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## Why Doesn't God Do Something?

TO-DAY there is great mention of new machines, but even new machines and devices made by man sometimes have their shortcomings. This is one of the reasons why we need and desire to turn to God, because we recognise Him as an absolute Being, One who has no shortcomings. But as we look around us and see the world filled with shortcomings, plagues, death and war—any spot on earth where we look, whether it be in the eastern part of the world, in Vietnam, the Middle East, Israel, our own country, the United States—there is one recurring question, and for those who are Christians there is a challenge—Why, if there is a God, doesn't God do something?

Now, if we are going to answer that challenge we need to fairly and honestly look not only at the world situation but at the Bible as the Word of God. Whenever we turn to the Bible we should turn to it in a prayerful condition of mind. So, as we look at this question, Why doesn't God do something? let me ask a question. What would you do, if you were God; if you had in mind to create an entire race of human beings, a race that would want to serve you willingly and of their own free will, a race that had a choice to serve you or not to serve you, and yet would willingly and lovingly render the service desired—what would you do, if you were God?

There are several alternatives that would be open to you. One of them would be that you could create a race of beings with the instinctive desire to do that which is right, the instinctive notion to obey. Then you would have a race of beings that would obey you. But this plan has a fallacy. They would obey, because they had no alternative. You would not be accomplishing the objective desired.

A second possibility would be to create a race of beings who did have a choice, freedom to choose right or wrong, but to create them in such a way that there would be a natural tendency to choose that which is right, so that when evil was presented as an option, it would not be considered a desirable option, and would be rejected. But that has basically the same problem as the first possibility and you would have a race of semi-robots who would obey because you had planned it that way.

Take a third possibility, to create a race of beings who had the alternative of serving or not serving, obeying or disobeying, according to the experiences that touched them, but loading their experiences of good. The choice they would make would obviously be that which is right. Once again you are failing in your basic objective, for they would be already biased in your favour.

A fourth alternative would be to make a race of beings that had an equal option to choose good or evil, to present them a fair test where evil is presented in a setting appearing as good, and good as evil. Let man choose, and if he chooses that which is evil, permit him to suffer the consequences of that act. Afterwards give him a new experience with good and evil, instructing him fairly and fully in the lessons of the sinfulness of evil, along with a sampling of the goodness of God, so that the renewed choice would be that which is right. It would seem that this alternative is one which would give a free and open choice, and if it could be arranged, would work to that end. This, we suggest, is the plan God has chosen. We will try to establish it from the Scriptures, that man has been given a free

and open choice to choose good or evil. God has fore-arranged a plan whereby man has an association with evil and a contrasting experience with good, and so having an informed choice of good or evil, man as a whole will choose good and live.

Yet if that were the plan God had in mind, when we look about us and see the various degradations man has fallen into, wouldn't we have to say, If that is God's plan it has been a failure? No doubt we would. If we were to stop the course of human history today, and at this time take an evaluation, seeing man has been allowed to do what he would—we would have to admit that plan is a failure. But we do not have to stop the clock today! This is where the Bible comes in as a wonderful guide for us. If in looking at the Bible we can see that the course of human history has been prophesied in advance by God, and the very course mankind would take, and if we can additionally see the Bible contains prophecies yet unfulfilled that would provide the full scope of this experiment, then we have reason to hope that the Bible's plan is valid.

If we see a new building in construction, and look at the framework and scaffolding, the lack of windows and so on, you might say, Whoever designed that building is a miserable architect. But you know that building is not yet complete, and you are not in a position to judge it until the building has reached its final stage of completion. So we cannot judge by God's unfinished plans, or a situation which exists at any particular time, such as today. There must be an experience with evil followed by an experience with good. We will find this plan basically in the Bible.

