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PRICE-TWOPENCE HALFPENNY

## God's Great Plan of Salvation and Restoration.

IN the Bible we have revealed to us a God perfect in Wisdom, in Justice, in Love, and All-Powerful. In the first three chapters we have a very concise account of creation—first of this earth, and of its being gradually brought (no doubt throughout thousands of years) into a condition suitable for the habitation of mankind. Then at the end of the last long period, man was created, male and female, and placed in perfect surroundings. They were informed that if they were disobedient to God, they should die. This shows that, so long as they were obedient, they would have access to the grove of the trees of life, and might live forever.

This does not, however, mean that they had an immortal soul, or possessed immortality; there is no such teaching in the Bible. On the contrary, we read, "God only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:16), and "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4). There is quite a difference between being able to live forever under certain conditions and being immortal. To be immortal means to have life in oneself.—John 5:26.

God is the fountain of life. He lives quite independently of food or drink, air, climate or environment. Man was made a mortal being (or mortal soul); that is, unless he has food, drink, air, and proper environment, he will cease to live. Our first parent, Adam, sinned, and was sentenced to death, "dying thou shalt surely die," and in order that this penalty of death should go into force, he was prevented from eating of the life-sustaining fruits in Eden, which would have kept him alive. Thus it was that Adam, and all the human race represented in him, were condemned to death.—Romans 5:12-21.

Does it not seem strange and unjust that we should all come under the sentence of death, through no fault of our own, but through another's sin? Yes, if that were all that was going to happen, and God had no other purpose in view, it would certainly seem quite unfair. However, the Bible shows that it is all a part of a great wise and kind plan.

All intelligent people will agree that there could be no satisfactory lasting arrangement, which did not have justice as its first principle, and "Justice is the foundation of God's throne."

So, then, this earth could never be a happy place unless all the inhabitants should learn righteousness (Isaiah 26:9). But how could all the inhabitants be taught to love righteousness?

The Lord evidently saw that it was well to allow man-kind to have an experience with evil, then to arrange for all to have an opportunity of turning from sin unto righteousness, and thus of enjoying everlasting life. How could this be done, seeing that God had said they must die? "The day that thou eatest thereof dying thou shalt surely die." God could not set aside His own decree; He must enforce His own law. But Divine Love and! Wisdom had foreseen a way whereby God could still be just, and yet provide the means of justifying them that believe.—Romans 3:21-26.

Had all been created perfect, all would have been personally responsible in case of disobedience, and it is reasonable to suppose that the great majority would have failed as did our first parent. In order to satisfy justice there would have been the necessity of providing life for life, each sinner would have needed a separate saviour to ransom him from death and provide opportunity for another trial.

How wise it was that all were represented in Adam, so that all could be redeemed by Christ (1 Corinthians 15:21-22);

Hosea 13:14). By this means all come into the world and have the experience of the baneful results of sin before they come to have the responsibility of choosing between sin and death or righteousness and life eternal.

The whole world is “ dead in trespasses and sin “ (Ephesians 1:2, 5), “ condemned already,” as the Master said.

It is only as we receive the knowledge of salvation in Christ Jesus that we come to be on trial for life or for death; knowledge brings responsibility. So the Apostle says, “ God will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Some have received this opportunity and knowledge in Christ during this age, but the great majority have not. It may be asked: Why is it, seeing Christ died for our sins, so many years ago, that so few have as yet heard of the “only name given among men whereby they can be saved”? Evil still abounds, godlessness and misery still prevail.

To answer ‘his reasonable question, we need to consider the divine purpose and plan as revealed in the Bible, and note how is gradually working out; we shall then see that the message of the angels at the Saviour’s birth is yet to be fully realised, “ Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.” This message is in perfect accord with God’s promise to Abraham, long, long before, “In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” No doubt, our Saviour referred to this promise when He said, “The Gospel was preached to Abraham.”

### AGES AND DISPENSATIONS.

We find three distinct long periods in human history mentioned in 2 Peter, chapter 3. The first is called “the old world,” or “the world that was,” before the great deluge. The second is called “ The present evil world,” which dates from the flood and reaches to the second coming of Christ, and the establishment of His Kingdom in the third great period, called “ The world to come wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

We enquire, what purpose has been served in these past dispensations, and what will be accomplished in the new age that is so soon to begin? The whole of the past nearly six thousand years of human history has been, as we have already mentioned, for the purpose of allowing all mankind to learn by experience the terrible consequences of disobedience to God’s laws.

When Adam and Eve were thrust out from the Garden of Eden, the Lord’s providential care and protection were no longer over them. They had to earn their bread by the sweat of face, and became subject to accident, sickness and death.

