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Christ's Message to Laodicea.

(Convention Address.—Continued from last issue).

“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore and repent.”—Rev. 3:19.

HOWEVER important the messages are to the Churches of these seven successive periods of the Church's history, we should fail to derive the blessing there is in them if we did not consider particularly the personal aspect. This would seem to be especially the case in regard to the message to Laodicea. We would notice that up to the 18th verse the whole church is addressed and admonished, but from the 19th verse the Lord appears to address individuals. “As many as I love.” Who are these whom the Lord loves? Does He not love all mankind? Has He not demonstrated His love to all in that He shed His blood to ransom all from the Adamic sentence of death? Who, then, are these whom the Lord mentions as being loved? The church as a whole was cast off as neither hot nor cold, but there are those who would hear the warning, who would accept the exhortation to buy the clothing, the white robes, and the gold tried by fire, and the eye salve that Voice might see. The result is that they hear the Lord's Voice calling them away from the corrupt and fallen, and cast off systems,—“Come out of her My people.” Such have preserved their love for the Lord. They may have been greatly attached to the associations and friendships in the nominal systems, but their love for the Lord was greater, and they have obeyed His call. Of those who love church associations or companions more than the Lord, they are allowed to take their own course, but they will surely fail to be among those “accepted in the beloved!” “He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.” (Matt. 10.:37.)

The Lord is represented as having come to claim His bride, His beloved. It was for these He prayed the Father “that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them.” (Jno.17:26.) If a man love Me he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make our abode with him.” (Jno. 14:23.) This has been the privilege of God's people all through the Gospel Age, namely that when the heart has been truly consecrated to God, the Father and the Lord Jesus have taken up their abode there by the holy spirit. There seems to be a special blessing, however, in this way, to those living in the period of Laodicea, when the Lord has come to claim His beloved. “I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with Me.” (Verse 20.)

There is a similarity of expression here to that of Luke 12:36, 37, where the importance of being watchful is stressed. “Be ye yourselves like men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding, that

when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching. Verily, I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.”

It is in this Laodicean, or last period of the Church’s history, that the message reads: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.”

What a happiness, what a joy is here indicated, that in these last days of the Church’s course, when the nominal Church has become so worldly, so lukewarm, and so astray in doctrine, when there is generally a famine for the Word of God, which has been confused by the creeds, dogmas and theories of men, the Lord would be once more present; not generally recognised at all, but He would just knock at the door of the heart of His beloved, and such would open and He would enter, and there would be such holy, happy communion, supping together the truths of the kingdom, so that their “hearts burn within them as He talks with them by the way.” What feast God’s people have thus enjoyed of late years. No wonder that the angel said to Daniel: “Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 days.” (Dan. 12:12.)

The Parable of the Ten Virgins shows that there will be those with lamps burning, watching and ready to enter the great feast of the marriage of the Lamb, and it also shows that there will be others who have lacked a sufficiency of God’s holy spirit, and by some means have been allured by other matters, and have so dulled their spiritual perceptions that they will not be able to discern the presence of the Lord in time, and so they fail to enter the marriage feast. It emphasises the importance of watchfulness and alertness in spiritual matters. The Bride must make herself ready. It is this Bride class whom the Lord has come for, particularly His beloved, “as many as I love I rebuke (or reprove) and admonish; be zealous, therefore, and repent—reform.”

While these last days have been such happy days of rejoicing in the beautiful truths which the present Lord has spread for His people, yet our experiences have sometimes been hard; we have surely had His kind reproofs. We have not been without this evidence of His love and of Divine sonship, for “whom the Lord Loveth He disciplineth.”

The time is drawing shorter and shorter; maybe this is the special reason for the mention of this reproving and admonishing of the Lord. There is no time to waste in respect of being made ready for the deliverance of the Church.

If we are to be among the favoured “little flock” to whom “it is the Father’s good pleasure to give the kingdom,” we have no time to parley with worldly things; we must take advantage of the Lord’s reprovings and admonishings, and use the more diligence to make our calling and election sure, “that no man take our crown.”