**First**, it was necessary for man to have an experience with death. That is obvious. That does not take any looking at the Bible, but at human history. **Second**, the Bible has a plan providing a legal means of redemption from the penalty man has to pay for his experience in sin. That takes on an element of faith. There is a story in the Bible of Jesus of Nazareth, and the death He died on Calvary's cross. **Third**, the Bible tells us that man will be resurrected from the dead to live on this earth, and in that resurrection he will have an experience with good with full instruction in the Word of God. That is not an historical event, and takes more faith. That looks to the future. **Fourth**, in that educational experience man is to be given a contrasting experience with good, in contrast to evil, that he may choose good and live. **Fifth**, God has provided in His plan a full, final test for all mankind, having given them an experience with evil at the present time, and an experience with good in the Kingdom. The final test will see if each man, having had a full opportunity, will choose good or evil. Man will choose, having had such contrasting experiences. As the Psalmist says in Psa. 119:67, 71, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." And Eccles. 1:13, "I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven; this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith."

And yet this whole plan centres around one experience which Christians have to accept by faith, an experience of the past. There must be an acceptance of the value of the sacrifice of Jesus, and His death for all mankind. This may be hard to accept for many because this happened 2,000 years ago, yet it has not changed world events as far as the reign of evil is concerned. So the question persists—Why doesn't God do something? The answer to that, we believe, is because this great plan of God is like a drama in five acts, each act having its own specific purpose, each act dramatising one thing, man's need of God, and God's ability to solve all the problems of mankind.

The first act lasts from the creation of man in the Garden of Eden to the time when God wiped out all mankind from the earth except Noah and his family. This act taught the lesson that mankind could not, as individuals, trying to bring themselves back to righteousness, even having the assistance of the powers of heaven, find a solution. It was beyond the powers of men or angels to solve the dilemma.

The second act goes from the end of that Flood to the death of Jacob. Jacob was the son of Isaac, who was the son of Abraham. Up to this time God permitted man to experiment, under patriarchal arrangements, and He dealt with such people as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, giving them His instructions directly, and those instructions were passed on down through family arrangements. But this failed to produce any real righteousness, showing that man by himself does not have the power to solve his problems.

In the third act, from the death of Jacob to the Cross, God's dealings were with one nation, the nation of Israel. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." God, in His dealings with Israel, gave them a Law

through which by keeping, they could obtain life. What was the result of that experiment of nearly 2,000 years? Even though they knew God's Word, and many were sincere in trying to keep God's Law, it required a perfect man to do so, and it dramatised the need for something else. The Law, which would have given them life if they kept it, brought only condemnation. Rom. 7:7—"What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." If anyone could have kept it, he would have been pointed out as a perfect man, qualified to give his own life for the life originally forfeited by Adam. So the law was, as Paul said, a schoolmaster to point to Christ. Except for His keeping of it, the failure of all others once more dramatised the essential point, man's inability to save himself, and therefore his need of God.

The fourth act was from the death of Christ to the present time. This was the time for spreading a new concept, that Jesus Himself introduced. It was termed by His followers Good News, because it prescribed a new way to life through the gospel of Jesus. During this period it was the plan of God to deal with individuals from every race and group of people, who would try in their hearts to walk the way that Christ walked and follow closely in His footsteps. As Rom. 8:17 tells us, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." This was the selection of what is called in the Bible the Bride of Christ, the Church of Christ, those identified with Him, and by such identification and faithfulness would be rewarded by being given life with Christ in heaven. We read in 1 John 3:1, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

This brings us to the fifth act in this drama, called the Millennium, the Kingdom of Christ, the Kingdom of God, the grand climax act, for which Jesus wanted His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth even as it is in heaven." The Bible describes this period of time in Rev. 20:1, showing that Satan, the great enemy of mankind, would be bound for a thousand years.

Isaiah 35:8-10 tells us that "a highway (a way to approach to God) shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." In other words, this is describing a time which would enable mankind to go from unholiness to holiness, and the Bible predicts that then no man would need to say, Know the Lord, for the knowledge of the Lord would cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. This is the age spoken of in Acts, "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained", even Jesus Christ the righteous. It is this act which rounds out the purposes of God in this great drama. It is this act in which the class of individuals selected during the Gospel Age will live and reign with Christ, and use their experiences to help others to live forever as perfect beings on this earth. In this act also man needs to recognise his own inability, in order to appreciate that the only thing that could lift him back up to standing with God was something God Himself must do.

Why doesn't God do something? Man has been doing many things, and they have all failed. Man has tried every form of government. He has tried theocracy, claiming God as his head. He has tried monarchies and empires.

