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THE SECOND PRESENCE OF CHRIST:

His Revealing and Manifestation.

Continued from May Issue.

THERE are some Scriptures which are used to teach contrary to what has been stated in these articles in the last three issues of this paper, but which we believe will be found to be in harmony therewith when carefully examined. For instance, Acts 1:11, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." The apostle Peter (1 Pet. 3:18) informs us plainly that our Lord was "put to death flesh but quickened spirit," which is in harmony with St. Paul's statement "sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body." So then our Lord at His ascension was no longer human, but spirit, and after His ascension was exalted to the Divine nature "in the express image of the 'Father.'" He had, on a few occasions after His resurrection, assumed the human form so as to be seen by and to converse with the disciples, who were to be witnesses to the fact of His resurrection. Acts 1:9 reads, "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was 'taken up, and a cloud received Him .out of their sight.'" The eleventh verse does not promise that anyone will see our Lord return, it simply says that He will come again in like manner as He went. 'The cloud that received Him, then, may symbolise the same thing that the Lord indicated when He said, "Ye shall .see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.'" (Matt. 24:30.) That is, that clouds, in symbolic scriptural language, -indicates trouble, distress or calamities, and Daniel informs us . (Dan. 12:1) that when Michael (Christ). stands up there is. to be the greatest time of trouble ever experienced. The evangelist Luke, quoting the same words .as Matt. 24:30,. adds, 21:27-28, "when these things, begin to come to pass look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption. (or deliverance) draweth nigh." If it -were, as some think, that our Lord will suddenly appear .sitting on a cloud, there be no waiting for the deliverance soon to be, for they would according to their understanding be instantly caught away to be with the Lord. The meaning seems clearly to be that the clouds of trouble will encircle the earth, and the watchers will be able to discern. in. the severe experiences of the world, that it is the sign "of the presence of the Son of Man," who is to come and take control of the world. He will command ..'Peace be still" (Psalm 46), and then cause "righteousness and truth to spring out of the earth." They shall discern the Son of Man in the clouds • in the same way that we can discern Satan in all the wickedness now in the world and in all the false religions of our day.

It is in this way that ultimately "every .eye shall .see Him." (Rev. 1:7.)

EARTH'S NEW RULER.

Satan has long been "The prince of this world," "The prince of the power of the air,"^ "The god of this world who now worketh in the children of disobedience." (2 Cor. 4:4; Ephes. 2:2.) He has been permitted thus to reign and bring experiences to mankind so that they may learn what it is to be disobedient to God's laws. Christ comes to hind Satan, and to take the Kingdom instead. ..He will deliver mankind from bondage to Satan, sin and death. As no one sees Satan, who is a Spiritual being, so the world will not see the new Ruler, who has distinctly said, "The world seeth Me no more." (John 14:19.) The 'Church will see Him, for they -are to be changed to be "like Him," spirit beings.

It is when we see matters in this light that the Scriptures become so much clearer and truths respecting our Lord's second presence open up.

In the 24th of Matthew we have in symbolic a language a history of the Gospel Age, terminating with the second

presence of Christ. The same history, with more detail, is given in the Book of Revelation, also in symbols.

The disciples being impressed by the Lord's doings and sayings respecting the Temple a few days before His death, asked Him, Matt. 24:3, "Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of Thy presence (Greek, parousia) and of the end of the world (Age)."

Verses 4-14 seem to be a brief synopsis of the Gospel Age, from that time down to the end. It is an outline of prophecy which has been very clearly fulfilled, as history reveals. What deceptions there have been in connection with the Christian religion. What great claims have been made to great authority, even to be Christ. What wars and unrest, what famines, pestilences, scourges, and the people of God have been martyred and tortured. Nation has risen against nation.

Verse 14: "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

The Gospel is the good news of Christ's Kingdom for the blessing of all the families of the earth. It has now been preached in every land to every nation and almost every dialect, so that we are surely living in the "time of the end."

Verses 15-22 appear to be so worded that they answer that portion of the question relating to the typical temple and Jerusalem and gave instructions to such as had "ears to hear," which saved many lives when the city was taken by Titus's army. Josephus points out that. "The fall of the city seemed imminent about A.D. 68, but for some reason the Roman Army was recalled, and so Christians made good their escape. Only two years later the city fell amidst the greatest slaughter that had ever been up to that time. That, however, was only a partial fulfilment of the prophecy which is to be fulfilled on a larger scale at the end of this Age, in the destruction of the great systems of Christendom.