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock.” Thus we have indicated the Lord’s presence among His people, and unknown to all but to those to whose hearts He comes with His knock. This is not the knock calling to repentance from sin, and turning to the Lord, but rather the indication of the Lord’s second presence. He went about Israel at His first advent, calling one and another “Israelites indeed in whom was no guile,” an example of which we have in the way Nathaniel was called by Phillip. He had been studying the prophets regarding the coming of the Messiah. The Lord knew him and saw him in his earnest enquiry, so He sent the message to him. Just so to-day, the Lord knows every member of the Bride class, all who “love His appearing,” and He brings the “knock” to their hearts. Somehow or other He sends the message of His second presence, and then, when the heart opens to Him, He comes in and brings the feast of joy. What a comfort the truth has been, the opening up of God’s Word revealing His gracious purpose.

What a contrast is the Bible teaching of “Good news unto all People” to the miserable doctrines of hell and purgatory, which were formulated in the dark ages of Papacy; also to the harsh teachings of Calvin and his predestination on the one hand; and the Methodist doctrine of free grace and that God was doing all He could to save the world, on the other hand. Calvin’s teaching would leave us with no love for such a God as was declared, and the Methodist teaching left us wondering how it was that a God of almighty power could not convert the world, could not close up all the dens of vice and public houses and places of temptation, why He did not save the righteous from all trouble and punish the wicked, why it was that the wicked flourish as a green bay tree while the godly suffer injustice. When we came to the feast, our eyes were opened to see the whole purpose of choosing first the Church during this Gospel Age under conditions of suffering and persecution, for their discipline and that then Christ’s Kingdom would come to turn the world from sin unto God. Our hearts were gladdened at the prospect of the blessing for mankind—all who had never had an opportunity of knowing and accepting the only Name whereby they might be saved, during the present lifetime. Our hearts rejoiced as we found that God was so kind and good and just and true and all-powerful, and therefore able to carry out His great designs. We were able also to appreciate better the high calling of the Church and the exceeding great and precious promises, whereby we are made partakers of the Divine Nature.

How true was the counsel that we should come and buy raiment, the robe of righteousness which Christ has provided, and that we purchase “gold tried in the fire,” these Divine blessings and promises of joint-heirship with Christ, and “eye-salve” that we might understand the great Divine plan and rejoice in its provisions.

Then there is the promise to the overcomer. This promise is not to any sect or party, or society or church or class, it is “to him that overcometh.” The overcoming must be individual. It is only by personal zeal and activity and diligence that the election can be made secure. The exhortation to Philadelphia was “hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” It may be more difficult as we near the end of the way, probably it is more difficult in the Laodicean period than in the Philadelphian period, for errors, theories and all sorts of philosophies are more rampant in the Churches, to confuse and lead to Doubting Castle, and outside the churches the world is gayer than ever, more full of frivolity, carelessness, indifference to religion, full of pride, sensuality and infidelity. The promised reward to the overcomers of this period is so clear and wonderful, “To sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with My father in His throne.”

“He that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit saith to the Churches.” While the messages to the seven Churches have their prophetic and historical application to seven different periods of the Church’s experience—from Pentecost down to the second presence of Christ—it would seem also that all seven types of Christians spoken of may be found among God’s people of this day. The message to the Church at Ephesus was particularly concerning the Church of the early days, but there have, no doubt, continued to be what we may call Ephesian Christians ever since that time; there are still those who are zealous for good works, anxious to have a perfectly working Church, splendid order and with a good show in the flesh, excelling others in activities, but the motive is not quite right—they have lost their first love. The first love prompted zeal with a pure heart and a single eye to God’s glory and the blessing of His people, but this was supplanted by a desire, perhaps to please others, leaders or friends, or simply to make a show, and excel other Churches. How we need to guard our hearts, keep our motives right, our eyes single to God’s glory, our minds humble, and our hearts ever faithful, loyal and increasing in love to God, to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to all the members of His Body. It is a sad reproof from “Him who loved us and gave Himself for us,” “Thou hast left thy first love.”

The Smyrna Christians were particularly the suffering Church of the second period under the terrible pagan persecutions, and there have always been suffering saints from that day to this. Suffering has always been a helpful experience. Its tendency is to lead the soul to seek the great Burden-bearer, the One

who suffered for us, and who was perfected by sufferings, and so it is that there is no reproof to this class. Instead, there is the loving encouragement in the promise of the Crown of Life. If we belong to the Smyrna class of Christians, let us remember that “He who walketh among the candlesticks” knows fully all our sorrows and pains, and calls to mind all the many loving promises of His Word, promises of grace and help according to need, and a crown of life at the end of the way. “Henceforth (Paul could say) there is laid up for me a crown of life which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them also that love His appearing.” (2 Tim. 4:8.)