Angels who had been created prior to the creation of man appear to have been allowed to assist mankind, if they would. It would seem that in this way the angels could learn by observation the dreadful results of sin, while men were learning the same lesson by experience. These angels had been interested in the creation, and quite likely assisted in the preparation of the earth for man.—Job 38:7.

It was indeed a sad experience beginning with the murder of a brother. Cain, through jealousy, slew Abel. The two brothers had brought offerings to the Lord. Cain brought of the fruits of the ground by his work, Abel brought a slain lamb. Cain’s offering could not be accepted because there was nothing to indicate that atonement for sin was necessary, for “without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.” Abel’s sacrifice of a lamb pointed to or recognised this necessity, and prefigured “ The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” There have always been, and still are, many people who think they can gain the Lord’s approval by their good works.

God appreciates good works by those who are at one with Him, but we all first need the blood of Jesus Christ —the Lamb of God—to cleanse us from all sin. Then, being justified and at peace with God, we must show our faith by our works, and add to faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love.—2 Peter 1:5-7.

While there were a few during that period—the old world—of 1656 years, who pleased God, such as Abel, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, etc., yet the majority became wicked, and the angels, who should have helped, also became wicked, and hindered men. They materialised, and assuming the human form, married the daughters of men. We read (Genesis 6:1-7) that “ God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth . . . and said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth.” Noah and his family, of whom it is written they “ were perfect in their generations,” were instructed to build the large Ark, so that when the Flood came they were saved.

That ended the first world (age or dispensation). It had demonstrated how quickly men slide into more wickedness,

and bring more trouble upon themselves, if they get away from God.

When the flood subsided Noah's family came forth from the Ark, and the new age commenced. Peter says, "The heavens were of old, and the earth standing in the water and out of the water, whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."

Of course, all know that it was not the earth on which we stand, nor the heavens we gaze upon that perished. It was simply the order of things that then existed—the "heavens" referring to spiritual or religious arrangements and the "earth" to social arrangements—that passed away.

That world or age having ended, the "present evil world" began. The wicked spirits (angels) were no longer allowed to materialise and appear as human beings, as they had done. They were restrained in chains of darkness (Jude 6; 1 Peter 3:20). They have, however, operated in darkness, in seances of spiritualists and in various other ways in such lands as India, China, Africa, and in the pagan religions of Rome, Greece, Persia, etc. They have everywhere caused confusion and trouble, blinding the minds of the people, and thus hindering the spread of the true knowledge of God.

It is not that God could not further restrain them or even stamp them out of existence, but He has a good purpose in permitting evil 'to still exist, so that man will eventually have learned how hard and sorrowful the way of the transgressor is, and how much better it would be to live in obedience to God's righteous laws.

This is the lesson God wants everyone to learn, to hate sin and to love righteousness. The wages of sin is sorrow, trouble, disaster, and death; the gift of God for the righteous is life, peace, and joy. However, it is evidently the Divine 'purpose to allow the world to have 6000 years of the experience of sin, so Satan is permitted to be "prince of this world." This means that he rules in the affairs of men during this evil age. St. Paul, in 2 Corinthians 4:4, refers to him as the "god of this world who hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them." It is because Satan is the present ruler of the world, that we see how the wicked prosper (Malachi 3:15). This prophet said, "Now we call the proud happy, yea, they that work wickedness are set up, yea, they that tempt God are even delivered."

When mankind has learned the needed lessons under these hard conditions, under Satan's rule, God will establish His Kingdom and bind Satan, and prevent sin and evil. He will enforce righteousness, that is why the new age is called "The world to come wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:13). So this present evil world which began just after the Flood in Noah's day, reaches right down to the second coming of Christ. As the "old world" that was before the Flood ended with the great Deluge, in which all perished, except Noah and his family, so this "present evil world" will end with "a great time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." We have long been praying,

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as in heaven," and after this great time of trouble this prayer will be answered.

As this long period from the creation of man has been full of sorrow, calamity, sickness, pain and death, because God had allowed all men to go their own ways, this new age, so soon to begin, will give to every man, "all the families of the earth," an opportunity of turning to the Lord, of living righteously, and of receiving the reward of lasting life.

The prophet has said they shall no more die because of their father's sin, but each shall be personally responsible. If they do what is right they shall live; but if they do evil, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:20, 24).

In those days they shall no more say the fathers have eaten the sour grape and the children's teeth are set on edge, but everyone shall die for his own iniquity, every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge. — Jeremiah 31:29-34.

