



Vol., XIII., No. 8 MELBOURNE, 1ST AUGUST, 1930. PRICE-TWOPENCE HALFPENNY

## HUMILITY IN SERVICE.

“For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister.”—Mark 10:35-45.

AT the time of this lesson Jesus, with His twelve apostles, was en route for Jerusalem. He had just explained to them more particularly the ignominy, shame and death which He would experience, and repeated His assurance of His resurrection. The rich young ruler had just visited Him, and gone away sorrowful upon learning the terms of discipleship. Jesus had just said, “How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the Kingdom.” The apostles had inquired what they should have since they had left all, and Jesus assured them that they should have a hundredfold more in this present time, with persecution, and in the world to come everlasting life.

The context says that Jesus was walking in advance of the twelve, who were discussing matters amongst themselves, overawed by the stupendous things which the Lord had declared to be imminent. The courage of our Lord in the narrow way fills us with admiration. What a strong character was His! He had no thought of turning back; He was intent upon accomplishing His Father’s will—upon sacrificing Himself in the interest of others. A noble pattern the apostles saw before them—greatness in humility, victory through service.

## A GOODLY HERITAGE DESIRED.

It was at this time that James and John approached the Lord in a private manner. Matthew tells us that their mother Salome was with them and really made the request for them in their names. Salome is supposed to have been the sister of Mary, the aunt of Jesus, in which event James and John were His full cousins. Realising that matters were drawing to a crisis, they sought of the Lord an assurance that they might be very close to Him in the Kingdom, one on His right hand and one on His left, the two positions of chiefest favour.

Our Lord did not reprove them, for doubtless He read in their hearts a great love and loyalty toward Himself; and the desire for the positions indicated not merely the desire for the honours and authority implied, but specially because this would bring them closer to Himself.

Had the Lord seen in their hearts an evil form of ambition, undoubtedly He would have reproved it on the spot. His answer, however, was so framed as to impress these brothers and all of His followers since with what is implied in joint-heirship with the Lord in the Kingdom. ‘Very forceful is the expression, “Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?”’

The cup signifies experiences—as, for instance, when our Lord said, “The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?” (John 18:11.) Our Lord wished His disciples to see clearly that the Father had poured for Him a special cup of experiences, and had required of Him special baptism into death, as conditions precedent to His glory and kingdom; and that whoever would become if is associates in the Kingdom must become also His associates in the sufferings of this present time—in the ignominy and whatever experiences the Father might see best to permit as tests of faith and devotion and character. Our Lord did not refer to the Memorial Supper cup, but to the experiences which it symbolised, even as He did not refer to water baptism, but to the baptism into death which is symbolised by the water immersion.

How heart-searching was this question! It meant, “are ye willing?” because it would be impossible for the disciples to have known their own ability except in the sense of having confidence in God that He would give the ability to those

who had their wills thoroughly subjected to His. This is illustrated in the symbolical baptism in which one no more buries himself than he raises himself. We merely surrender our wills, our all, to the Lord, and He, by His Word and grace, works in us to will and ultimately to do His good pleasure—expecting from us only the possibilities, and assisting us to these with grace sufficient for us, for every time of need.

“MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU.”

That these two noble apostles were not inspired by selfish ambitions in this request is evidenced by their prompt reply to the Lord’s searching question and later on evidenced by their faithfulness even unto death. They said, “We are able”—that is, “We are willing. God helping us, we will sacrifice everything to follow in your footsteps; we will count nothing dear unto us; we will lay aside every weight and every sinful besetment; we will run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.” ‘This we may assume to be a larger statement of their devotion.

Our Lord’s love and sympathy went out to them afresh as He answered them, guaranteeing that with such willingness of heart they should indeed have the experiences necessary to fit them for a place in the Kingdom. What a comfort this is to even the weakest of the Lord’s followers who are sincere!

The Lord looketh at the heart, and if He sees there full devotion to Himself, He is pleased to grant to such His blessing, His aid, saying, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee”; “My grace is sufficient for thee—My strength is made perfect in weakness.” We, too, are desirous of sharing the Kingdom with our Lord, yet not from love of exaltation above others, but from a desire to have this evidence that we please our Father and our - Lord Jesus—to have this closeness of relationship to Him. and to have the privilege of participation with our dear - Redeemer in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth in due time. It is well that we should have the Lord’s answer clearly before our minds and know that unless we partake of His cup and are immersed into His death, we can have no share in His Kingdom of glory. Let us then count all things else as loss and as dross to obtain this necessary experience. As it comes to us let us not be fearful, nor think strange the fiery trials that shall try us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us. On the contrary, even hereunto were we called, that we might now suffer with the Lord and by and by be glorified together with Him.

