I am sorry that I am not able to do so yet. With your kind invitation to attend a convention when there is one in Adelaide, I should be very pleased to do so; but even if it were financially possible I would meet with family opposition. I have studied the copy of the "Plan of the Ages," which I find most interesting. I hope to read all your books in time, and I am watching world events in connection with the Book of Revelation, and I would like to know if you have any explanation of the 12th chapter of Revelation.

Thanking you again for your assistance in my study of the Bible, Yours sincerely B.A.

Building a Disposition

"Well, I do hope that when I reach the age when I have to be taken care of, I shall be willing to let other people have their way instead of insisting upon my own and making it hard for everybody else," said a clear, decided voice as three women parted at the street corner.

They had been discussing the troubles of an acquaintance. As the speaker departed, the other two looked at each other with a significant smile. This friend of theirs was one who had great faith in her own wisdom.

"I am afraid that virtue does not develop suddenly," remarked one. "I suspect that the person who is to be gentle and unselfishly considerate in old age has to begin to cultivate that spirit much further back."

That is the story of so many of our failures to attain Our ideals. We do not begin to practice their graces early enough. The strong, self-controlled, useful man-, hood or womanhood does not grow naturally from a, careless, self-indulged youth, and the beautiful old age that is a benediction is not likely to spring from the hasty, domineering spirit that has been allowed to rule middle life.

Character is a garden whose gracious flowering calls for early planting.

IT IS NOT THE DEED WE DO.

"It is not the deed we do,
Though the deed be ever so fair,

But the love that the dear Lord looketh for
Hidden with holy care.

In the heart of the deed so fair.
"The love is the priceless thing,

The treasure our treasure must hold;
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,

Or tell the worth of the gold
By the love that cannot be told."

The Wise Choice

“Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”—Joshua 24:15.

THE Children of Israel had crossed Jordan. Moses was dead and Joshua was their leader. They were having no difficulty at that time; but Joshua thought that it was proper just then for them to make their decision—proper for them to decide whether or not they would be faithful to the Lord, or would allow themselves to be led away by the idolatry of the people who lived in Canaan. Joshua had called them together and had recounted to them the Lord’s blessings and favour which they had thus far enjoyed, and then expressed himself in the grand and noble sentiments of our text.

So, dear friends, we who realise that the Lord has been blessing, guiding and sustaining us in the past, should come to a full, positive decision as respects our course of life. The very fact of coming to a positive decision is a great blessing and a great help in the formation of character. Every time we come to a wise decision on any question, it strengthens mind and character, and makes us much more ready for another test—along some other line, perhaps.

We well recognise the fact that the entire consecration which the Christian makes, leaves nothing out; but we need to have some touchstone, something which will enable the mind to reach a decision quickly, and this touchstone should be God’s will, so that to perceive the Lord’s will on any subject would be to settle it without any temporising. Again, it is highly proper that we should reiterate our consecration, and thus make it prominent before others.

For instance, if we were at a testimony meeting, there would be nothing wrong in saying, “Whatever anyone else may do, I acknowledge God and will serve Him!”—not as a new vow, but as a fresh acknowledgment of the consecration vow we have already taken.

We are to recognise the difference between making a new covenant every day, and the daily renewing of our covenant; the one would be an impropriety; the other would be proper. If we have made a binding covenant for life, we should no more think of breaking it than would a man who had leased a house or sold it.

Every day we should renew our covenant with the Lord—renew it and make it fresh in our minds, thus showing that there has been no change on our part; that we are still in the same attitude. This is the same thought as was in the making of our consecration; we are dead with Christ—“Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price.” We are exhorted to make this review of our lives and renewal of our consecration daily; to continue to keep this before our minds and hearts; to render our sacrifice to the Lord. Thus we are baptised by baptism into His death; and this baptism continues just as it was with our Lord. He had made His consecration and so it had to be completed; so it is with us; our vow, our covenant is unto death.

If the Lord’s consecrated people could be brought to the point where the chief aim in life, the burden of all their prayers, would be that they might have a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of the Truth, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of a sound mind, what a blessing it would mean! If then they should wrestle with Him until the breaking of day, their hold upon Him would be sure to bring the desired blessing. The Lord reveals Himself for the purpose of giving this blessing; but He withholds it until we learn to appreciate and desire it.

Hitlerism and the Churches.

In one of the telegrams of congratulation sent to Herr Hitler on his forty-fourth birthday the Stahlhelm leader's declared that under his leadership they would held' to complete his "mighty work—the creation of the German nation." It is clear that Herr Hitler is succeeding in his attempt to unify the political, commercial, business and religious life of the German people and that the German people are submissively accepting the domination of, the Nazi Commissioners in all departments of life. The plan which is known as the Gleichschaltung is being applied to the Protestant 'Churches. "The Times" correspondent, at Berlin, writing on the subject, said that the process began in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, where the Nazi Premier has appointed a Nazi "Commissioner^ for Tile Evangelical Lutheran Church," who has dissolved all administrative bodies of the Church in that State and taken over their functions.

The German Evangelical Church Union, the correspondent adds, has protested to the Government against this step, recalling, that Herr Hitler, in his Government declaration, solemnly guaranteed the independence and constitutional rights of the Church. On the other hand the German Christians—a Nazi organisation of Protestant churchgoers—demands "Bishops and not Parliaments"; they want their new national Church governed by men and not by Synods. The Gleichschaltung policy strikes at the independence of the Protestant State Churches in the various States and aims at creating a unified national Church, whose control will be centralised at Berlin.—'Christian World."

WHY DOUBT THE RESURRECTION ?

Who would imagine that from a single grain of seed a huge tree would rise up, unless he had it as a certain fact by experience? In the extreme minuteness of a grain where is the wood buried, the roughness of the bark, the greenness of the root, the savour of the fruit, the sweetness of the scents, the variety of the colors, the softness of the leaves? Yet because we know this by experience, we do not doubt that all these spring from a single grain of seed. Where, then, is the difficulty that dust shall return into limbs, when we have every day before our eyes the power of the Creator, who in a marvellous manner from a grain creates wood and fruit.—S. Gregory.

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