He has tried democracy and republics. Now he is trying socialism and communism. Each of these things has shown that they have not been able to solve man's basic needs, the removal of sin from an imperfect heart. Often, the various solutions have been tried with good motives. Men such as Constantine the Great, who tried to unite Church and State to see if this would do something, brought in an age of persecution, an age of inquisition; it ended in the stopping of all freedom of thinking about God. A great society, a new deal, has often been proposed. Each time it has been an ideal which has tried to bring in equality to a people who have not had equality, but each time it has not worked.

The churches of the world have offered great programmes with the best of motives, to try to correctly distribute the wealth of the world and eliminate poverty and discrimination. Despite the greatness of their efforts, poverty and discrimination persist. They have to learn one lesson. It was expressed very well by Billy Graham—"Man cannot

legislate Paradise.” That is one lesson—it cannot come through outward changing of laws. The one thing man is proving himself unable to do is changing the heart. But in the plan of God as revealed in the Bible, describing what He calls a New Covenant He will make with man, He says He will take away their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. But He would begin by changing the heart, and with that change, changed laws are necessary.

Man feels he has one more thing to try—limited or unlimited anarchy, each man doing his own thing, each one doing what he wants to do, granting to all others that same freedom. Yet the fallacy of this has already been shown in the first experiments of this free thought and free living, because every man’s liberty is taking away from his neighbour’s liberty. All men are dependent one upon another, and their lives affect one another.

So God has not been doing nothing, because He has been allowing man to try all these various solutions for himself, and learn the lessons inherent in their failure.

But we have to come back to our original question. Letting things carry on seems so pathetic. Why doesn’t God do something? A story has been told of Martin Luther. During the Reformation he had his moments of extreme discouragement, because he fought against tremendous odds. On one of these occasions when he came home very discouraged, he found his wife in tears. He asked what was the matter. She said, “Haven’t you heard? God died today.” The point came across to him, that that was not true, and that while he was attempting to do something by himself, the real solution was that God had planned the final outcome, and he needed to have trust. So every night he would go through the streets thinking, God’s in His Heaven and all is right. However, God has a plan;

He is doing something, even if in that plan is a period allowing man to run his own way. That in itself is doing something, permitting a valuable lesson to sink in, which will be the key to man’s heart. No man can change his heart until he realises that he, of himself, has no ability to achieve righteousness.. The New Testament was based on one word—REPENT! and be converted, and your sins shall be blotted out. Recognition of a need is there. It is because man has failed to realise that God can be doing something passively, that some theologians have come up with the thought that God is dead.

The Bible, in projecting this time, says in Luke 18:8, “When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” Faith has been replaced by cynicism, blind unbelief, agnosticism, wondering whether God is interested and involved at all. Why has this happened? Why has the Christian religion, centered upon God and Christ, failed to bring that peace of mind that changes men’s hearts? Looking at this matter honestly, the answer is simple. It is because the creeds of Christendom have made God an unbelievable Creator. It is for this reason that Higher Criticism and Communism and Modernism have entered religion. The desire to throw off the unbelievable picture of a mighty God who created a race of beings and was not able to save more than a small percentage of them; a God who had a vindictive heart, who would take those He could not save and roast them forever in hell; a God who did not have the ability to so get across to the man He had created the concepts of life. There is a grand purpose stated in 1 Tim. 2:4—God “will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” But many think that God could not fulfil that purpose, and His plan is a failure. This has made of the Bible an unbelievable proposition, and this is the reason many have thought the Bible itself must be false, and thrown out the entire concept of God. Movements such as the Modernist movement in the Christian church today have this as their background.

But it is not necessary, because that is not the Bible at all. It says very clearly and straightforwardly that there is to be a time when “all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth.” The Bible says God will judge all men in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained. It says God does have a plan that provides an educational experience for man to learn. The alternative to discarding the unbelievable God as painted by Christians, is to go back to the Scriptures anew and personally study them, and see what the Bible itself portrays of the character and plan of this Creator.