During the time Satan has been "prince of this world" evil has prevailed, the wicked have prospered, it has been hard to do what is right and to avoid sin, for so many snares lie in the path. "Satan like a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour"—or cause to stumble. All sorts of temptations to do wrong are abroad. It is surely a slippery path, it is a broad road that leadeth to destruction, and it has been a "narrow way that leadeth to life and few there be that find it."—Matt. 7:13, 14.

It would indeed be a sad thing if only those few were to be saved; and all the rest, the millions of men, women and children of all races, were for ever lost.

In this coming new age, there is to be another way to life opened up, "for a highway shall be there, and a way: it shall

be called the way of holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for all those, the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.” (The way shall be made so plain that all will understand what is right, what is true, and what is God’s will). No lion shall be there (Satan is to be bound that he shall deceive the nations no more), nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon. (No selfish, cruel, greedy men or nations or corporations will be allowed to afflict or oppress mankind). It shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord (“He gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.”-1 Timothy 2:3-6) shall return (from the land of the enemy, the grave—Jeremiah 31:16; Hosea 13:14), and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness (in the resurrection day), and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

(Isaiah 35:8-10). “And there shall be no more curse, for God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.”—Revelation 21:4.

We may wonder why the Lord has so long delayed to set up His Kingdom, and we find a wonderful reason as we turn again to His Word for instruction. In Acts 15:14, James informs us that before this time of blessing all the world it pleased God first to select a church “people for His name.” There has then been a very special work proceeding during this Gospel Age, a necessary work in preparation for the coming Kingdom Age.

### DIVINE PURPOSES IN AGES PAST.

As we look back over God’s dealings with man, we find He has dealt differently at different times. “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke unto the fathers by the prophets, bath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.” (Hebrews 1:1-2). Prior to the Flood we have seen that in a general way God had let the world take its own course and receive experiences under the administration of angels, and how few there were who kept faithful to God during that time.

Following the time of the deluge, God dealt with certain patriarchs, such as Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but still allowed those who would to go their own ways; and they mostly went into idolatry and depravity. During this Patriarchal Age, God specially chose Abraham because of his faith, so that He could reveal to him something of His purpose. Because Abraham left his own land in obedience to God, not knowing whither he was to go, God led him into Canaan (Palestine), and gave him a sure promise, saying, “In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”—Genesis 12:3.

Many years rolled away, and yet Abraham had no son, but then even when he was a hundred years old, Sarah bare him a son, whom he called Isaac. Later, God very severely tested Abraham’s faith by telling him to offer up his son as a burnt sacrifice. Abraham was ready even to do this, believing that God was able to raise up Isaac again from the dead, and so fulfil His promise that “In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” God thus gave a picture of how God Himself would give His only begotten Son as a sacrifice to pay the price of sin for all the world, so that all could be redeemed from death; that “as in Adam all die, so all in Christ could be made alive again.” (1 Corinthians 15:21-22). Because of Abraham’s great faith, God repeated His blessing, and enlarged the promise, saying, “In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is upon the seashore and in thee and thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.”—Genesis 22:16, 18.

This great promise is still to be fulfilled, for while God did bless Abraham’s seed, the Israelites, in so far as they would remain obedient, yet in no sense have all the families or all the nations of earth been blessed. Yet the Apostle in Hebrews 6:13-20 reminds us of it, and that God hath confirmed it with an oath, so that it is sure of fulfilment.

God’s ways and thoughts are so much higher than our ways and thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9), so much so that “A thousand years in His sight are but as yesterday when it is past (Psalm 90:4); therefore, what seems so long to us is only a little while to the Lord. He has all power and has His own time for the fulfilment of His word.

Abraham continued to believe, for he had learned that there was “nothing too hard for the Lord.” (Genesis 18:14). He knew that God could raise him up from the dead so as to give him the land and make him a blessing along with his seed, to all the nations of the earth. This great promise was passed on to Isaac and Jacob, and then to the twelve tribes of Israel. But God dealt differently with Israel as a nation during what we call the Jewish Age. God had allowed the Israelites to become slaves to the Egyptians, and this looked as though He had forgotten His promise to Abraham, but the experience was to do them good. Then the wonderful way that He delivered them by Moses was to be a picture of how the “Prophet like unto Moses,” the real Messiah or Christ, would deliver the whole world from slavery to sin and Satan in due time. So we learn to wait for God’s due time to relieve us from oppression and wrong, while we just do our best to please God and to remember His gracious promises.

God gave Israel the Law, which taught them what the Divine will is, and it has also helped all civilised nations to form laws somewhat along the same lines. If Israel had kept the Law they would have inherited the promise given to Abraham, but not one could fully keep it. This demonstrated the fact that no one could so live as to gain by his own righteousness the reward of eternal life. It showed that only by someone paying the price of sin, and thus removing the death sentence, and then taking man's hand and helping him to do right, gradually leading him up the highway of holiness, could there be any hope for the human race. So the Apostle says, "The Law was our schoolmaster to lead us to Christ."—Galatians 3.