Verses 23-27 speak of the presence of Christ, and show that He will not again appear as a man, that they could say "He is in the desert," or that He is in some secret room. If anyone should tell us that He is here or there, that He can be located anywhere, then we are not to believe them. The presence will be everywhere just like the sunshine that comes from the east unto the west. The word "lightning," used in the authorized version, allows of a wrong thought, and has misled many to think that the Lord will come like "lightning," which stays not a moment. The Greek word means "bright shining," and is so translated in Luke 11:36. It is used in Revelations for lightnings, but it undoubtedly here refers to the "bright shining" of the Sun of Righteousness. It is a beautiful illustration of the presence of Christ. "Chose awake and watching may see the glories of the rising sun for some time, even before it rises above the horizon. How it dispels the gloom and darkness just as the Sun of Righteousness arising will disperse the dark night of sin and sorrow, of superstition and error, and bring healing in its wings. (Mal. 4:2.)

Thus the Lord would guard us from the many deceptions which were to be, and undoubtedly are, prevalent in this our day. The question of the disciples was: "What shall be the sign of Thy 'parousia,' presence?" —not a sign of His arrival and departure, like the lightning. The Lord adds, "So also shall the presence of the Son of Man be." Lightning has no presence: it is simply a flash and gone.

Verse 28 indicates that there is to be a feast just as eagles or carrions feed upon flesh, so those who hunger and thirst after righteousness and truth will be found where the food is (see again Luke 12:37; Rev. 3:20).

Verses 29-31 seem to refer to the tribulation of God's people during the dark days of Papal persecution and martyrdom foretold by Daniel 7:25.

This great desolating power received its deadly wound by Napoleon. Its power to "tread down the saints" was broken in 1799. There have been the literal demonstrations, in the literal heavens in the notable dark days of May 19, 1780 (sun darkened), and in the wonderful showers of falling stars of November 13, 1833, as though to draw attention to the more important fulfilment of this prophecy in the fact that the Gospel light has been darkened by false teachings, such as Evolution, Higher Criticism, etc., and that the clear shining of the writings of the apostles, the twelve stars, has been beclouded by destructive heresies. Then the powers of the heavens (the religious systems) shall be shaken. There has now been a general disintegrating process at work throughout Christendom. When we see such processes at work, we may take that as a sign of His presence. This is in line with our Lord's parable, "Let both (wheat and tares) grow together until the harvest" (the end of the Age), when He would send His messengers to gather the tares in bundles to burn them, and to garner the wheat. The trumpet would refer to the proclamation of truth by which the separation would take place. Then will come the great time of trouble, "all the tribes of earth shall mourn."

Verses 32-35 give another sign, this one on earth. The separating of the wheat from the tares is a work in the

“heavens,” the religious world. The sign of the fig tree budding is of the earth, and refers to the nation of Israel, which must again come into Divine favour. Surely Israel’s hopes are budding again. When ye shall see all these things know that it is near. The generation seeing all these signs of Christ’s presence shall not pass until the great trouble has occurred, and the Kingdom of righteousness and peace has been established,

Verses 36-39. These verses clearly indicate that just as Noah was a preacher of righteousness for 120 years before the Flood, so Christ would be present for some time before the great calamity which is to destroy the world systems of this evil day. Noah preached and warned, but they went on with their own selfish pursuits, regardless of the message. They “knew not.”

2 Pet. 3:3-7, 10, 12, 13 foretell similar conditions, and are not these conditions with us to-day? Luke 17:26-30 also mentions the conditions in Sodom and Gomorrah, and they also refused the message in the days of Lot, and both Matthew and Luke state that “as it was in the days of Noah,” and “in the days of Lot,” so also shall it be in the days of the Son of Man. Thus the Scriptures clearly declare that Christ would be present for some time prior to the great calamity, although only the watchers would know of His presence. All others, as in the time of Noah and Lot, are not to know.

The important thing is to watch, for no one should know the day nor the hour of the Lord’s arrival, nor of the actual time when the great time of trouble will overwhelm the world.

The Lord did not inform the disciples so that the Church might fix dates for future events. In answer to the “when shall these things be?” He simply has given the signs of His presence and told us to “watch,” so that we may discern His presence when He has come. Then we may enter the feast of spiritual things which He has promised to His waiting people, and may be gradually called away to be with the “Lord in the air.”