This will bring us back one more time to our basic question. From man’s extremity we still ask, Why doesn’t God do something? The answer is, He is not only doing something, but doing many things. First, He is selecting the Bride of Christ; that is the feature of His plan now going on in preparation for the blessing of all mankind. Secondly, He is actively permitting evil to have its full fruitage so man will see the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

Third, the Bible indicates that mankind is in a transition period, from the experience of sin into the Kingdom and its experiences of righteousness. Dan. 12:1-4 marks out our time—by the vast increase of knowledge on all subjects; by the tremendous amount of running to and fro by this generation, quite unparalleled in the world's history; and the present time of trouble, laying bare all human society for the erection of a new building, the Kingdom of Christ. We are in the final stages of that period, with the restoration of the homeland of Palestine to the people to whom God promised that land. So many things indicate this transition, and the very nearness of the Kingdom for which we have been praying for so many years.

While God has been doing these many things, the Bible predicts there are many more things He will do. It describes the fact that there will be on the earth one final climax of trouble to prepare men's hearts for the new rule, preparing them to accept Him as they realise their own unwisdom has failed. He will finally complete the Church so He can use that body, with Christ, in blessing all the families of the earth, and giving them the education they need. He will convert the nation of Israel to His plans, as Paul said in Rom. 11:25—'Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.' He will resurrect from the dead not only the wonderful men of old, but all mankind, the good and the evil to share in these experiences. They will have an opportunity of trying, in that kingdom of God, to thoroughly learn the lessons He will give. Satan will be restrained for a thousand years. At the end of that period God will let man have a final test called in Revelation a "little season", which will reveal those who will not obey. Then Christ will say to all others, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the earth."

Why doesn't God do something? Because He is first permitting evil to rule on the earth, to give an experience in unrighteousness.

Why doesn't God do something? Each feature of God's plan is for a specific purpose. We are in the final phases of the selection of the Church.

Why doesn't God do something? Because He is allowing man to try everything himself, to fully bring him to the realisation that he cannot do anything himself.

Why doesn't God do something? Because He is waiting to see man resting in the fact that God is working in mankind, even though it can be seen only by the eye of faith.

Why doesn't God do something? He is doing many things, and will do many more. When we look at the structure fully complete, all men will realise the full scope of God's Plan.

Why doesn't God do something? The question is really not, Why doesn't God do something? but Why don't we do something? God has a plan so all-comprehensive as to cover every man.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM *Australia, 3101.*

# Convention News

IT is a pleasure to report a very helpful and refreshing season of spiritual fellowship experienced at the Annual Christmas Convention, sponsored by the Melbourne Class. We are grateful indeed to the Lord for His blessings in connection with the gatherings throughout the four days. It was a pleasure and privilege to welcome visiting brethren from Adelaide, Sydney, Perth and Tasmania, as well as quite a group from various parts of U.S.A., also some from nearer localities in Victoria. The presence of each one of these dear friends into our midst and their assistance with the programme, added considerably to the blessings derived from the assemblies under the Lord's providential overruling.

Various sessions made up the four days of Convention, including two Bible Studies on the passages Ephesians 4:1-6, and Revelation 3:14-22. The main thoughts on each portion of Scripture were brought out with benefit to all, our brethren from U.S.A., contributing helpfully,—these studies were of added interest to them, as Bible Studies are not taken at Conventions generally in U.S.A. Brief thoughts on these studies and also notes on all addresses given at the Convention are contained in the Convention Notes, also now available and supplied free to all desiring these copies.

Addresses by the brethren covered a wide range of topics and each one was much appreciated, the subjects being—“Our Covenant Relationship”; “Into His Hands”; “The Prophecy of Micaiah”; “The Spirit of Prayer”;

“We Found Jesus”; “The Church's Mission”; “Be strong in the Lord”; “Give ye Them to Eat”; “Zion, the City of God”; Faithfulness of God's Promises”; “Newness of Life”; “Law of Liberty”; “They That Wait Upon the Lord”; “The Great Love of God”; and “The Chastenings of the Lord.” It is expected that some of these addresses will be published in full in the “Peoples Paper” from time to time.

The many messages with Christian love and greetings and wishing the Convention God's blessing were very gladly received. Many of these were brought personally by our visiting brethren from various Classes in U.S.A., as well as by our Australian brethren from their groups or individual friends. Other messages came by overseas telegrams from U.S.A. and Canada, also some by air from England and India. All these were a real highlight of the first Fellowship Meeting on the first day of Convention. It was encouraging to know that so many dear friends would be remembering the Convention days in their prayers, many on other continents of the world. To all who remembered the Convention with their greetings, as well as to our brethren in every place, the message from the Convention is contained in the passage of Scripture Eph. 4:1-6, with warm Christian love from all assembled at the gatherings.