While by the deeds of the Law no one was justified, there were many who proved faithful to God and suffered persecution and death; these are to be rewarded by "a better resurrection." (Hebrews 11:35). They are evidently chosen to be "princes in all the earth." (Psalm 45:16).

When our Saviour came to earth, He was born an Israelite, under the Law. He kept the Law perfectly, and thus gained a further right to life. He made an end of the Law, nailing it to the Cross (Colossians 2:14), and "opened up a new and living way" (Hebrews 10:20), and a new arrangement began. "The Law and the prophets were until John; since then the kingdom of heaven is preached." (Luke 16:16). There began the selection of a very favoured class, to be associated with Christ in the heavenly kingdom. Our Lord said that in all the past ages there had been no one greater than John the Baptist, but he who would be even least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. (Matthew 11:11). Again, he said, speaking to His disciples as representatives of the Church, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."—Luke 12:32).

The Scripture is very clear that the selection of this class is the chief purpose of this Gospel Age. (Ephesians 1:41). God has been choosing the members of this class, and only such as "take up their cross and follow Christ" can hope to become "joint-heirs" with Him in heavenly glory.—Romans 8:17.

The Apostle informs us that, if we would make our calling and election sure, we must be "transformed by the renewing of our minds" (Romans 12:2), and gain the virtues and graces of God's Holy Spirit, and so become like Christ in character. It is predestinated that only such as be thus conformed to the image or likeness of His Son, will God number among those "called according to His purpose."

#### WHAT IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

The steps necessary in order to obtain an inheritance in Christ are clearly shown, and only such as take those steps can entertain a true hope of a heavenly home hereafter. It is by God's Holy Spirit operating through His Word and in the hearts of believers that the Christian pathway may be begun, continued and finished. "No man cometh unto the Son except the Father draw him." (John 6:44). First there is the realisation of sin which separates from God, along with a desire to know and be at peace with God, and there is joy and peace in thus appreciating that even when we were sinners Christ died for us, and so God commendeth His love to us.—Romans 5:8.

Oh, 'twas love, 'twas wondrous love  
The love of God to me;  
It brought my Saviour from above  
To die on Calvary."

But we must not stop there, for if we fully appreciate such love, that Christ died for our sins, surely we should desire to show our love in return. We say, like Paul, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and the Lord sends His message through His Word, "My son, give me thine heart." "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me," or, again, as the Apostle has said (Romans 12:1): "Present your bodies a living sacrifice to God"—it is but our reasonable service. It is, indeed, the only reasonable thing to do, for we were under sentence of death and were redeemed by the Cross of Christ. We are then not our own, we are bought with a price—so we gladly say, "Take Thine own way with me, dear Lord." Like our Master, we say, "Thy will, not mine, be done."

Then it is that we commence the narrow way to life—to walk in the steps of Christ, the way of sacrifice. We promise to drink of His cup, and to be baptised with His baptism; for the promise is, "If we suffer with Him we shall be also glorified together." (Romans 8:14-18). To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame and am sat down with My Father in His throne.—Revelation 3:21.

Soon the full number of this elect Church will be completed. Then the Church with Christ will be the "stars of heaven" "class of the promised Abrahamic seed, which is to bless all the families of the earth.—Galatians 3:9, 16, 27, 29.

Then Acts 15:14-17 tells us that when God has taken out this people for His name, He will return and build again the Tabernacle of David, and set it up—(Israel must return to their own land, and once more be favoured of God)— that all the rest of mankind may be saved. The same thoughts are given in Romans 11:25-27. Blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fulness (the full number) of the Gentiles be come in, then all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, “ There shall come out of Zion a deliverer that shall turn away ungodliness from Israel, etc.” The 31st of Jeremiah speaks of the joys of that happy time when God will bless them. Also Ezekiel 37:12-14, speaks not only of those who happen then to be alive, but “Oh, my people, I will open your graves and bring you into the land of Israel, and ye shall know that I am the Lord. But the prophecies are so full of that happy theme that there is difficulty in making a selection of citations. Micah 4:1-7, tells of how all nations will come to see that the God of Israel is the true God, and will say: “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths, for the Law shall go forth out of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem . . . . They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his own vine and fig tree, and none shall make them afraid.”

This is what the Bible tells us of God’s gracious purpose. How much more could be said and quoted showing the good times of refreshing that are to come at the second presence of Christ. Times of restoration of all things which God hath spoken by the mouths of all His holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-22).