Before He will set up His Kingdom He will gather His elect from the four winds of heaven. Then the saints are to share the glorious work of that Kingdom of peace. Satan, however, must first be bound, and the Church are to have something to do in this connection, for the promise is, “The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” Then, the time of trouble over, the Prince of Peace shall reign from shore to shore, and the prayer be answered, “Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” (Rev. 21:1-4.)

Following this highly figurative statement of prophecy in answer to the disciple’s question respecting His second presence, the Lord gives three illustrative parables which indicate progressive conditions and work that will occupy Him on His return.

The “Ten Virgins” parable shows the proper attitude of the watching Christians, and how some will fail.

The Parable of the “Talents” shows how the Lord will have a work to do among Christians, in winding up the affairs of the Gospel Age, completing the number of God’s elect.

The Parable of “The Sheep and the Goats” then follows, showing the work of the Kingdom Age, when the Church, with Christ, are to judge the world during that thousand years’ reign (1 Cor. 6:2). Matt. 25:31 very distinctly informs us that the parable is applicable to that time. “Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate one from another.”

For nearly 1900 years God has been judging and selecting the Church, for the “High calling in Christ Jesus.” During that thousand years’ reign of Christ the whole world will have the advantage of the judgments of the Lord, and Isaiah 26:9 states that “when Thy judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” (Psalm 22:27-28.)

Those rightly exercised by the favourable conditions of that time of blessing (Psalm 72; Isaiah 35) will develop hearts of love and care for their fellows, but others of the goat nature will not respond, but will think only of their own selfish ease and pleasure.

The righteous do kindness by nature without thinking of it, the unrighteous never think of doing kindness that will involve any cost or sacrifice. Eternal life is only designed for such as become righteous, such as are restored to “the image and likeness of God,” lost by the First Adam, but restored to all the willing and obedient by the Second Adam. Time and space would fail to tell of the blessing of that glorious Kingdom of Christ. No wonder the angels sang “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and goodwill towards men,” and said, “Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.”

The righteous receive eternal life and enter into the Kingdom “prepared for them from the foundations of the world”—Paradise—the earthly home. The wicked are cut off for ever. They have been redeemed from the Adamic sentence of death by the Cross of Christ, but have again incurred the death penalty—the second death from which there is no redemption—it will be an everlasting punishment. The Greek word signifies a “cutting off” as a branch is lopped off a tree. There is no life for humanity apart from Christ, who, “by the grace of God tasted death for every man.”

(Concluded.)

“THIS IS THE VICTORY THAT OVERCOMETH THE WORLD, EVEN OUR FAITH.”

“Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”-1 Cor. 15:57.

When you are disappointed, set at nought, your wishes crossed, your tastes offended, your advice disregarded, and you take it all in patient loving forbearance,

This is Victory!

When you will not approve, by word or silent acquiescence, exaggeration, evil speaking, vain imaginations, or perverse conduct,

This is Victory!

When you do not love to refer to yourself in conversation, nor glory in your own pious deeds, when you can in honor prefer others,

This is Victory!

When you can be conscientious under all conditions, when you can be faithful in things small and great, when you can practice true Christianity equally in your home as in public life,

This is Victory!

When you have stumbled into error, weakness or sin, or seem overwhelmed by discouragement, suffering or wrong, and you thereafter grasp more firmly the hand of the Lord,

This is Victory!

When you can count all earthly desires and ambitions as loss and dross compared to the full approval of the Heavenly King,

This is Victory!

When you can stand face to face with the opponents of truth and righteousness, who misunderstand, hate, and persecute you, and you faithfully endure it all as Jesus did,

This is Victory!

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THE work done during the past year has not been large, yet we trust it has been- of benefit to many. There are those in very lonely places who -find the monthly. visits of the “People’s Paper” a blessing and encouragement to press along the narrow way towards the “mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Others, too, who though having more opportunities of .personal fellowship write of their appreciation of the “People’s Paper,” which just aids in holding in touch with one another classes and individuals. rejoicing in the present truth.

It will be noticed that the subscriptions to the “People’s Paper” are far short of paying for its expense of printing and posting, so that the deficiency requires to be made up by the Tract Fund. Unlike other periodicals, there. are no paid’ advertisements to help out the cost of the Paper. Its only source of revenue is the subscription list, and there is opportunity for all interested to increase this by obtaining new subscribers.