Opportunity for praise and testimony was taken by a goodly number of the visiting and local brethren, testifying to the Lord's blessings and favors received at the Convention and throughout the year past, as well as over many years in the Christian way. All agreed that it is the greatest favor and privilege to receive so much of blessing from the Giver of every good thing. At this Fellowship Meeting appreciation was expressed of the service rendered by the Sisters in providing refreshments throughout the Convention days, all undertaken as a labor of love in the service of the Lord. The “Hymns We Love and Why” session was also much enjoyed, as the sentiments of our beautiful hymns were meditated upon while they were sung heartily.

The daily attendance throughout the Convention was of a higher average than for many years, and it was a pleasure to have many members of our Melbourne Polish Class present throughout the gatherings. Quite a few visiting brethren from U.S.A., could speak the Polish language, so this meant extra fellowship for some of our local Polish brethren, who have not yet become fluent with our English language. Altogether, the fellowship throughout was very sweet and precious. Some of our visiting friends were not able to remain for the last day of Convention, but those who did were with us for the Love Feast, when the special hymns “Blest be the tie that binds”, and “God be with you till we meet again”. were sung with grateful hearts for all the Lord's favors bestowed throughout the Convention. The closing prayer of thanksgiving to God, and requesting His blessing and oversight upon His dear people everywhere concluded the very profitable Melbourne Convention for 1972.

# Passover Memorial 1973

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 15th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "In remembrance of Christ."

## Memorial Services

*Melbourne*—Sunday, 15th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

*Adelaide*—Sunday, 15th April, at 6.15 p.m., at the M.U. Hall, (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

*Sydney*—Sunday, 15th April, at 6 p.m., at 81 James Street, Leichhardt.

*Perth*—Sunday, 15th April, at 6.30 p.m. Phone secretary 93-1973 for meeting place.

## They That Wait Upon the Lord

(Convention Address)

"Nast thou not known? host thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isa. 40:28-31.)

WHEN verse 31 of Isaiah 40 is read, it brings to mind a statement written a while ago by an elderly brother. The years were telling on him, and he wrote—"I am not able to run these days and not be weary, but I can still walk and not faint."

In dwelling upon the thought of **waiting** upon the Lord, there are two Hebrew words used in the Old Testament which bring out the thought beautifully that is in mind. The Hebrew word translated "wait" in our text is spelled QAVAH, and means—"to bind together, that is collect; (figuratively) to expect." This Hebrew word is translated by five English words in various texts; namely gather, look, patiently, tarry and wait. Referring to Isaiah 5, where this Hebrew word is translated "looked", we read—"Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill; and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein; and he LOOKED that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now,

0 inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge I pray you betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore when I LOOKED that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof; and it shall be trodden down; and I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned, nor Jigged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he LOOKED for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry." (Isa. 5:1-7). The Lord "looked" upon Israel expectantly that it should have brought forth fruitgrapes--and it brought forth wild grapes.

How clearly this was revealed towards the close of Jesus' ministry, when He declared—"0 Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. 23:37, 38.) This same situation is explained in Luke 19:41-44,—"And when he was

come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.” What a pathetic situation the dear Lord found in Israel! He looked upon them to find fruitage, and there was no fruitage. He wept over the city.

This Hebrew word which refers to the Lord looking expectantly for fruitage in Israel, His chosen people, is also translated in Psa. 40:1 by the words “waited patiently.” In prophetic strain the Psalmist writes—”I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the

miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears host thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” We realise that this prophecy applied to our Lord Jesus, and since His first advent to all His followers who have walked, and are walking faithfully in His steps; those who **wait patiently** upon God, expectantly, and the Lord inclines towards them and hears their cry.

From the writings of the inspired Psalmist again we read—”Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul, my God,

I trust in thee ... Yea, let none that **wait** on thee be ashamed . . . Show me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I **wait** (expectantly). all the day”. “Hear LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. When thou saidst,

Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up. I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. **Wait** on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: **wait**, I say, on the Lord.” (Psa. 25:1-5; 27:7,8,10,13,14.) (See also Lamentations 3:22-26.)