As for the particular place to be occupied in the Kingdom by the sons of Zebedee or by us, our Lord pointed out that the assigning of such positions was in the Father’s hands—the choicest positions shall be given to those for whom they have been prepared by the Father. Not that we are to understand that the Father prepared the places in advance by any arbitrary divisions, ‘but rather that the Father’s prearranged plan is that each of the followers of Jesus shall have positions of honour in the Kingdom proportionate to the zeal of their faithfulness in the present time—for none shall have any part in the Kingdom who do not now prove faithful.

THE MEEKEST AND MOST ZEALOUS.

It is not for us to decide the zeal and faithfulness of the apostles—to say which two would better fill these positions of chiefest honour. The Father will make no mistake. It will not surprise us, however, should we find the Apostle Paul in one of these two positions. His faithful, loving zeal and loyalty seem to shine out conspicuously even amongst those who were also faithful and loyal. It is not for us to have any ambitious feelings respecting this matter, except that we desire always to serve the Lord and be pleasing to Him, and eventually to be as close to Him as possible. When we remember that the closer we come to Him in the present trials and experiences and sufferings with faithfulness the closer we will be to Him in the future, it explains to us the meaning of the Apostle’s words when speaking of his severe trials: he called them light afflictions but for a moment, working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.-2 Cor. 4:17.

We recall that there had been, a little while before, some rivalry amongst the apostles as to which should be greatest in the Kingdom. At that time Jesus took a little child as an exemplification of candour and guilelessness, and assured them that unless they became as little children—simple-hearted, honest, candid—they could in no wise have any part in His Kingdom. Now, when the ten other disciples learned the special mission of Salome and the request made by and for James and John, they were indignant at them. Possibly some of them, Judas included, were very anxious for the authority and power and dignity of the throne, but without the very special love and longing to be near the Master Himself, which seems to have influenced James and John in their request. But Jesus set matters straight with them all, and turned their displeasure into an opportunity for another good lesson, by the assurance that the chief positions in the Kingdom would be given along the lines of meritorious service, and that thus each one of them would have his opportunity to strive for the chief position by striving to render service to the others.

Amongst the Gentiles the rulers are lords, who do no serving but are served, but among the followers of Jesus the rule is to be reversed: he who would serve most was to be esteemed most highly. What a beauty there is in the divine order of How thoroughly all who are right-minded can sympathise with the principles here laid down! How reasonable they are and how contrary to the spirit of the world. ‘ Truly, the Lord’s followers will in this sense of the word be a peculiar people in their zeal for good works—for serving one another and for doing good unto all men as they have opportunity. The Apostle ‘Peter emphasises this point (1 Peter 5:6), “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” “He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased.”—Luke 14:11.

#### OUR LORD SERVANT OF ALL.

The Lord did not have one standard for His followers and another standard for Himself. Consequently, when they heard Him say, “Whosoever of you will be chief shall be servant of all,” they could promptly recognise that this was the course that He had pursued—that He had been, servant to them all; and it was on account of the services that He was continually rendering them that they delighted to serve Him, to acknowledge Him their Master, and to walk in His steps. Indeed, they had seen only a small fragment of the Lord’s sacrificing and of its far-reaching influence as a service to others. We can see this as we recognise the fact that our Lord was about to die, not merely for His disciples, not merely for the Jews, but to be a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, that the whole world eventually might have a blessing—a blessed opportunity for coming to life eternal through the Merit of His service. Our Lord called this to their attention, saying, “For verily the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto (served) but to minister (serve), and to give His life a ransom for many.” This is one of the very explicit statements of Scripture respecting the object of our Lord’s death—that it was not for His own sins that He died: that, on the contrary, it was for ours, and that in thus dying He gave Himself a ransom price—a corresponding price for the sins of the whole world.