There is also the Pergamos type of Christian. They are true at heart to the Lord, but are weak in allowing those who lord it over them and serve them for earthly reward. This type of Christian can easily be traced all down the Age, and is still with us. They hold too great an esteem for the clergy class, and are apt to seek to please leaders instead of “holding to the Head.” Elders are but helps, and are not to be allowed to “lord it over God’s heritage.” We must worship God, and serve Him only. We may esteem those who serve and toil in the Word, but we may reverence only the one Lord. The Pergamos Christians appear also to allow worldliness to influence them, and are reprov’d.

The Thyatiran Christians go further than those of Pergamos, by allowing themselves to be ruled by the anti-typical Jezebel system, and while this message has particular application to the Papal power, yet there are still those who permit themselves to be ruled by smaller or large Churches or sectarian systems, which make such claims of Divine authority over God’s people and the truth.

The Sardisian Christians appear to be those apt to be discouraged and oppressed, and there are many in this day. Circumstances all seem to be against them, maybe all their relatives and friends are opposed to, and hinder them in their religious privileges, and they have degenerated respecting works, and are sort of “dead alive” Christians, lacking in courage and zeal. These are admonished of the Lord to watch and to strengthen their faith and love and hold fast what they have, or it may be that the Lord would arrive, and they would not know of it.

There are also Philadelphian Christians still amongst the Lord’s people of to-day. These are such as seek the open door of work in the Vineyard, those who are true to the Lord’s Word and Name, full of zeal and faith and love, and there is no reproof for this class of Christian. Surely these will be amongst the overcomers.

Then, lastly, we have the Laodiceans, and the whole Church is cast off, spued out as nauseous, and the Lord’s true people are called out and addressed individually, and receive such abundant reward for overcoming the seducing influences of this time, they feast on the rich truth’s provided, and have the promise to sit with Christ in His throne.

So then these seven messages form a very complete message from our risen and glorified Lord to His Church yet in the flesh, with the way of the Cross still to travel, who must yet prove their loyalty to God under difficult circumstances and develop a character like their Lord’s if they shall be counted among the overcomers who are to reign with Him in His throne, even as He has overcome and is set down with the Father in His throne.

We notice that in each message the Lord indicates His intimate knowledge of the Church’s doings and conditions — “I know thy works,” and then follow either commendation or reproof, with exhortation and the promise of a great reward. The rewards hold out nothing of an earthly nature; all hopes in regard to the Church are of a spiritual or heavenly nature or condition. It is because of being begotten of the holy spirit to a new nature that the Christian finds himself going against the stream. Fleshly interests conflict with spiritual interests and there is continual warfare. The reward is to him that overcometh. What is there to overcome?

There is, as expressed to Ephesus, the inclination to lose our first love and allow a wrong or impure motive to enter into our hearts and be the motive power behind our zeal.

There is the opposition of those who would injure us, persecute us, and say all manner of evil against us; how easy to be discouraged by the sufferings which should be esteemed a privilege for Christ's sake. To overcome would be to bravely and trustfully plod on with the assurance of the Lord's approval, though "despised and rejected of men," and to maintain a kind spirit toward those who would do us harm.

There is the spirit of Churchianity and reverence towards men—the fear of man that bringeth a snare. We must keep our worship for the Lord pure, and not allow anyone to come between ourselves and our Lord, if we shall be among the overcomers.

There is the spirit of worldliness, the love to make a great show in the flesh, the temptation to accept the aid of worldly powers and influences—to lean on the human arm instead of trustfully leaning on the Lord and accepting His good providence even when it may mean suffering and pain, ignominy and derision.

“ 'Tis the way the Master went,
Should not the servant tread it still?”

Then sometimes the Lord has permitted seeming utter failure of our best efforts to serve Him and proclaim His message, and the cause seems to be almost lost; such was the case with the disciples when their Lord was crucified as a criminal; such was the case with the Sardis Church through the bitter and cruel persecution of the Papal power. Possibly at some time or other each individual member in Christ's Body has had some such experience, which would "beat their courage down." The promise is to the overcomer. Let us remember that God is able to overrule all things for good, and that none can hinder His purpose for His Church. So let us trust and take courage and "strengthen that which was ready to die."