It is surely right that all should realise the goodness of God as revealed, in His great plan for the redemption and restitution of all the willing and obedient. To think soberly upon it will surely lead to a desire to reciprocate the love which is so manifested. It will lead to a reverence towards God and a desire to speak to others about it, so that the truth may be known among men. God has been so much misrepresented. No wonder that men did not love Him when they were taught that He was fierce and dreadful, but when we see Him to be Wise and Kind and Just and True, we must tell others that they may also rejoice in His goodness and the happy prospects of His Kingdom.

Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth As it is done in heaven.”

July 1st, 1930 PEOPLES PAPER.

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# British Weekly

Mr GILBERT THOMAS, writing in the British Weekly some months ago on "The crisis in organised Religion," said: "What honest observer, whether in the churches or outside, can deny that, whether the misrepresentation has been accidental or deliberate, the real spirit and teachings of Christ Himself have similarly been too often obscured by the institutions existing in His name." The early church, freshly under the influence of His earthly presence, reflected vitally the spirit of Jesus. But as that direct influence faded, the church began to adapt and dilute His message, which was at once too simple and too difficult for it to grasp, and to practise. So The Church became the churches, torn asunder by different interpretations and traditions, and at last embroiling themselves (in the name of Him who was called the Prince of Peace, and who took as His favourite symbol, the simplicity of a little child) in some of the worst wars and persecutions of history."

"How true this statement of facts and conditions is, and what an exact fulfilment of the Lord's parables, such as the "Three Measures of Meal," and of the "Mustard Seed." The three measures of meal represented the pure gospel message, which was to comfort, sustain in faith and godliness, and encourage in hope of the "exceeding great and precious promises" of "joint-heirship" with Christ in His kingdom.

How soon after the Apostles fell asleep, an enemy sowed tares in the wheat field, or in this other parable, how soon the woman (the false church) contaminated the truth by false teachings, of which Peter also predicted (2 Pet. 2:1.) "There shall be false teachers among you who shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them." The "mustard seed" also shows the development of which the above writer speaks. It had so small a beginning in the little movement in Galilee, Paul also foretold, "I know that after My departing many grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:29, 30.) Thus it was that the great papal system was developed, embodying many of the errors of Paganism, in its desire to embrace the whole world. It has become, as prophesied in the parable, of such great growth that the birds of the air may rest in its branches, such is the divided condition of "Organised Religion" to-day. How true is the Master's anticipation, "When the Son of Man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?"

Mr Gilbert Thomas proceeds in his article in an endeavour to comfort himself and Christian leaders, and hopes for the revival of true Christianity in the churches, and seems to still hold the thought that the church as organised will conquer the world for Christ. "We would have healed Babylon, but she would not be healed." It is not a pleasant thing to prophesy calamity and judgments; such is sometimes the duty of God's people, as in the case of Jeremiah. How plaintive is His cry (Jer. 8:20, 21): "For the hurt of the daughter of My people am I hurt, black; astonishment hath taken hold upon Me. Is there balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of My people recovered?"

As indicated in the above quotation, the churches gave themselves over to the world and became "embroiled" in the great war to such an extent that ministers generally acted like recruiting agents, and blasphemously misquoted scriptures, endeavouring to give men a false hope that if they died in battle they would go straight to heaven. Such doings and teachings were so evidently contrary to the spirit and doctrines of the Prince of Peace, that men perceived that the churches no longer represented Christ. The result is that since that time the pews are so deserted. It seems that even the heathen world can recognise the difference between the life, teachings, the principles of Christ, and so called Christianity of to-day. This is shown to be a fact by Mr. Stanley Jones in his book "Christ of the Indian Road."

It should be evident to all who will sincerely compare present day churchianity with the description of Rev. 3:14-20, that this position has been reached. Christendom has surely been tried in the balances and found wanting. It is not for us to demur at the Lord's judgments, but rather to obey His will and invitation.

The true gospel of Christ and the Apostles has been leavened, and the system of religion has developed into a corrupt organisation. The proper course is to "Inquire for the old paths." Get back to the simplicity of the truth and Christian life exemplified in Jesus and His disciples. Let us cling to the cross of Christ and His principles, His spirit, and leave the corrupted systems, so contaminated by errors of the dark ages and the spirit of the world, to the judgments written. Instead of all the great efforts to confederate the churches by compromising doctrines, and customs and modes, etc., the proper course is to seek the one true church, or rather, as Selkirk has put it: "The one true church thou shalt not seek; seek then for evermore, instead the one true Christ its Head." We need to get back to the Bible, back to the teachings of Christ and the Apostles, laying aside the many false doctrines which have been such a hindrance to a clear understanding of God's great purpose for the church first and also for the world of mankind in due time.