No other lesson needs to be so carefully learned by the Lord’s people as this lesson of humility. It has to do with the very humblest of the flock, as well as with those who are teachers and elders and pilgrims, etc.; but the degree of force that seems to come with the besetment or temptation seems to multiply in proportion to the position and attainments of the individual. Pride and ambition may be in those who have no official position in the Church, often asserted in fault-finding and criticism which, to the hearers, is intended to imply superior wisdom or ability on the part of the critic—that his wisdom- only, waits for opportunity to manifest his greatness above his fellows. We are not objecting to a kindly, brotherly word of criticism given privately and with a view to helpfulness, but merely to the kind which vaunteth itself and seeks to do injury to the reputation of another occupying a preferred position.

#### “BE NOT MANY OF YOU TEACHERS”

As the Apostle intimates, however, this besetment bears chiefly upon those who have some talent, some ability, and whom their fellows have to some extent honoured as teachers: Little men, like little ships with broad sails, are in great danger - of being capsized if too strong a wind of popularity plays upon them. Not only so, but we believe that even the most humble, the most faithful, the most zealous of the servants of the cause, have continual need to be on their guard lest their good intentions should be used of the Adversary as a trap for their ensnarement. Let us remember the Apostle’s words, “Be not many .of you teachers; my -brethren, knowing that a man (who is a teacher) shall receive greater condemnation”—he is exposed to greater trials and temptations as a result. This must not hinder any who have talents from using them, but it should make each one very careful that he does not think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think soberly. If the judgment: of the majority of the congregation does not recognise. his adaptation to the service of a teacher, he should humbly accept its conclusion as correct, no Matter how highly he had thought of himself previously. And even if the majority should conclude that he is worthy of a position as a teacher in Zion, he should tread very softly before the Lord, very humbly, realising that those who in any degree attempt to impart instruction in spiritual things to others are to that extent acting as representatives and mouthpieces of the Lord Himself, the Head of the body; and all should keep in mind the Lord’s words in. this text and His own exemplification of the matter—that he. who serves most and -not he who lords it most should have the chief respect of the Lord’s people.

## BE STRONG.

Be strong to bear, O heart of mine,  
Faint not when sorrows come.  
The sum of all these ills of earth  
Prepares thee for thy home.

So many burdened ones there are  
Close toiling by thy side,  
Assist, encourage, comfort them,  
Thine own deep anguish hide.

What though thy trials may seem great?  
Thy strength is known to God,  
And pathways steep and rugged lead  
To pastures green and broad.

Be strong to love, O heart of mine,  
Live not for self alone;  
But find, in blessing other lives,  
Completeness for thine own.

Seek every hungry heart to feed,  
Each saddened heart to cheer,  
And when stern justice stands aloof,  
In mercy draw thou near.

True, loving words and helpful hands  
Have won more souls for Heaven  
Than all the mixed and various creeds  
By priests and sages given.

For every grief a joy will come,  
For every toil a rest;  
So hopes, so love, so patient bear—  
God doeth all things best.

Be strong to hope, O heart of mine,  
Look not on life's dark side;  
For just beyond these gloomy hours  
Rich, radiant days abide.

Let hope, like summer's rainbow bright,  
Scatter thy falling tears,  
And let God's precious promises  
Dispel thine anxious fears.

# SODOM WAS REALLY BURNT DOWN.

Site Discovery Proves It -was -Older than Jericho.

JERUSALEM.—The Pontifical Biblical Institute's excavations have resulted in the discovery of the site of Sodom, one of the "cities of the plain," mentioned in the Book of Genesis.

The remains of the city are situated on the eastern plain of Jordan, approximately five miles north of the Dead Sea. They contain pottery and other articles showing that the city was built early in the Bronze Age.

Therefore Sodom was more ancient than Jericho, but possessed an advanced type of civilisation.

The excavations prove that the city was destroyed by a great fire, and has not been inhabited since.

(Sodom and Gomorrah, it is stated in Genesis, were destroyed by fire when "the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven," because "their sin was very grievous.")

It is no delusion, *NO* dream of a hot brain, *NO* error of a too confiding *SOUL*, that has made the children of God delight to trust in His providential aid. When God, in deed and in truth, is present and dominant in the soul of a man, He can and He will give to that soul a real guidance.—H.S.S. PEOPLES PAPER.

## EXCERPT PITTSBURG CONVENTION REPORT.

HAVE we ever stopped to really think seriously just how the Saviour would view matters and what He would say to us were He visibly to appear in our midst in these times? Sonic have said, "Oh! how I wish the Master would visit with us as He did with those disciples long ago; how I wish I might consult Him with regard to many questions that have so troubled me; I am sure, if the Master were right in our midst, we could soon have the burning vexing problems and issues that have disturbed us in these recent years quickly settled." But, brethren, is there any question, problem or difficulty before us to-day that Master has not already answered in one or another of His.- many sayings when He was here long ago? Has He not through the Spirit in the Apostolic messages dealt with all the present issues?