There is also the opposite extreme, when everything goes well, when there is much happy work and many cheerful associations. How easy it is then to fail to build on the true foundation, to begin to feel that we were doing something and fail to realise that it is the Lord's own spirit that works through His people. How easy it is for 'Philadelphia to develop into Laedicea and worldliness and lukewarmness to come about.

It would seem that there never has been a time of more testing of personal faith and trust in God. Never has there been a time when the "whole armour of God" was so necessary to the Christian; never a time when prayer, study and watchfulness was so much needed. The tide against us is so strong that should we—for a moment let go our anchor, our barque would drift down the stream. What is most needed is what the Lord has provided. We specially need His presence, His spirit in our hearts, His grace, His wisdom, His strength, His truth, "the meat in due season," and this is His provision. Have we heard His knock? Have we opened to Him? Are we supping together the good things provided? Let us more and more prize His presence and cling to His Word, which teaches us His will, gives us wisdom and grace, and holds us up against all the foes about us. How could we be overcomers if these were nothing to overcome? Let us take courage. What a privilege it is to be in the Christian fight, and the fact that we realise that the foes "are pressing hard" is an evidence that we are still in the fight, therefore still have the opportunity of proving an overcomer. The promises to the overcomers of the other Churches are all beautiful, but none is more clear or more wonderful than this—Rev. 3:21: "To Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with My Father in His throne."

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the Churches."

PEOPLES PAPER.

AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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The Message on the Air.

IT is a pleasure to report that some good response has been received from the programmes thus far broadcast from 3GL. There is clear evidence that these programmes, containing the message of the Kingdom with its sure hope for the future, are becoming more widely known and appreciated. Apart from those who have sent in for the literature, numerous cases are heard of who look forward to the talks and do their best to hear them each Sunday night. There is cause for rejoicing when the "glad tidings" give comfort and encouragement, and all the dear friends who are assisting in this radio effort can be assured that much good is being done, by the Lord's overruling providence.

While we are sorry that interstate reception cannot be guaranteed, it is good indeed to hear from a Sister as far away as Wallaroo—about 100 miles beyond Adelaide, in South Australia—to the effect that the broadcast on 14th February was heard fairly good. Previous to this on hearing from Canberra and Adelaide that the announcer's voice in our session could be heard much better than the actual talk, this information was passed on to the manager of 3GL with the result that he is doing his best to have our talks "toned up." This may account for the better reception on 14th February. In any case this should encourage other friends at a distance to endeavour to hear 3GL, and, if at all successful, to commend the sessions to others in their locality. Those with really good receiving sets should see that they are in first class order, so that interference from other stations may be avoided. The time for South Australia is 8.30 p.m. on Sunday nights.

Up to the time of going to press there have been six broadcasts, the subjects being varied from week to week. Following each talk a copy of the Dialogue and an appropriate booklet or pamphlet is offered free, so that listeners may receive the greatest benefit by reading and turning to the Scriptures for themselves.

On the last day of February, Sunday 28th, the subject for broadcast will be "Where are the Dead?" The topics for this month are as follows:—

7th March—"The War of Survival."

14th March—"The Third Heaven."

21st March—"The Last Days."

28th March—"What is the Soul?"

(Since setting the above, word has been received from Adelaide that the broadcast on 21st February was heard there very well.)

The Dialogue below was broadcast on 21st February, and was well appreciated. Copies of all these Dialogues are available for those who can make good use of them.

Paradise and the Thief.

ERNEST: Frank, does the Bible tell us very much about Paradise? For instance, where is Paradise and what is Paradise? I realise that these may seem like simple questions, but at the same time I would like to know the answer.

FRANK: The Bible says a great deal about Paradise, although the word itself is used in the Bible only three times. The word Paradise simply means a garden and the Scriptures use it with reference to the original garden of Eden and more particularly with respect to the restored garden of Eden.

ERNEST: Did you say the restored garden of Eden?

FRANK: Yes, the Bible gives us the blessed assurance that the garden of Eden is to be restored, and furthermore that ultimately the whole earth is to become like the garden of Eden.