Back numbers are freely supplied to all who can make good use of them. There is still work to -be done, and ..., probably the present conditions of stress may check the careless godlessness which has of late years more than ever manifested itself ill luxurious extravagance, waste and selfish pleasures, and affect some hearts so that they will feel after better things and be prepared for the comfort, joy and peace in the time of trouble, which alone the truth can .bring. There is still the joy of bringing-the cool, refreshing draught to the thirsty soul for the zealous worker. There are still “Israelites indeed” to be ‘found by the faithful Phillips. The truth presented in the .quiet earnest way is all that is necessary. It will be found more effective so than if accompanied by human. power or orator • ‘ eloquence,

Phillip’s earnest “come and see” brought. Nathaniel, and such quiet invitation to read a tract or come to ‘a chart talk or class for studying God’s Word is all that is needed for any who are hungering for the knowledge of God and His great purposes.

We invite all to more earnest consideration in this service for the Lord of the harvest.

The Tract Fund has not quite met the expense of the year, but probably the new year will make it up. Besides the amount contributed, the Tract Fund. there was during- the year the ‘stint i:18/6 specially donated for the ‘purpose of publishing literature in the Zulu language. There have been difficulties in the way of having this accomplished, but there is now a prospect of having the work done. We hope to report favourably ill the matter before very long.

Tracts are available for willing workers, and we would just remind all that more results are obtained by personally handing them to. the people than by just putting them under the doors or in letter boxes. To be successful in this or any

Christian service there needs be the preparation of one’s own heart by prayer for grace to act and speak so as to gain

all entrance for the word and to bring honour to His “name whose we are and whom we serve. •

TRACT FUND ACCOUNT.

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AN ANZAC DAY SERVICE.

THE following clipping from the Melbourne “Herald,” of April 25th, gives the remarks of the Rev. A. Penry Evans, expressed at the Anzac Day service in the Independent Church, Collins-street, Melbourne, respecting the soldiers who fell during the great war.

He said it was the usual practice for mourners to believe that all the sacrifice was on the part of the Men who fell at the front. “We must think of their relatives,” he said. “They are still wounded, whereas we can think of the dead as being alive with Christ—as being a good deal better off.”

While sympathising with the relatives of the men who sacrificed their lives with commendable courage and fortitude in that which they believed to be their duty, how sad to hear of expressions from a professing minister of the Gospel such as herein quoted, and which seems characteristic of the clergy generally of almost every denomination.

We would that these gentlemen, who profess to sit in the seat of the great antitypical Moses, Christ, would seek afresh to study their Bibles and pray Divine guidance and wisdom that they may see light in God’s light.

The Scriptures clearly teach that the dead, whether they die from famine, pestilence, sword, sickness or natural causes, are dead, and their only hope is in a resurrection from that death state. God’s Word declares that- in due time all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth and have their opportunity of salvation when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, during the Millennial reign of Christ, and in order that the world of mankind generally shall learn righteousness. In the meantime, God’s purpose has been, and is, during this Gospel Age, to call out a people for His name, a class who desire earnestly to follow in the footsteps Of the Master. Such follow peace with all men and holiness, and realise that they must love their neighbour and fellow creatures, and do good to them that despitefully use and persecute them, and in no case to render evil for evil, but contrariwise blessing, in order that they may be the children of their Heavenly Father. This called-out class are predestinated to be conformed to the image of God’s dear Son, and delight to follow the great “Prince of Peace,” and develop the spirit of Christ more and more in their lives, while seeking to put away the fleshly mind, which is indeed carnal, and at enmity with God.

We rejoice that the day is not far distant when all the blind eyes shall be opened and the deaf ears unstopped, and when men shall see out of obscurity, and come to love their fellowmen under the righteous laws of Christ’s Millennial Kingdom and reign. Meantime, God is allowing all men to go their own way, and to learn the lessons by experiences with this present evil world over which Satan, the great-Adversary, reigns with God’s permission as the “Prince of the power of the air,” working in the hearts of the children of disobedience.

God’s Word assures us that Satan is shortly to be bound, that he may deceive the nations no more, and then the world of mankind, having tasted of the bitter fruits of evil and its consequences, will gladly conform to, and appreciate, the righteous judgments of that 1000 years reign of blessing under Christ, the blessed “Prince of Peace,” and when men’s hearts will be changed from their present hard and stony condition to one of flesh, as the Scriptures so beautifully attest.