While we have seen that the Lord **looked** expectantly for good fruitage in Israel prior to and especially at Jesus’ first advent, and found none, it is encouraging to see that at the second advent, when Israel is delivered from her oppressors in being saved out of “Jacob’s trouble”, the words waiting expectantly are used concerning them in the prophecy of Isa. 25:6-9—“And in this mountain (kingdom) shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things; a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have **waited** for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have **waited** for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” What an expectation then, for Israel restored, Israel prepared to bless the other nations who will also fall into line with the laws of the wonderful kingdom operating at that time. Then the expectation, the waiting, will be abundantly fulfilled and realised, and will also be the realisation of all mankind when “the desire of all nations shall have come.”

Referring to a second Hebrew word translated “wait” or “waited”, it is spelled—CHAKAH—and means mainly “to adhere to; hence to wait.” This word is found in the prophecy of Daniel 12:12,—”Blessed is he that **waiteth**, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” This, *we* know, has reference to the necessity of the Lord’s people exercising patience in respect of the blessedness to be experienced in the last century, when the second advent of Christ was about to be revealed. Blessed is he that **waiteth**, that continued to adhere to the fact that the second advent was imminent. This refers to the time of the Millerite movement. Some at that time did not maintain a waiting attitude in respect of Christ’s second presence at the completion of the 1335 days—years — which many Bible students agree had their fulfilment about the year 1874. At the time of the Millerite movement many held the thought that Christ’s return was imminent, but they expected Him to return as a man, in the flesh. Indeed the date was set for about 1844. When their expectations were not realised at that time, they lost faith in Christ’s return. They failed to experience the blessedness of those who waited and came to the 1335 days—the

fulfilment of the 1335 years of the prophecy of Daniel.

So we also can lose the blessedness of the Lord if we do not wait sufficiently upon Him to experience the enlightenment of His truth in our hearts and minds, as indicated by our Lord in His message to us in Luke 12:35-38,—”Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning: and ye yourselves like unto men that **wait** for their lord .... 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 sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.” This is a parable illustrating the expectant attitude of God’s people who have been experiencing the blessing of the harvest truths from the Lord for upwards of 100 years in particular.

A helpful prophecy respecting the attitude of the Lord’s people towards world events in the end of the age, with the passing of the present order, is found in Zephaniah 3:8,9,—”Therefore **wait** ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.” This means to **wait expectantly** for God’s plan to work out, in accordance with His Word. The Lord’s people are not commissioned to interfere for or against God’s “indignation.” His plan will work out for the ultimate blessing of the whole human creation, as depicted in verse 9 of this prophecy.

Returning to Psa. 40:1 , we would like to meditate on this verse,—”I waited patiently for the LORD and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.” We have previously referred to “waiting patiently”, expectantly, for the Lord, and now wish to consider the Lord “inclining” towards us. Have you ever felt the Lord **inclining** unto you? The meaning of the Hebrew word translated “inclined” is “to stretch, or spread out”, and Weymouth’s translation of Heb. 2:16 is most revealing,—”For assuredly it is not to angels that he is continually reaching a helping hand, but it is to the descendants of Abraham.” He is continually stretching or reaching out a hand to the seed of Abraham,—”If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” This compassionate, merciful High Priest stretches out His hand to His faithful followers; He **inclines** towards those who are truly **waiting** upon Him, during this Gospel Age.

It is helpful to us when we realise the Lord really **inclines** unto those who are **waiting** upon Him. Some few years ago one of our young brethren took a visit to various parts of the United States, and on his return explained how smoothly the whole visit had turned out to be. To some extent it surprised him. Another brother said, That was the result of prayer on behalf of the young brother while he travelled in unknown parts of the world. The Lord inclined towards the traveller; any difficulties which may have been in the way were overruled so that the whole visit ran smoothly.

Other experiences could be mentioned which impressed beyond doubt that the Lord **inclined** toward us in connection with the broadcasting of the message of truth in this region. In this matter, the waiting on Him was not for personal advantage but that His cause might be prospered in accord with His good will. Our thanks to the Lord were rendered accordingly. Some may consider these things rather small for the Lord to be concerned about, which brings to mind the lines of the poem—

”If I could Know.”