But still someone says, "If He were here I would like to ask Him who has charge of His Church to-day, and whom He has put over His people to control and direct them with power and authority." How would Jesus reply to this 'question? I believe that we already have His answer to that question— " clear disciples, I have never vacated the position the Father gave to Me in the beginning of the Age. As I then said, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," so now I say that I alone have charge of My Church, and I have never delegated authority to any man or company of men to rule over the Church or to interfere with the individual liberty of each member.

Another might ask: Master, tell us what great movement or work have you authorised your people to carry on in the earth to-day; what great pronouncement is there to be made in fulfilment of your will? Again we may be sure the Lord would answer in harmony with what he established as the mission of the Church when it was instituted, and that answer would be: I have not authorised any great movement or any great work to be achieved during this dispensation, for "My Kingdom is not of this world." I remind you that in the beginning of the Age I said that My people would be few, but a little flock, that they would be scattered here and there throughout the earth. I never authorised My disciples to organise any great and wonderful work while yet in their earthly pilgrimage. Was not this the sum of the teachings of Christ and the apostles with regard to what was authorised or expected of the faithful Church all along through the centuries until her glorification?

Another question might be: Master, will you not tell us just who and where your people are to be found in the earth to-day so that we may be numbered among them and thus enjoy fellowship with the true saints. We believe the Lord would answer, saying, "My followers are those who do the will of My Father in heaven; they are those who possess My Spirit; they are such as are consecrated—surrendered—to My will; they are those who deny themselves and have taken up their cross to follow Me; in fact, whoever will do the will of My Father, the same is My brother. My sister, My mother."

And, dear brethren, should not this reply of the Master be satisfactory to us? Do we not really love all who love the Lord Jesus and possess His Spirit? As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God.

All our perplexities of to-day can be settled if we properly take them to the Lord and enquire what the Spirit has long ago said unto the Church.

# MAN, NEARLY BLIND, GOES IN SEARCH 'OF LIGHT AND COMES BACK CURED.

UNDER the above heading the following appeared in the Melbourne "Herald" of 1st July:—A man returned to Australia to-day, who went away at the 'beginning of the year doubting if ever he would see Australia again.

When he left Australia, Mr. G. Kontalis was going blind. He had consulted every eye specialist of note in Sydney, and each of them had held out no hope. He was suffering from detachment of the retina.

He sent cables to his native Greece, which he had left 20 years before, and then he decided, as a last resort, to go there and see if anything could be done for him.

"The saddest moment of my life," he said, "was when I left my wife and small children standing on the wharf in Sydney. I felt that it was very unlikely that I would see them again, for what remained of my sight seemed to be failing.

"In Greece the specialists told me the story that I had been told in Sydney. There was no cure.

"One specialist, however, advised me to see a specialist in Switzerland, Professor Gonin, of Lausanne. I caught the express the next day. The doctor performed an operation and I am cured. My eyesight is 70 per cent. normal, and it is improving every day.

"There is so much joy for me in being cured," Mr. Kontalis said, "that I want everybody to know. I can barely wait until I get home to show my family that I am cured and that I can see them all again."

Maybe from the above report Bible students are again reminded of the deeper lessons derived from the experiences of everyday life respecting mankind and their attendant ailments and trials. We can all rejoice with this gentleman as he has at last been blessed with renewed sight (after having almost despaired), and the great joy experienced by him and his family in consequence.

While rejoicing greatly at every evidence of beneficence and uplift enacted amongst mankind generally in these days, do we not • the more deeply appreciate the plan and purpose of God, in His rich provision, through Christ, for the poor groaning creation (in the near future we believe) when the Great Physician will open all the blind eyes, and when men shall see out of obscurity, and come to praise the Creator to the utmost. (Isa. 29:18; 35:5.) At the present time (2 Cor, 4:4) "Satan has blinded the eyes of all that believe not, lest the glorious light of the Gospel of Christ should shine unto them."

Just as it was necessary for the afflicted one to go to the mountains (Switzerland), so, when Christ's Kingdom is inaugurated, it will be essential for mankind to go up to the mountain (Kingdom)' of our Lord for the real eyesalve, at the hands of the Great Restorer and Physician, and where the healing balm will be poured out for all Greeks (Gentiles) who seek earnestly and patiently the blessings of the Kingdom during the Millennial reign of Christ.