ERNEST: And that's what the Bible speaks of as being Paradise, is that the thought?

FRANK: Yes.

ERNEST: You may be right, Frank, but you have me puzzled. The reason I asked the question is because I have been reading the promise that Jesus made to the thief on the cross. That promise was, as you probably remember, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Now if Paradise, as you say, is to be right here upon the earth and will be a garden of Eden condition everywhere upon this planet, please tell me how the thief and Jesus could be together in Paradise nearly two thousand years ago. Do you see my difficulty?

FRANK: Yes I do, but in reality there is no difficulty in this connection because Jesus and the thief were not together in Paradise the day they both died.

ERNEST: But Frank, that's what Jesus promised, and surely we can depend upon what He says, can't we?

FRANK: Indeed we can, but first of all we want to make sure just what Jesus did say and why He said it. Let's examine this Scripture carefully. It is found in the 23rd chapter of Luke, verses 42 and 43.

ERNEST: Oh, I know where the passage is found all right, as a matter of fact I had it already for you, and it reads just the way I have quoted, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

FRANK: But Ernest, perhaps you haven't noticed the request made by the thief as recorded in the 42nd verse. It might be well to read that just to keep the record straight.

ERNEST: Very well, Frank, according to my Bible the thief said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom." Well, I can't see that changes matters any.

FRANK: Ernest, where is Christ's Kingdom located?

ERNEST: Well, from what I have learned already, Christ's Kingdom is to be right here upon the earth. And, of course, if that be true, it agrees with what you have said concerning Paradise—that is, that Paradise will be here upon the earth.

FRANK: Yes, and it also agrees with the way Christians have been praying in that wonderful prayer, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” When God’s will is done upon the earth we should have pretty much of a paradise condition here, should we not, Ernest?

ERNEST: It would seem that way, Frank; however, that doesn’t do away with the fact that Jesus promised the thief that they would be together in Paradise that very day. Anyway, just what does Christ’s Kingdom have to do with the promise Jesus made to the thief?

FRANK: It has a very important bearing upon that promise, Ernest. This promise was made in reply to the request of the thief, “Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy Kingdom.” In reply to this Jesus said, “Verily, verily.”

This reply simply means, your request is a proper one and it will be granted. The thief requested to be remembered in something that was yet to come, but you are trying to interpret Jesus’ words as applying to a place to which they were to go.

ERNEST: Frank, your argument, while it sounds plausible, may not necessarily be such a good one because, after all, what did that thief know about the Kingdom of Christ? How do we know that he had the right idea about a kingdom that is coming rather than one to which we are going?

FRANK: It isn’t necessary for us to decide just how much that thief may have known about the Kingdom of Christ.

It is Jesus’ reply to the thief that gives us the inspired information that is so meaningful. Whether or not the thief understood the real intent of his question, Jesus’ reply, “Verily, verily,” means that the thief’s request was a proper one, a request that was in harmony with the Divine plan, and one that would be answered in God’s due time. It was, of course, a very natural question for the thief to ask. There was an inscription over the head of Jesus which read, “This is the king of the Jews.” If the thief had no other information about the kingdom except that, he would get the thought that this man at least claimed to be a king and that it could do no harm to ask to be remembered when he came into his kingdom. This thief was being crucified under the laws of the Roman Empire; he could not expect any further favours from this source. But here was a man who obviously claimed to be a king; a man, moreover, who according to the clamouring of the crowds that witnessed the crucifixion, who also was reputed to be able to perform miracles. The crowd in fact was clamouring for Jesus to demonstrate His miracle-working power by coming down from the cross. What if he should suddenly do this, He might thus gain so much prestige as to enable him to wield a ready influence even in the Roman Empire and possibly would be in a position almost immediately to do something for the thief. Anyway, the thief was grasping at a last straw of hope. He wanted to be remembered when Jesus came into His Kingdom and Jesus assured him that he would thus be remembered and together they would be in Paradise.

ERNEST: Frank, that’s all very interesting, but it doesn’t answer my original question; it doesn’t explain how Jesus and the thief could be in Paradise that very day if Paradise was not then in existence. How do you get over that difficulty?

FRANK: There is really no difficulty to get over, because Jesus didn’t promise the thief that they would be together in Paradise that very day.