"To the Law of the Testimony; if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them." (Isa. 8:20.)

PEOPLE'S PAPER.

July 1st. 1930 -

## Question Box.

Question.--Acts 3:21 says that Christ is to be retained in the heavens until the times of restitution of all things; how then can it be that Christ could be present prior to these times commencing?

Answer.—The times of restitution of all things cannot take place until Christ's Kingdom is set up, and Christ must first come and bind Satan before He can reign in his stead. The difficulty seems to be in taking a small view of such matters. A thousand years in the Lord's sight are but as yesterday—a day with the Lord is as a thousand years--2 Pet. 3:8—and the matter of even one hundred years as a day of preparation is not long.

The thought of Acts 3:21, however, seems to be that the Lord had gone to the heavens until He would come to set up His Kingdom and restore the human family. (Other Scriptures are so clear in respect of the first work of the Lord being to reckon with His people respecting the use of their talents and their heart condition. Some will be found negligent and some evidently \ vi i 1 be without oil in their vessels, and some without a wedding garment. The Diaglott rendering of Revelation 3:3 shows that the Lord may be present quite unknown to many who profess to be Christians. It reads, "If, therefore, thou should not watch, I may have come on thee as a thief, and thou mayest by no means know at what hour I may have come on thee.

## Correspondence

South Australia,

8/5/30. Dear Brother,

Pleased again to have Your welcome letter, and it is good to know that some of the Sydney friends are again getting together. and we trust they will continue the regular meeting together for mutual encouragement in these days when fellowship with those of like precious faith -seems so new to our progress in knowledge and grace. Give our Christian love to any who may know us. Yes, the Eastern Convention was a very happy occasion. The friends of the class here and also at Gawler seem to have received a blessing. I am sure these special meetings do us good in stimulating us to renewed faith and zeal; so we thank God for all His many blessings to us, and we would go on with greater determination to do God's will, to light the good light of faith in the name and in the strength of our Lord Jesus Christ. We just want to be of those who patiently continue in well-doing, for, as the Apostle says, "in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

We regret that some who once appreciated the present truth have now seemingly lost their appreciation to a large extent. There are some who will say that so long as we retain faith in the blood of Christ we should -find helpful fellowship as brethren with all who make the same claim. irrespective of what their views on other doctrines may be. But, surely, this is too broad an attitude; it would include Seventh-day Adventists, Christadelphians^ Anglicans, and even Roman Catholics. Those who adopt this attitude are those who do not seem to realise the fact that we are now living in the Harvest of the Age, and a special message from the Lord is doing the gathering work. Those whose eyes of understanding have been opened to see the truths now due and to discern the signs which indicate the second presence of Christ must be true to their calling and responsibility, and let their light shine for the blessing of others.

We are glad to have your messages of love to the friends in this vicinity, and we will give them your message. It is nice to feel that we have your prayers also, and we remember you each day in our prayers. We will hope to hear from you again soon. Accept our warmest Christian love, in which I know Sister would also join.

Yours in the Master's service

R. J. M.

5/6/30. Dear Brother,

Greetings in the Saviour's Name, to whom be glory for ever.

Just a few lines to thank you and the other brethren and sisters for the helpful thoughts contained in the "People's Paper," for the Lord is good to His people. I would like to help with more contributions, but am coming out of employment for the time being, but take the will for the deed. The friend that Bro. — met and asked me to visit came to my home, and afterwards I went to visit hall and had quite a nice talk upon the Scriptures and the Truth, and he asked me to go again, which I promised.

Yes, every day is swelling the Lord's great army, but what a blessing. and what a deliverance is yet to come for the poor groaning creation. •

Many in the Ecclesias are being stumbled by the Cimcordant Version purporting to be an exact expression of the Greek in the English language. but its leanings toward Universalism are very subtle and misleading. Then Others are denying the Lord's presence. that wonderful truth, with all the undoubted signs which are almost sight, but so it is. Some are sending out papers to this effect, and many are adopting the views, so childish. May the Lord keep us in His is Presence "Parousia" and then receive us to Himself, where perplexities will be at an end, where we shall be known even as we are known.

Praying the Lord's blessing upon you,

Your Bro. by His Grace,

B. H. J.

"Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee."—Luke 8:39.

Are. you seeking to be your best to those nearest to you? If not, you may be quite sure you are missing some of life's purest joy and highest service. How often the teaching of the Christian home is discounted by the want of earnest effort to please and gladden and serve in the family circle! To those nearest to us God has given a stronger claim upon us than any others in the world.—Selected.