Then, as with the Greek and his home, all families of the earth will greatly rejoice and men will praise the Lord and sound His Name abroad throughout all the earth for His goodness.

"For dwellers in darkness with sin-blinded eyes, The Light of the World is Jesus,

They'll walk at His bidding and light shall arise, The Light of the World is Jesus."

## “THE DEAN OF PETERBOROUGH AND THE FLOOD.”

The following letter was addressed to the editor of

“The British Weekly,” and appeared in a recent issue:—

“Sir,—It’s is a pity that Deans in the Church of England have so little time for study, Dr. Langdon, the

Professor of Assyrian at the Uni of Oxford, himself once held the Dean of Peterborough, has mistaken view that there was no Noah and no Flood. He now handsomely acknowledges his former error, holds firmly by the ‘historical accuracy’ of the Old Testament, and by his own discoveries has placed the fact of the Deluge beyond dispute as having taken place about 3400 B.C. He has even found ten kings ‘before the Flood, and sent notice of these ‘epoch-making’ facts (as he calls them) to the Press of Europe and America. I am now able to add to his authority that of his predecessor, Dr. Sayce, who, since the new discoveries at Babylon authenticating the traditional dates and facts of the Book of Daniel, allows me to state that he now regards the ‘Higher Criticism’ as bankrupt: the rout is complete.’

I wish Deans would keep abreast of scientific research. ‘The priest’s lips should keep knowledge, for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.’—Mal. 2:7.”

Dare to look up to God and say: “Deal with me in the future as Thou wilt; I am of the same mind as Thou art;

I am Thine; I refuse nothing that pleases Thee; lead me where Thou wilt; clothe me in any dress Thou chooseth.” — Epictetus.

## A Present Day Church Service.

Another evidence of the spirit of the times is manifested by the following report published in the Melbourne "Age," dated 30th June, 1930, with regard to one of the usual "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" meetings held under the auspices of the Methodist Church:—

"Prolonged applause greeted reference made at Wesley Church yesterday to the splendid performance of the Australian cricketers in England by Mr. I. Mackinnon, president of the Victorian Cricket Association, during the course of his address on "The Place of Sport in National Life."

Mr. Mackinnon is reported to have read out the cricket scores amidst further loud applause, and said he hoped the Australians would win, because it would put us on the map once more.

To the sincere Christian, hungering for the "Bread from Heaven," an occasion such as this must indeed have proved most unprofitable. It seems almost incredible that a professing Christian denomination would apparently allow such little oversight respecting the order of its meetings, and introduce a topic entirely of a worldly nature, and at a time and occasion when the Gospel Message should have been the all-absorbing theme for consideration.

According to Divine Prophecy it is apparent that there is a "famine in the land," not for the material, worldly, or carnal things, but for the "true Bread from Heaven." How often many Christian people attend church meetings • only to be turned "empty away," and for an "egg" receive the "stone" as foretold. Surely a great responsibility rests on every preacher, who has named the Name of Christ, as to the nature of the message he would give out.

Judging by the attitude of the congregation at Wesley Church, it would seem that the majority were delighted at the reference made regarding the test match, and no doubt have come to so regard these "pleasant" Sunday afternoon gatherings as very pleasing to the natural mind, which must be, and is, entirely opposed to the spiritual mind and desires of the true child of God.

God's Word declares that Christendom of to-day would be found worldly, indifferent, and largely blinded to the true teachings of the Bible, and thus constituting "Babylon," be judged as a class, "weighed in the balance and found wanting."—Rev. 18:4.

When disappointment foils you, and what you thought was best  
Fades away as daylight when the sun sinks in the west—  
Then tread the paths of wisdom, where riches real and true  
Are waiting to be gathered—the treasure's great for you! —Prov. 2:1-11; James 3:17.

When wisdom's gems are gathered, rare gems which beautify,  
Then praise the Lord of heaven, who heard your feeble cry,  
And send them hither, thither, there are others in distress,  
If you would live forever, then you must live to bless. —2 Cor. 9:6-15; 1 John 2:17. 30

# Correspondence

10/6/30.

Dear Brother,-

I have to thank you for sending me the copy of Leeser and Morton Edgar's paper on the British Israel question. These I am keeping meantime for further perusal, if you don't mind.