ERNEST: But Frank, that’s what it says right here in the Bible; don’t you believe that the Bible is inspired? You don’t mean to say that you intend to change the Bible just to make it fit with your own ideas?

FRANK: No, Ernest. If we need to change the Bible to make it fit with our ideas then we may be sure that our ideas are wrong. But the fact is, that in this case the Bible has already been changed to make it fit someone else's ideas. I might better say, however, that the meaning of the Bible has here been changed by an unintentional mistake of the translators.

ERNEST: Frank, I don't follow you at all.

FRANK: Well, as you probably know the art of writing had not developed in Jesus' day to the extent that it has today. For example, Greek and Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible show no division between words and sentences at all; and, of course, punctuation was not known back there either. For this reason, none of the punctuation in our English

version of the Bible is a part of the inspired record. It represents merely the best efforts of the translators to interpret the significance of what the inspired writers had said. In most instances the translators have done a very good job, but in isolated cases they have confused the real meaning of the text.

ERNEST: But what could punctuation have to do with what Jesus said to the thief?

FRANK: It has much to do with it, Ernest. The way the translators placed the comma the promise reads, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." But with the comma in its proper place, Jesus' promise reads, "Verily, verily, I say unto you to-day, shalt thou be with me in paradise." The way the translators have it in our Common Version of the Bible the text contradicts the remainder of what the Bible says on the subject of Paradise as well as upon the subject of Christ's Kingdom.

ERNEST: Certainly punctuation does make a big difference in the meaning of a sentence. However, if Jesus didn't mean that He would be with the thief in Paradise that day why did He use the expression "to-day" at all?

FRANK: It was to emphasise the promise He was making in spite of the circumstances of that day of darkness and foreboding. This form of emphasis is quite common even in our mannerism of speech. For example, if we wish to make a promise emphatic we might say: I'll tell you right now I intend to do so and so. And there was a special reason why Jesus should emphasise the particular day in which He made this promise to the thief. It was a very dark day for Jesus, a day when from the human standpoint it looked utterly impossible that He should ever have a kingdom in which He could remember and bless the people. His promise to the thief was an evidence of His great faith in His Heavenly Father's promise to make of Him a worldwide King in a kingdom that was yet to rule over and bless all nations. Jesus was simply telling the thief that despite all indications to the contrary the Messianic Kingdom would be established in God's due time and that He would then be remembered and blessed.

ERNEST: Well, that makes the matter plain all right. Certainly it must have required a great deal of faith on the Master's part to promise the thief that His Kingdom was to become a reality and that through its administration Paradise would be restored upon the earth and that the thief would be there and receive a blessing. It's easy enough to have faith and hope when circumstances around us are fairly bright and pleasant, but to have a vision of truth and a faith in that vision that pierces the gloom of present suffering and distress is something else.

FRANK: How true that is! We have somewhat of a similar situation to-day. As we look out over the world and see the conditions prevailing it would be easy to conclude that Christianity has failed. It is only as we know of God's long-range plan, and realise that despite all the signs to the contrary, Christ's

Kingdom is now indeed just around the corner, that we can have real hope despite what seems at present to be a threatened black-out of civilisation and Christianity. God's purposes never fail, however, and Jesus knew this, so He could say to the thief that He was indeed to be a King, that His Kingdom would restore the long-lost Paradise. Upon the authority of God's promises we can say to the world to-day that Christianity is about to triumph, that the Kingdom of Christ is soon to be manifested for the blessing of the people, that there is soon to be universal and everlasting peace and joy' and happiness and freedom for all nations. We can say this because not only has God promised it but His almighty power guarantees it.

ERNEST: I can see that all right now, but Frank, tell me this: where did Jesus go when He died?

FRANK: According to the Bible, Jesus went into Sheol—that's the Hebrew word used in the Old Testament for hell. In the Greek of the New Testament the word is Hades. It is really the condition of death. The prophet tells us that Jesus poured out his soul unto death. Jesus went into death in order to redeem the fallen human race from death. His death was a substitute for the forfeited life of Adam. As the whole world lost life through Adam so all will have an opportunity to regain life through Christ. This opportunity will be given during the thousand years of Christ's Kingdom.

ERNEST: That's the time when Paradise will be restored upon the earth, is that it?