The interesting matter respecting our Lord's return which has appeared in the last four issues of the People's Paper is now printed in booklet form, and should be useful- for circulation among all thoughtful Christians. It is important that all concerned should- have a correct understanding regarding the manner of our Lord's second coming. Many may have friends who would appreciate the truths explained in this brochure. The price is' 4d. each, or 3/- per dozen, post paid.

A supply of the booklet "God's Covenants," by H. B. Barton, has been received from the Bible Students' Committee, London. The question of the Covenants, with notes upon the ransom, sin offering and justification, is very clearly stated by the author. The price is 6d. per copy,.

Correspondence

THE -following extracts from letters of our readers show how the Lord's message of "present truth" is appreciated at this time; and is also found to be "meat in due season" to all of the same precious faith. A reader in Victoria writes:—I am enclosing my subscription, 2/6, for the "People's Paper," which, I think, is overdue. I look eagerly for its arrival each month. and would be grievously disappointed if it were not forthcoming, and although small, it contains so much that is comforting and food for thought. I should be pleased to have an extra copy each month.

I do regret my inability to attend the meetings. I thirst more and more for the revelations of the Scriptures. .I. have read the "Atonement," and am now reading "The !New Creation." They are beautiful studies and have been a feast of good things to me. One can read them again and again. "The Tabernacle Shadows" is not included in the "Atonement." Yes! I would be pleased to have it.. I am very thankful for all you have sent me. The dear Lord has blessed me and comforted me more than I deserve, for oft-times I have been impatient; now, with 'God's help, I will live not for to-morrow and its needs, but just for to-day.

Some of our subscribers in another State write:—

Loving greetings in our dear Redeemer's name. We wish to express in words the pleasure we have experienced -and also the help from the articles in the little paper brought out by you.

We can, dear friends, appreciate, at least to some extent, the financial difficulties and the time required to edit it, together with other matters connected with its publication that we know nothing of.

We rejoice to have seen that the old paths and matters that we have been assured of have not been departed from? Those blessed truths taught us by our Heavenly Father through the instrumentality 'of that faithful and wise servant, are still meat in due season for us; the great Divine Plan of the Ages, sufficient to make us wise unto salvation. -

It is our prayer that the spirit of humility, combined with strength in the Lord, may so keep you that the winds of present day doctrines may not shake you from declaring the truth as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Watch and pray, dear friends, for the day is evil, and never was it more necessary for us all to. do so continually.

The loving . . . of humility, is of no benefit or advantage to you, but so far as you love to see all your own thoughts, words, and actions, governed by it. And the hating of pride does you no good, is no perfection in you, but so far as you hate to harbour any degree of it is your own heart.—W.L.

Let us trust in God, and not fatigue ourselves with indiscreet and unwarrantable apprehensions. Let us depend on the divine assistance for the conduct and issue of our lives, and let us not yield ourselves up to disconsolateness and despair.—Pascal.

"The heart that trusts, for ever sings
And feels as light as it had wings;
Come good or Ill,
Whate'er to-day, to-morrow brings, It is His will."

BROKEN WITH HIM. OUR PARTICIPATION AND PRIVILEGE.

IN presenting the following thoughts at this time in connection with the Annual Memorial observance of our Lord's death, it is with the desire that we may continually keep in mind the significance of our partaking of the emblems, which symbolise to us our Lord's broken body, and a life poured out in sacrifice on our account.

As we meet together on these occasions it is always "with desire" and gladness that we obey the Master's words and invitation, "Do this in remembrance of Me," and as St. Paul said, "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink of this cup ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come." As prospective members of the Body of Christ let us review something of the typical and anti-typical significance of the picture relating to the "passing over" or "sparing alive" of the firstborns of Israel, made possible through the shedding of blood and its sprinkling, along with the necessary eating of the lamb, etc., as recorded in the 12th chapter of Exodus.

Applying this in harmony with the Scriptures, we see that the firstfruits unto God of His creatures, the Church of the Firstborns, alone are being spared and dealt with, being "passed over," those who are under the blood, during this night time, this Gospel Age.