# BROKEN WITH HIM. OUR PARTICIPATION AND PRIVILEGE.

(Continued from June Issue) .

JUST as the grape must be crushed in order to lose its identity, and produce the refreshing, life-giving properties, so our Saviour trod the winepress alone, pouring out His soul unto death, in order that the life sustaining blood might flow, and the world of mankind experience its cleansing, healing, and restorative powers in the Millennial Morning. In the meanwhile, we are invited to take up our cross, deny ourselves, and follow Christ. We, too, must lose our identity as human beings in the carrying forward of the work of sanctification unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, and daily being made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. In this connection, can we not more fully appreciate the words of the Prophet in 53rd chapter of Isaiah: "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions is, bruised for our iniquity, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes are we healed."

As we always joyfully and earnestly gather to commemorate our Lord's death, and "with desire" partake of the emblems which are so grandly significant and mean so much, let us at this time remember that there is constant need for self-examination. While we lovingly and gratefully view the morrow and succeeding days, and rejoice inasmuch as the Lord is "risen indeed," we would recall the experiences which took place when the time came, at our Lord's first advent, that the Great Passover Lamb must be slain, and how a particular testing and trial time came upon our Lord's followers.

It was at this time that, amongst His loyal disciples, the most courageous forsook Him and fled. Another disciple, in his timidity, even denied his Master. On this occasion also there were those who would be found disputing amongst themselves as to who would be the greatest; and, finally, there was one amongst them who would prove so degraded, selfish, and despicable, as to betray his Master for this world's paltry gain, and that with a kiss.

What an occasion is this for looking to our own hearts, respecting the measure and degree of our faith, loyalty, courage, and willingness, in confessing Him under every circumstance and condition, as we desire to show our gratitude and love for the Niaster, who died that we might obtain "so great salvation." Shall we not the rather more firmly resolve that by God's grace we will not deny our Lord, but at all times gladly seek to acknowledge Him, not only with lip service, but also 'by our every manner of life?

So then, to the sincere child of God, having a true knowledge and deep appreciation of his or her covenant of sacrifice, and highly favoured standing in and through Christ, and a thorough realisation of what consecration to God means and embodies in its every aspect, respecting His will for us, a review of an occasion like this will surely be one of supreme interest and intense desire, for was it not in accordance with the injunction and will of our head, and in joy and thankfulness, while yet with due solemnity in keeping with the occasion, that we partook of the 'blessed emblems of the bread and wine which are so full of meaning and deep import to each one of us?

To those who thus assemble on these memorial occasions which signify the anniversary of our Lord's death on 'our behalf, and in the larger sense and viewpoint, our privilege and responsibility in that one great sacrifice, as members of His Body, is it not -fitting that we look back over the past, and, weighing the matter carefully, seek to examine ourselves and determine whether or not we have partaken worthily, or been as earnest, zealous, and enthusiastic as we might have been in the carrying out of our vow of consecration, to be broken with our Head, and to drink of Ilk cup of suffering, which the tokens signify?

How strange is the attitude and viewpoint of some of the Lord's people respecting this great privilege and blessing in memorialising our dear Redeemer's death and partaking of the tokens which speak so forcibly and significantly to us. While in the past these brethren have seemed to rejoice in the great privilege of meeting with others of like faith to celebrate and partake, thus manifesting their desire to be broken with our Lord, and to drink of the cup which He drank of, now we hear of their changed viewpoint, when they state that on account of our Lord's presence it is not incumbent or necessary for the Lord's people to celebrate or memorialise our Saviour's death, because His Word says that such celebration is only "until He come," and now that He has come, and we are living in the days of His parousia, the partaking of the emblems can have no value or meaning to His people. How regrettable to see the blindness that is creeping over many in these latter days of peril and ensnarement, and to see the faith becoming beclouded by giving heed to false doctrines and seducing spirits, which ever lie in wait to deceive.

In this connection let the Lord's true followers ever keep before their minds the many precious teachings respecting our Heavenly Father's will and divine purpose. in that He is seeking out a Bride for His Son, only on condition that such a class fulfil their covenant of sacrifice to suffer and be broken with their prospective Bridegroom, and earnestly seek to carry out that covenant, in filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ, for His Body's sake, the

Church. In the expression, “Till He come,” can we not see the all-embracing theme of the “mystery” that has been hid’ from ages and from generations, and now revealed only to those who come. through consecration, under the enlightenment and influence of God’s Holy Spirit, by which we are begotten, and by which means alone can spiritual things be discerned? What a deep antitypical lesson, and full of beauty and meaning, have we in the “Atonement day sacrifices” of the animal slain. in connection with God’s people of old, fleshly Israel, and the covenant relationship.