FRANK: Yes. The thief will then get his opportunity, so will all who have died without having a full opportunity to accept the Redeemer. The success of this wondrous plan of God depends upon a resurrection of the dead. Jesus assures us that all who are in the graves shall hear His voice and come forth. This will include the thief, it will include all men and they will come forth from the tomb in order that they might have an opportunity to obey the laws of the new kingdom and live here upon the earth in the restored Paradise forever. That will be God's provision for humanity in His world of to-morrow.

The Secret Place.

There's a shelter, safe and precious,
Where God's children may abide.
There's a refuge from the tempest
Where in safety they may hide,

There's a place where all life's trials
Seem to fade like mists away,
Where Peace broods with spreading pinions.
And night seems as bright as day.

There's a place where all the weary
Lay their burdens down and rest,
Where the sorrowful and lonely
May find shelter and be blest.

There the sin-sick may find healing,
Hungry souls be satisfied,
The repentant find new courage
And the homeless may reside.

There's a refuge for the sinner
When remorse has done its part.
There is hope e'en for the dying,
Comfort for the broken heart

Would you know this blessed refuge
That's provided by God's grace?
Know that Christ Himself invites you
To that sacred "Secret Place."

Underneath His wings abiding
There no storm can e'er molest,
Safe in Christ, our blessed shelter
Every weary soul may rest.

Oh, what joy and peace awaits us,
Oh the fulness of His grace,
Oh, the joy of simple resting,
Hiding in the Secret Place.

—L.K.P.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren in Adelaide wish to announce that they expect to hold the Convention again this year at Easter, D.V. 'The three days, from Good Friday to Easter Sunday, have been determined for the gatherings—April 23rd to 25th—and a hearty welcome awaits all able to attend these meetings with the friends in Adelaide. Visiting friends expecting to be present are asked to communicate with the secretary, Mrs. H. H. Bartel, 10 Forest Avenue East, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, South Australia.

The End of the Way.

The following is to hand from Sydney and it is regretted that this information of the passing of Sister Pinkerton was not included in last month's issue:

“The Sydney Class has yet another loss to announce in the passing away of Sister Pinkerton, the loss of whose husband was reported in a recent ‘P.P.’

“This member was a quiet unassuming Sister, manifesting the beautiful grace of patience in her trials, and was greatly respected by all, and especially loved by those who knew her intimately. She has entered into the rest that remains for the people of God.

“So many of the friends passing away causes us to realise that the time is short and that we should make full use of the opportunities that are still ours. ‘Redeeming the time for the days are evil.’ “

Passover Memorial, 1943.

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death falls this year on the evening of April 18th, according to the Jewish date. Sunday evening April 18th will therefore be the appropriate time for the brethren to celebrate the Memorial of Christ's death.

Memorial Service in Melbourne.

The Melbourne brethren wish to make known that they expect to hold the Memorial Service on Sunday Evening, April 18th (D.V.) and extend a welcome to all believers in the sacrifice of Christ to be present to keep the celebration in remembrance of Him, in harmony with His request. The exact time and the address for this service will appear in next issue.

Aids to Bible Study.

“Tabernacle Shadows.”—This well-known booklet; most helpful to a clear understanding of the plan of salvation. Paper covers, 1/- each.

“Zionism in Prophecy,” instructive for both Jews and Gentiles, and especially appropriate for the present days. Priced at 1/- per copy.

“God's Covenants.”—An instructive booklet on these subjects. Priced at 6d. each.

Cards, Desolation—Restoration.

This poem is now available in post card size, in a variety of colours. Many of our friends will know the very helpful message it contains for the bereaved. It is also very useful in conveying the hope of salvation in a general way. It is supplied at 3 for 6d., 1/8 per dozen; or 1/6 per dozen in 3-dozen lots.

Correspondence.

Victoria, 7th February, 1943.

Frank and Ernest—Dear Sir,—As I have been listening to you this last few Sundays and, being a Bible student for about 35 years, having read much literature, I would like to know just how you expect the Kingdom to start and function.

I am one hundred per cent. for the Kingdom, as it is the only chance we have, but there are so many different ideas just how it will start, and when.

I am, Yours sincerely.

Victoria, 8th February, 1943.

Dear Sir,—Please enclosed find ten shillings (10/-) —2 / 6 for one year's subscription for "Peoples Paper."