We see then that the term "firstfruits," or "firstborns," implies that there are afterfruits, and succeeding generations, and this is just what the typical Passover presents to us; for it was God's purpose that all Israelites should be saved, and that these typical people, representing the Household of Faith in the smaller picture, and the world of mankind in the larger sense, would eventually be delivered through the agency of Christ and the Church as the antitypical "Elder Brethren," and thus be enabled to obtain deliverance and eternal life in the "Land of Promise."

But particularly regarding the "firstborns," the Apostle Paul clearly identifies the Passover lamb with our Lord Jesus, saying in 1 Cor. 5:7-8, "Christ our Passover is slain for us; let us therefore keep the feast." He reminds us that we all need the blood of sprinkling—not upon our houses—but upon our hearts. Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2. We must also eat the unleavened "Bread of Truth" if we would grow strong, and be prepared for our pilgrimage journey. and deliverance, in the morning of the New Dispensation. We also must eat the Lamb, must appropriate Christ, the great "Paschal Lamb of God," His merit, not merely by faith, but more and more "to put on Christ" to the extent of our fullest ability. We should seek to have the life of Christ more and more discernible in our mortal bodies, and daily to be transformed into His glorious character and likeness.

In every feature of the Law Covenant and its arrangements, we see shadows of good and higher things to come. In the type we note that the lamb was to be without blemish, well representing Christ, the spotless Lamb of God, holy, undefiled, separated from sinners. Not of Adamic stock, otherwise He would have been leavened with Adamic sin, but of a life, unblemished, from a higher, heavenly nature.

In type the animal was taken on the 10th day, and kept until the 14th -day, when it was sacrificed, corresponding to our Lord as the great "Paschal Lamb" selected, and offering Himself at Jordan, and for 372 years being killed "all the clay long," until the final completion of the sacrifice at Calvary, when He poured out his soul unto death. In the type each house represented the Household of Faith, each lamb the Lamb of God, and the firstborns of each family represented the Church of the Firstborns. the Priestly Class. The sprinkling of the blood in the type pictured salvation, the "sparing of, or passing over," those firstborns who obeyed instructions, and meant expectancy of deliverance during that night. So with the antitypical firstborns. Their hope of deliverance lay in the fact that the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, was shed on their account, and these during this night time, must appreciate the means provided whereby they may have their hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil. Not only was it necessary that the typical we saw that the blood of the animal was sprinkled on the lintels and doorposts, in order to be delivered, but it was also imperative that the lamb must be roasted and eaten, and that in haste, during that night, and none of it be left over until the morning. Here we have a vivid picture of what must be, concerning the antitypical Jews, the Household of Faith.

It is not sufficient that we, as prospective members of the Church of the Firstborns, should have faith in the blood of Christ alone for our ultimate and complete deliverance, for we must partake of the Lamb by faith, and appropriate of our Lord's merit and sufficiency. and thereby maintain our justified standing before God. We must continually be found feeding on the Bread from Heaven, in order to grow strong, and, like the Israelites of old, be prepared for the wilderness journey and experiences ahead. In other words, we are, as the Apostle says, "Members in particular of that One Loaf," and must be broken with Him, and realise more each day that no hope of life is obtainable apart from Christ, "The Bread from Heaven."

'Fins appropriation or feeding on the "Paschal Lamb" must be during this dark night, this Gospel Age, the only

acceptable period, and must be eaten “in haste.” Each and all must necessarily realise that the time is short in which to make our calling and election sure. Consequently the time must be redeemed, straight paths made for our feet, we must be found numbering our clays, and our hearts unto wisdom, for, as the Apostle says, now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed,” and again, “The night is far spent, the clay is at hand.” In this important connection we are reminded of our Lord’s words in Matt. 24th chapter and verse 20, “Pray that your flight be not in the winter, nor on the sabbath day.” This Age is the acceptable summertime of the sunshine of God’s favor, and, consequently, the typical picture conveys a special warning to the antitypical firstborn class.

According to the type, the passover lamb had to be roast with fire, and eaten in that night with bitter herbs. Bitter herbs in this typical connection, we understand to picture that which would serve to whet, to sharpen, to “keen up” their appetite, and in the antitypical sense, well represents the bitter trials and experiences that come, as a result of appropriating to the full, during this Gospel Age, or night time of evil. Being exercised aright by these experiences, the firstborns are caused to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and to continue to feed on the Lamb of God, with healthy, keen appetites, also. Eating the lamb in haste and with staff in hand and loins girded for the journey, would represent a readiness, an activity, an alertness and expectancy of deliverance, for the time was limited, and nicely corresponds to the position of the Church, as pilgrims, having here no continuing city, and being alert and ready, for the time is short, and rejoicing in the hope and expectancy of deliverance so soon to be accomplished.