I have just skimmed Bro. Edgar's pamphlet. and I think his ideas regarding the resurrection are helpful; for I do not think, if the various tribes are to 'be again reformed, it is possible that the material-I might say the mixed material—at present available can help to any extent. But personally I do not see that there will be-need for discrimination in the work of the Kingdom, unless there will be some form of ritual needed to help some races—like pictures illustrating special heavenly teaching, for Christ used earthly things to illustrate heavenly.

But I find that the British Israel quest is not for the Ten Tribes as such. Joseph or Ephraim is the Tribe they are only concerned about, or chiefly, for the promises made to Ephraim approximate more closely the British fulfilment. They are put to great straits to get history to trace the wanderings of the Tribes to Britain, and apparently do not mind twisting things to suit. They make history out of their own "probabilities" and "conjectures," but the language of the ,New Testament decisively destroys their imaginings. "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel," said Christ, and He came to where He found them. •

Again thanking you and with Christian regards, Yours in Him M.W.

## Question Box.

Question.—What is your thought re Ancient Worthies coming lack before the Great Company are glorified?

Answer.—We do not know of any scripture that would seem to teach that the Ancient Worthies would be resurrected before the members of the Great Company are glorified. To our understanding the raising of the Ancient worthies is part of the restitution work at the beginning of the Millennial Age, and the spirit-begotten class selected during the Gospel Age, must be complete before the Great Mediator, Christ, Head and Body, could reign for the restitution work. the Great Company will not be of the Bride filling their covenant of rice willingly. As the merit of our Redeemer is applied on behalf of the spirit-begotten class only, during this Gospel Age, our understanding is that it could not be applied to the Ancient Worthies, or the world of mankind until the new Creation is complete.

We realise. also. that there is no call to the Great Company class—we are all called in the one hope of our calling (Eph. 4:4)—and the provision God has made for -the lesser reward is an evidence of great mercy and favor, so that a large number of spirit-begotten sons do not go into the second death.

Question.—When did the Lord come to His temple, and how do You understand Malachi 3:1-6?

Answer.—This prophecy had its fulfilment at the first advent of Christ. The angel, in promising Zacharias the birth of John refers to him as the one who would fulfil this prophecy, de Luke 1:15-17, and Zacharias, being filled with the Holy Spirit when John was born, sings, “Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go - before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,” Luke 1:76. Our Lord also identifies John as the fulfiller of this prophecy in Matt. 11:7-14.

The Messenger of the Covenant, the Logos, Messiah, then came to Israel. “He came unto His own and His own received Him not.” He came to the temple and there witnessed to the-truth. The few were purified, and as wheat they were gathered into the Gospel garner. The harvest of that period was ended; the words rang out; “your house is left unto you desolate,” and the bundles of chaff were ‘burned in the great destruction of Jerusalem—Ezek. 15. “Who may abide the day of His coming?” Only a remnant was saved. Rom. 9:27.

Reading to the end of Malachi’s prophecy it would seem evident that a further fulfilment is indicated in respect of the Christian Church what Paul speaks of as the Israel of God. As the angel of the Covenant” (the Law Covenant was also the Abrahamic Covenant) came quite unawares to the typical temple of Israel, just so He would come again as a thief. Rev. 3:3. “If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know at what hour I shall have come” (Diaglott).

As the Lord was present purifying the sons of Levi, calling out “the Israelites indeed,” conducting the harvest the religious leaders of that clay knew it not, jus so He would again come unawares to Christendom, the Harvest of the Age would proceed, He would be dealing with His- own who are all to be sealed prior to the great time of trouble which will destroy the present systems as completely as the Jewish polity was burned up. After this, His saints having all been glorified, His Kingdom will be established and righteousness and peace begin to dwell on earth. The Jewish people (Israel) will then come again into prominence, being blessed according to the Abrahamic promise. Rom. 11:25-29.

All evidences seem to indicate that the Lord came to His Temple many years ago, and has been conducting the harvest work and judging among His people. Who shall be able to stand? At the first advent the Lord came as a man “made flesh” to deal with a natural people, -but the second coming is to a spiritual people, who walk by faith and not “by sight, and He comes not again in a ‘body of humiliation that can he located, seen or handled. but in power and great glory as a spiritual being. “in the express image of the Father.” It is, tl • -fore. only those “brethren Who arc not in darkness those watching, who can recognise His knock and rejoice in His presence. 1 Thess. 5:1-9; Rev. 3:20.