Would you kindly send me last night's broadcast talk and some of your Free literature; the remainder of the money you may use for broadcasting funds, or where you think best for the Lord's work.

My wife and I are praying that many may receive spiritual help from the talks from 3GL. So may God's blessing go out with it.

I am, Yours sincerely.

Victoria, 2nd February, 1943.

Dear Sir,—We listen to your Sunday night session and find it very interesting, and would also like a copy of your free booklet. You will find enclosed a stamp to help cover postage, thanking you for your kind offer of the free booklet.

Yours sincerely.

Victoria, 2nd February, 1943.

Frank and Ernest—Dear Sirs,—Having heard your Radio programme on Sunday night last, I was very much interested in the questions and answers, so I thought I would write you and see if I could get any books on the second coming of Christ, also its connection with this present war, and the last war.

I became a Christian in 1900 but am not a member of any present day churches, as it appears to me that the various church doctrines falsify the truth in Scripture; as, for instance, most churches believe that Christ came, was born, lived, died and rose again the third day, but do not believe the Scriptures in that He is coming again and will raise the dead, and will reign with His people. That is one reason I cannot associate with them entirely. The Scripture is either all truth, or else all lie. God cannot lie; we cannot accept some of the Bible and refuse to believe the rest.

Hoping you can help me with some reading of truth on these important matters.

I remain, Yours faithfully.

Victoria, 22 / 2 / 43 .

Frank and Ernest—Dear Sirs.—Would you send me your papers about the Bible? I have heard two and like the talks very much. Hoping to hear from you soon.

I remain, Yours faithfully.

Victoria, 22 / 2 / 43.

Frank and Ernest—Dear Christian Friends.—Pardon the liberty I am taking in writing to you. I listen to your Bible Lessons and think you are both wonderful. Would you please forward a copy of your lesson announced. “Coming Back from Hell Soon,” I think is the title, also a copy of your last-21/2/43.

I am a Christian, also a confirmed invalid having been bedridden 17 years, unable to walk. I have written a tract; it is my first, thus the reason for very poor composition; if you should think fit I was wondering if you would care to read it over the air at one of your lessons; if not, I will quite understand.

I will pray for your work; God loves them that love Him. Your Sister in Him.

Victoria.

The Secretary, Berean Bible Institute—Dear Sir,—Enclosed will you please find 10/- note, towards the fund of the Berean Bible Institute. I wish it were a larger amount, but that is not possible at present. I would be glad if you would post me twelve of the Radio Announcement leaflets.

With every good wish and thanking you for the same in anticipation.

Yours sincerely.

Victoria, 13th February, 1943.

Berean Bible Institute—Dear Sirs,—I am enclosing 2/6 for the “Peoples Paper” as I would like to get it regularly. I have been very pleased to get the free copies you have sent, also “Hope Beyond the Grave.” I would also like a copy of “Where are the Dead ?” and “Times of Refreshing and Christ’s Return.” Thanking you again for papers.

I am, Yours sincerely.

(This letter is the result of a Consolation Card being sent B.B.I.)

New South Wales, 24 / 1 / 43.

Berean Bible Institute—Some kind friend put one of your pamphlets called “the Voice” into my letter box, and as I fully believe what the Scriptures teach concerning the promises, and hope to take part in the fulfilment of them in that day and age, when He comes to establish the Kingdom, I would be pleased if you would forward me a copy of “Foregleams of the Golden Age,” for which find postal note for 2 / - enclosed.

The other book, “Divine Plan of the Ages,” would also be appreciated, for which I enclose postal note for

1/3. A copy of “Why Sorrow, Sin, Death and Evil is Permitted” would be appreciated, or “God’s Great Plan of Salvation and Restoration.”

With thanks, Yours sincerely.

South Australia, 12th February, 1943.

The Berean Institute—Dear Sir,—Many thanks for sending me the “Peoples Papers.” I am enclosing 10 / - in this letter for you to continue sending the “Papers” until the amount is gone. I cannot hear your broadcasts at 3GL and am very sorry, as I would very much like to hear them. Do you have the talks printed?—if so, I would like them posted on to me, while this money lasts, or any other interesting paper, as I am interested. I would like four small books for children, “God’s Best Gift,” and you will oblige me.

Yours truly.

(This letter is the result of a newspaper advertisement—B.B.I.)

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