I wonder if He really shares  
In all these little human cares,  
This mighty King of Kings

If He who guides through boundless space  
Each radiant planet in its place,  
Can have the condescending grace  
To mind these petty things.

It seems to me, if sure of this,  
Sent with each ill would come such bliss  
That I might covet pain,  
And deem whatever brought to me

The blessed thought of Deity,  
And sense of Christ's sweet sympathy,  
Not loss, but richest gain.  
Dear Lord, my heart shall no more doubt

That Thou dost compass me about  
With sympathy Divine.  
The Love for me once crucified  
Is not the love to leave my side,

But waiteth ever to divide  
Each smallest care of mine.

The words of Isa. 64:4 seem so applicable in this connection—"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that **waiteth** for him."

When clouds hang heavy o'er thy way,  
And darker grows the weary day,  
And thou, oppressed by anxious care,  
Art almost tempted to despair,  
Still wait upon the Lord.

When friends betray thy loving trust,  
And thou art humbled in the dust,  
When dearest joys from thee have fled,  
And hope within thy heart lies dead,  
Still wait upon the Lord.

When Death comes knocking at thy door,  
And in thy home are sorrows sore,  
Though age comes on and eyes grow dim,  
Still look to Christ, still trust in Him,  
And wait upon the Lord.

Whate'er thy care, believe His Word;  
In joy or grief, trust in the Lord.  
Good courage He will give to thee,  
And strong, indeed, thy heart shall be,  
By waiting on the Lord.

## Pilgrim Way Ended

WORD has been received that elderly Sister Holmgren of Perth finished the pilgrim way in her 91st year on the 13th January. Sister Holmgren and her late husband became interested in the truth through the Frank and Ernest Broadcasts in Perth in 1945, and has rejoiced in the truth ever since.

The friends in Perth advise that Sister Holmgren always kept close to the Class there to have Christian fellowship, and only ill health prevented her attendance for several years past. They also feel that our gracious Heavenly Father would have a good inheritance for her on account of her faith, her kindness and holy living. Thanks be to God who gives the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

## Radio Witness

Responses to the radio witness through 3GL Geelong have been encouraging over recent months, and we are grateful to the Lord that His message, from His Word, is attracting those who are longing for the satisfaction which only His truth can give in these uncertain days throughout the world.

One of our radio listeners who heard the broadcasts for the first time some few weeks ago writes —"I find that the literature you have made available is extremely interesting to me, and in due course I shall be pleased to request more of the "Dawn" books . . . As is the case with most of us these days there just never is sufficient time for reading the right material, or better still for concentrated Bible Study and the correct application of such helpful literature as is now available. May I ask concerning your Frank and Ernest Broadcasts; is it better for me to ask specifically for each series as they are delivered, or can these scripts be sent regularly without periodic request by me? I am always glad to listen to your 3GL discussions but sometimes it happens that I miss one week, or my listening is interrupted.

"Another year has commenced and we may ask ourselves concerning worldly affairs—'what kind of a year will this be'? One thing is certain —there will be further prophetic signs of the times, and undoubtedly there will be shocks and surprises for the uninitiated. Without doubt we have our individual tasks and worldly assignments, but we have the much greater responsibility in discharging our God-given commitments. Each of us must be glad of every opportunity to convey to others the truth of Holy Scripture, and our prayer might well be, that with our Lord's power and guidance, may we help one another while there is yet time. I often debate with myself concerning the most precious material commodity at our disposal—is it time: days, hours and minutes; or is it physical health! Both are so needful, but perhaps time is the more relevant to the task (no, not task, but pleasure!) of spiritual growth for ourselves and for those about us. I must close—sincerely my good wishes to you in the year ahead, and may the Lord help all of us to do His work more efficiently, selflessly and faithfully."

### Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd in the Manchester Unity Hall, (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street,

Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mrs. R. Jordan, 14 Newark Road, Torrens Park, South Australia, 5062.

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### FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

3GL Geelong, 1350 Kc. Sundays 10 a.m. 2QN Deniliquin 1520 Kc. Sundays 7.15 p.m.