# BE YE TRANSFORMED.

“Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.”—Rom. 12:2.

THIS subject is relating to our character development, an important feature of the plan of God. The Christian's part in the eternal purpose depends upon his character development. God's plan is going to be carried out. He will have a class selected from the earth who will worship and serve Him. But whether we are to be of the heavenly number who will eternally love and praise Him and eternally enjoy His favour and blessing depends upon individual character development in Christ. So after becoming acquainted with the various features of the plan of God in a general way, our minds seem to fix upon that one thing, upon which the enjoyment of God's eternal blessing depends.

The great questions that confront us, then, are: What is the standard of character that we must develop in order to have the assurance of enjoying the plan of God in its consummation throughout the endless ages of eternity? Is it possible to develop such a character? And how is it developed?

Let us notice the standard that God has set. In Romans 8:29 it reads, “Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate (determine or decide) to be conformed to the image of His Son.” This shows the standard. God has decided that this class whom He did foreknow to be joint-heirs with Christ should be character images of Christ. The same thought is given in Eph. 4:11-16, when it speaks of the Lord's providing of evangelists, teachers and pastors for the perfecting of the Church, for the edifying (instruction) of the body of Christ. For how long? Until they come to the unity of the faith, unto a perfect man. What is that perfect man? Unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. We see from this last clause that the full measure of 'Christ's character is the standard.

Again, in Eph. 5:25-27, it says, “Husbands, love your wives even as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without ‘blemish.’” Now we can see that if the Church would be presented in His presence without blemish, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, she would be Christlike. would she not? What does it mean to be presented without fault or without ‘blemish’?

It means that every imperfection of character is to be overcome. Every unholy quality of disposition is to be cleansed away. He washes us from our past sins by His blood; but it takes the Word and constant obedience to sanctify us.

For example, take pride, the disposition of self-exaltation in heart or in act, and therefore an unholy quality of character. Of a king it is written: “His heart was lifted up to destruction.” Humility is expressed in the exhortation “Let each esteem others better (more important) than themselves,” and “Not unto us but unto

‘Thy name give glory.’” Now to be presented without fault and without blemish would mean that this disposition of pride would be so completely eradicated that no temptation, however strong, would ever arouse in the heart in the least degree self-importance or self-exaltation.

Further, since Christ makes the Church holy by making the individuals holy, this passage would read: Christ loved me and gave Himself for me that He might cleanse me by the Word, that He might present me unto Himself a glorious character without spot or wrinkle, that I should be holy and without blemish. Here again holiness or Christ likeness is set as the standard. Additionally, this passage also shows the possibility of reaching that standard. It says Christ so loved the Church, not that He may do an impossible thing; for if it were impossible that we could be presented holy, or to become Christlike and without blemish, do you think that Christ would have died and attempted it? No! Therefore the very fact that Christ died and attempted to sanctify the Church and present it holy, reduces it to a glorious possibility,

There are other texts that teach the same thing. Take Eph. 3:14-19, “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and in earth is named, that He would grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.” What does it mean to be filled with the fullness of God? It certainly means to be filled with Godlikeness. That is the only reasonable way that we can be filled with the fullness of God while in the flesh. Here again the possibility of our becoming Christlike is taught. God knew that our weak faith and our depravity and our failure to make ourselves holy by our oft-repeated efforts would cause us to doubt the possibility of becoming Christlike. The thought of becoming a complete overcomer seems clearly beyond the range of possibility.

A brother was -once asked, "Do you think it is possible to attain to the condition described in these verses?" He replied, "It is for some." Another replied to the same question, "According to their capacity." We see how they doubted the possibility. But now note carefully and thoughtfully every word of the 20th verse, and it will be seen that reference is made the grand experience described in the previous verses. Now unto Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us." We see He can do not only as much as we can conceive or ask, but abundantly more. It takes real faith to believe that God can make us holy or Christlike. So we see there is no question as to the standard now. It is Christ likeness or holiness, and it is possible for us as new creatures. And we can scarcely overestimate the importance of being thoroughly convinced of these truths.