The Apostle tells us that their tabernacle services and sacrifices were given us as a shadow of grander and better things to come, and were written and carried out for our admonition and learning during this anti-typical Atonement day, the Gospel Age. In connection with the Lord’s words to His disciples on the eve of His crucifixion, “That He would drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day when He would drink it anew with them in the Kingdom,” do we not clearly discern I I is words to mean that when the last of His is Body-members had partaken of the cup to the full, then the sufferings of Christ, Head and Body. would be over, and the Millennial blessings would then be instituted under the glorious reign of Christ and His Church, as they figuratively drink of a different cup, representing joy and gladness, and be made partakers of a different experience, that of glory, honor, and immortality, and the eternal joys of the kingdom.

How beautifully clear are the Apostle Paul’s words respecting this matter. when he says that we. the Body-members of Christ, together with our head, being many constitute the “One Loaf,” and again, “the bread which we break is it not the communion or participation of the Bode- of Christ?”

How significant to the saintly child of God is the expression, “Christ the Anointed One,” and our privilege of coming under the Holy Anointing as so beautifully expressed in the 133rd Psalm. Only when we get a proper viewpoint of our acceptance in the Beloved can we fully comprehend and appreciate the purpose of our Heavenly Father to have a class, predestinated before the foundation of the world to be the chosen Bride of the Lamb, on terms and conditions so plainly marked out for the true child of God.

Only as we suffer can we hope to reign; only as we are willing to drink of the same cup as our Lord partook of, can we claim to be “members in particular’: of the Body of the Anointed One.

Perhaps, one of the most interesting, helpful, and typical pictures we have in enabling us to see the meaning of our Lord’s words, “Till He Come,” is found in the killing of the bullock and the goat in connection with the Jewish Atonement Day sacrifices. The Apostle tells us in Hebrews 13:11-13. “That the bodies of those beasts. whose blood is brought into the sanctuary ‘by the High Priest for sin, are burned without the camp, wherefore Jesus also that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate; Let us go, therefore. unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.” What could be clearer than these words of the inspired Apostle. enabling us to see our participation and fellowship with our Lord and Head, as these sacrificing members are being “killed all the day long,” and found filling up that which is left over of the sufferings of Christ for His Body’s sake, which is the Church.

The Apostle Paul also speaks of the shed blood as being the blood of the Covenant on behalf of many, for the remission of sin. As this New Covenant on behalf of the many, the ‘world of mankind cannot go into effect until the sacrifice in death of the last member of the Body of Christ has taken place, and the fulness from among the Gentiles be come in, so Bible students rejoice in the privilege of the breaking of bread, and drinking of the cup of suffering, in order that when the Bride class is complete the great marriage of the Lamb will take place, and the injunction of our Lord’s words, “Until He come,” will have been finally and faithfully observed as members in that blessed “Anointed One,” of whom Christ is the Head.

Finally, let us not forget that while we rejoice in the great hope set before us of being **J**oint heirs with our Lord in His kingdom, the pathway to tread is only by way of the Cross. “Whosoever will save his life shall lose it.” We must all pass through the trying experiences represented by the winepress. We are to lay down our lives by spending and being spent in the divine service. We are to joyfully and obediently submit ourselves to the crushing experiences, and as the wine is produced at the cost of the life of the grape, so we, too, are to be obliterated as humans. and become New Creatures. If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him—not otherwise.

So, then, we gladly accept the invitation to drink of His cup and not until the cup has been drained to the last, shall we receive the other cup, the cup of Kingdom joys, and the glories of the kingdom are only to God’ faithful saints. Forward to the future joy All my longing hopes aspire,

And for this world's mean alloy  
I will not henceforth inquire.  
O, the joy of that blest hour,  
When, in glory, Christ I'll meet—  
Raised by Him to queenly power,  
In His righteousness complete.

(Concluded).

## WATCH AND PRAY!

Watch and pray, the storm clouds hover over,  
Fierce billows gather near with threat'ning shock;  
Watch and pray, no harm can e'er come nigh thee,  
If thou art safely anchored to the Rock.

Watch and pray, the powers of night and darkness  
Determine to engulf thee in their sway;  
But swift the answer cometh from our Tower,  
"I still am with thee, loved one—watch and pray."

Watch and pray, temptations round thee gather,  
Cling to the Rock—its shelter hideth thee,  
Tho' thousands fall, thou'rt safe if thou art watching,  
Safe in its shelter, from the angry sea.

Watch and pray, trust fully, thou wilt never  
Be swept away, then, by the seething foam.  
A little while, the storms will all be over,  
Then, child, a loving God will take thee Home.

—W. H. B.

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