As a joyful recognition and memorial of their deliverance, the Israelites were to observe a feast to the Lord of unleavened bread for seven days following, and to be observed throughout all their generations. No leaven was to be found in their homes, otherwise this would mean death. The correspondence seems to be that the antitypical first born class keep the feast with constancy of hope and rejoicing, in the realisation of their promised ‘deliverance. In type seven days represents our entire pilgrimage here below, during which period the leaven of malice and wickedness must be put away, otherwise this would mean death to the spiritual Israelite also.

In type the firstborns occupied a special position in advance of their brethren and became liable to death previous to the general exodus. Also, after the exodus, these firstborns had a special work in connection with the general deliverance, as they became a separate class, represented in the Tribe of Levi. These gave up entirely their inheritance in the land, that they might be the teachers of their brethren, and became sacrificing priests or “able ministers” under their Law Covenant. We can see how the antitypical priestly class not only have the privilege of teaching and instructing some during this Gospel Age, with the “ministry of reconciliation,” but also the whole world of mankind during the next Age, as able ministers of the New Law Covenant. Having no inheritance in the land, and as sacrificing priests, we have been anointed to preach good tidings, as we journey on to our Canaan rest, and to be used, also, when ultimately delivered and glorified in blessing the poor groaning creation and world of mankind.

What, then, do these symbols mean to us, and what do we memorialise or commemorate? In partaking of the bread, and drinking of the cup, we remember the purity and sinlessness of Him, who as the Bread of Life, was broken for us, and the life laid down in sacrifice, even unto death, on our account. Viewing the plan of God and redemption through this great Central figure, “Christ our Passover,” we then celebrate four great matters.

1st—Our Lord’s Death as the “Passover Lamb.”

2nd—“Our relationship, or participation with Him in the sufferings and death of Christ as sharers in His cup.”

3rd—The great deliverance soon to follow this “passing over” of the present night time—first those “passed over,” and second the Levitical host or Tribe, who will be delivered in the morning—“the Millennial morning.”

4th—We incidentally commemorate the great “feast of fat things” to follow, when, with our Lord and Head, we will drink the cup of joy and blessing in the Kingdom.

In the light of the foregoing, should we not richly value, not only the great love of Christ, but also the love of the Father, in designing such a plan in which His Divine attributes are so wisely and graciously manifested, and the gift of faith whereby we can lay hold of the full meaning and purpose of these symbols, and what they memorialise?

Our partaking of the bread then represents symbolically our partaking of the fleshly perfection of the Man Jesus.

We partake of His perfection by faith, not actually. He gives us not restitution to human perfection, but merely an imputation of His righteousness, His perfection, which in turn covers, in the Divine sight, all our blemishes and imperfections. In a word, our Lord justifies us, and for us to maintain our justification, we must continue to appropriate or eat of that Bread from heaven, and this justification enables us to tender to God our fleshly bodies a

living sacrifice. When, as our Advocate, the Redeemer imputes to our offering the merit of His sacrifice, the Father accepts the offering and begets the sacrificer to a new nature as a member of the Body of Christ. It is only those who have thus partaken of the merit of Christ, and whose sacrifice God has accepted, that are invited, and directed to drink of His cup, and be daily immersed, or baptised, into His death in conformity with their covenant of sacrifice.

Then regarding the cup, ye must remember that it is the Lord's and not ours. The life or the sacrifice symbolised by the blood is not ours, but the Redeemer's. We merely are given the great privilege of drinking and partaking of it. The blood of Jesus could have sealed the New 'Covenant without ever having been offered to us at all. In this, then, is illustrated the grace of God, in that He is willing to receive us, and make us joint-heirs with our Lord, if we demonstrate that we have the same spirit of devotion and loyalty as He. Hence, our Lord emphasises this fact when saying that all who shall share His throne, must drink of His cup of self-sacrifice and denial, and be immersed into His death.

The Apostle Paul points us to the fact that our Lord is the true Bread from heaven, and that we are invited to be portions of the One Loaf which eventually will be the Bread of Life for the world during the next Age. As we partake then of the bread, we can with propriety view the matter from two standpoints. First and primarily, we symbolise our Lord's broken body; and, secondarily, the breaking of the Church and our own breaking. or dying as members of that Church Class. For. - vs the Apostle, "We being many, are one Bread and ;! Body, for we are all partakers of that One Bread.- The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the. Body of Christ?"