If we are fully persuaded that we must become Christ-like or we cannot inherit eternal life, or the Kingdom, and if we are also fully persuaded that we can become like Christ in His strength, we will arouse ourselves to seek to attain it; If we indulge in the thought that our desire to be good, to be holy, to be like 'Christ is all that is necessary, we will never be willing to seek to become holy with sufficient earnestness, or willing to endure the trials and take the crosses that will perfect us in love. We must not let the enemy deceive us. Let this thought ring in our ears: We must become Christ-like, and we can through Him who strengtheneth us. There is a path that leads to it, and we will find and follow it.

Now, let us consider a few scriptures that show the ,necessity of developing^ Christlikeness. Since His character is the standard to be reached, and since it is reached gradually, we must bend all our energies to the attainment of this end, or sooner or later we shall become completely and forever separated from the Lord. He says, "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit." We notice the 'branch was in the vine and yet did not bear fruit, did not make the effort to become Christlike. What shall become of such branches? "He taketh it away." Our standing in the Lord is not because of our knowledge simply, but because of our becoming Christlike. Are we growing? Are we bearing increasingly the fruit of the spirit? Do we have a clearer insight into what Christ's character is like? Again we must be developing more and more the spirit of the Lord in order to 'be useful now. First by example, "Be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in character, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Arc we becoming examples to others? Is the life or spirit of Christ • being manifest in our mortal body? God expects this of us. The brethren need such an example and stimulus.

In Eph. 6:18 we are told to pray one for another with all prayer and supplication, and in James 5:15, 16, we are told that the prayer of faith shall save the sin sick, and that the prayer of the righteous man availeth much. It is the prayer of a righteous man and the prayer of faith that is to bring the results. A righteous man is not necessarily yet perfect, but he is obedient and growing. In John 15:16 we will notice that Jesus points out that the more we bear fruit (grow in holiness) the more successful will we be in prayer. Christ has chosen us to bear fruit, that whatsoever we ask the Father in His Name He may give it us. We see also the more we develop in character, the more we can serve the brethren by obtaining blessings and enlightenment and mercy for them through prayer. Have we the love that gives us the longing to thus help the brethren, or are we cold, critical and indifferent? If we get into the latter condition we are getting into a dangerous position. Do we pray the prayer of faith, and the prayer of the righteous man on behalf of the brethren? Does our love prompt us to this? We can have such a love if we will.

We find it written in 1 Thess. 3:12, "The Lord make you to increase, and abound in love one toward another." The great. work which the Lord has for us to perform in. the coming Age demands that we become Christlike. No other character would do. We see how hard it is to deal with one another now owing to our lack in courage,. faithfulness, patience, mercy, humility, firmness. Nothing but the love described in the 13th chapter of 1 Cor. will fit us to deal with the fallen race. "Herein is love (to be) made perfect in us, that we may have boldness in. the Day of Judgment, because as He is, so are we (to become) in this world."--1 John 4:17.

God has a love that is not discouraged with the deepest moral degradation in His object, but follows the welfare of the sinner with an unchilled devotion, though He hates the sin with a hatred no less than infinite; and we are to be filled with all the fullness of God. We must grow and grow into Godlikeness.

Another reason: The very character of God demands that we become holy. Habakkuk .1:13 says, "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil (that is, look on with approval); Thou canst not look upon (or countenance) iniquity." We must be purified from all iniquity and evil before we can have the approval of God. Every defect in our character is evil. So we must perfect character before God could eternally endure us. Psa.:4, 5, says. "For Thou art not a God that bath pleasure in wickedness, evil shall not dwell with Thee; Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity ;" not only in all its grosser and outward forms.

God detects the smallest deflection in our hearts, and His character is so holy that He cannot but hate it. And this 'fitness of character to meet God's approval must be accomplished while in the flesh. Therefore we must in this life

perfect character in Christ or else we cannot dwell with God eternally: as it is written, "Be ye holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy."

(To be Continued.)

AIDS TO BIBLE STUDY.

"Divine Plan of the Ages," blue cloth, gold lettering, 2/6 (Other editions at cheaper rates) "Some of the Parables," 8d, 6/6 a dozen "Hopes Beyond the Tomb," 6d, 5/- a dozen "Christ's Return," 4d, 3' - a dozen "Hell, Death, Spiritism," 4d, 3/- a dozen

BEREAN BIBLICAL INSTITUTE,

National Bank Chambers, Glenferrie Rd., Hawthorn, Melb. E2

Published by the Berean Biblical Institute, National Bank Chambers, Glenferrie Rd., Hawthorn, Melb. Printed by Hinkling & Powell, 48 Lygon St., Brunswick