The cup to us means the sacrificed life of our Lord, and, additionally, it reminds us that in becoming His disciples, we accepted His invitation to share the cup. This means faithfulness in self-sacrifice, even unto death as the Lord's representatives. Rightly viewed, then, and fully appreciated, we can understand why the Apostle says it is the cup of blessing "which we bless." Should not our thanks be unbounding, as we realise such unmerited favor bestowed? Does not the cup then represent the gracious invitation of God, in harmony with His pre-arranged plan and fore-knowledge, giving the only opportunity held out during this acceptable Age of "filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ " (To be continued.)

BELOVED OF GOD.

Eph. 1:2-6. — 1 John 3:1, 2.

Beloved of God! while anthems ring
That hail the presence of our King,
The harps of God, in golden tone,
Proclaim the joys that thou shalt own.

A chosen heir with Him to dwell,
For evermore His praise to swell;
And share with Him, in sweet accord,
Who died for all, our precious Lord.

Beloved and chosen; call to stand,
Enriched with faith in this dark land;
E'en though thy foes cloth thee surround,
His glorious grace cloth more abound.

The glad'ning song of hope and cheer
Proclaims the Presence ever near;
His loving arms around thee twine
Till in His likeness thou dost shine.

Beloved of God! Beloved by all
Who hear the Father's gracious call.
He calls us each and all by name,
His love remaineth e'er the same.

What glories we shall soon behold!
The half has never yet been told.
O happy they who find release,
Beloved of God in perfect peace!

LONDON.—

“There is some historical ground for the Biblical story of the fall of the walls of Jericho.” writes Sir Charles Marston, who is conducting the archaeological expedition which is excavating the ruins of Jericho.”

“We know,” he says, “how when Joshua crossed the Jordan before attacking Jericho with the Israelites, the river was dried up for some distance.

“Above the point of the crossing the river flows through high banks of earth. There seems little doubt that the caving in of one of the banks temporarily dammed the river.”

Sir Charles Marston predicted that it would be proved that some, at least, of the Walls of Jericho had “fallen down flat” at the date assigned in the course of the Biblical narrative, although others were still standing.

Question Box,

Question.—Col. 1:14—“Fill up that which is behind.” What is the meaning of “that which is behind”? Where not all Christ’s sufferings perfect and finished at the Cross?

Answer.—The actual personal sufferings of Christ. Jesus, of course, ended on Calvary’s Hill; but the sufferings of the Church, the members of Christ, are not yet completed. It has pleased God to invite a “little flock” to first “suffer” with Christ and then “reign” with Him. (Compare Isaiah 53:7 and Rom. 8:36.) The reward of such exaltation to the Divine nature and to reign in kingdom power was contingent upon first proving loyal and perfect in obedience under great suffering and humiliation. As it was with our Lord, so it is with each member in Christ. “The servant is not above his lord.” First the cup of suffering and then there will be the cup of joy in the Kingdom. “Are ye able to drink of My cup and to be baptised with My baptism,” said Jesus to the two disciples who would sit on His right and on His left in the Kingdom. Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is His body. The body members must, like the great Head, learn perfect obedience under similar experiences, and prove loyal and true before they receive the great reward of joint Heirship. He was “tempted in all points like as we are.”

The Church is a very special. class which the Father has given to the Son. The prayer of Jesus (John 17 11). “Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those. whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are.”

So great is the oneness between Christ the Head and the members of the Church which is His body, and the Apostle says, “All things are yours, for ye are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.” The little hymn has put it beautifully “I am His and He is mine For ever and for ever.”

Whatever happens to the members of His body is as to the Lord Himself (Acts 26:14), and not until every member of the Body has completed the Christian narrow way, finished the way of the Cross and drank to the dregs the cup of humiliation and pain, will the sufferings of Christ be ended and the Body be complete in glory. So then, it was the sufferings of the Church, the body of Christ, which were left over, and of which Paul could say, “I 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.”

“Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptised into His death.” (Rom. 6:3.)

Why should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others,—that we are not always strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be;
Anxious. or troubled,—when with us is Prayer,

And Joy and Strength and Courage are with Thee! —Matt. 28:20. R.C.T.

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