



Volume LV No. 1 MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY — MARCH, 1972

The Memorial Supper

Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh which is called the Passover. Such is the sacred narrative announcing the last Passover Supper of which our Lord partook. Once more we have the Passover with us. It is in some respects the most hallowed occasion of the year, observed by disciples of Christ as a Memorial and celebration of their Master's sacrificial death, and of their participation with Him in that death in hope of the glory to follow.

Amongst the Jews the term "passover" was frequently applied as the name of a festival week, otherwise called the Feast of Passover, beginning on the 15th day of Nisan. But we should not confound this with the frequent references to the Passover found in the Scriptures when the word "feast" is not used, which generally refers to the lamb that was killed, the Passover. For example we read, "Then came the day of unleavened bread when the Passover must be killed." Again Jesus sent disciples to inquire of a friend. "Where is the guest chamber where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?" We read again, "And they made ready the Passover." When the Master sat down with the disciples to eat of the lamb, He said, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will no more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God."

Probably one reason why He specially desired to eat this Passover with them was that He there designed breaking the truth of its significance to them, to the extent that they could receive it; for, "As they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is My body." "This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me." "And He took the cup and gave thanks, and said, Drink ye all of it; This cup is the new testament in My blood which is shed for you." We cannot doubt that the design of the Master was to call their minds from the typical lamb to Himself, the Antitype, and to show them that it would be no longer proper to observe a feature of the Law which He was about to fulfil. And the bread and wine were to be to them, there-after, elements which, as a remembrancer of Him, would take the place of the typical lamb. Thus considered there is force in the words, "This do in remembrance of Me"—no longer kill the literal lamb in remembrance of a typical deliverance, but instead, use the bread and wine, representative of My flesh and life, the basis of the real deliverance, the real passing over. Hence, let as many as receive Me and My words henceforth— "Do this in remembrance of Me."

Taking our Lord's words in their simple obvious sense, how beautiful is their lesson. Unleavened (pure) bread henceforth would at this Memorial represent our Lord, the Bread from heaven, of which we may eat and have everlasting life. But this "bread" must be "broken" in order to be appropriated. And so we see that it was necessary not only for our Lord to come from heaven as the "Bread", but necessary also that He be broken in death—sacrificed for our sins—ere we could appropriate His merit and enjoy everlasting life.

The "fruit of the vine" was also introduced as an important part of this Memorial of our Lord's loving sacrifice. He explained that it represented His blood—"The blood of the New Covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins." What a reminder this is of the ransom-price necessary and secured on behalf of the sins of the world. The broken bread taught a part of the lesson, the "cup" taught the remainder of it.

The Lord's disciples must, by faith, partake of, "appropriate", both the "bread" and the "cup", or they cannot be one with Him. More than this: the Apostle shows that there is another subsequent view of this Memorial. We who thus eat and drink—who thus partake of our Saviour's merits—are reckoned in with Him as His "members", as His "Body", being broken and our lives sacrificed in His service, under His direction are counted as a part of His sacrifice. The Apostle's words are: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (common union)

of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the common union of the Body of Christ? For we, being many are one loaf, and one Body, because we are all partakers of that one loaf (Christ).”

The drinking of the Lord’s Cup by the Church represents our participation in the sufferings of Christ in the present time. None shall be a member of the Body of the great Mediator of the New Covenant unless he comes in now under the proper terms. The drinking of the blood, then, is the sharing of the Cup. For if we drink not of His Cup, neither shall we share with Him in His glory. He said. “Drink ye all of it.” All must drink, and the entire Cup must be drained during this Age.

It is a very great privilege that we are permitted to have a share in the sufferings of Christ. We see that our beloved Lord drank of the bitter Cup to its dregs, and did so thankfully. And we are to remember that He gave the Cup to us, that we shall all drink of it. “If we suffer (with Him), we shall also reign with Him.” *We* shall participate in the inauguration of the New Dispensation, and in dispensing its blessings.

After the institution of the Memorial Jesus went out into the Mount of Olives in company with the eleven. It is believed that the passage was made at midnight across the Kedron and up the slopes of Olivet into the garden of Gethsemane. It seems that the Saviour realised that He was entering this place for the purpose of fighting a great battle that was to win for Him the victory of Calvary; for out of this agony Jesus stepped calm and strong for the final hour, and herein is a great lesson for His followers: We must win our battles before we come to them, in secret prayer and gathered strength.

We observe that the Master realised that His hour of betrayal and fierce temptation was close at hand; He first comforted, counselled, and prayed for and with His disciples, and then His next strong impulse was to seek a solitary place for prayer and communication with God that He might find grace to help in this time of sore need. He wanted to see full and clear the light of His Father’s face before He stepped into the final darkness. He sought to fall into perfect submission to the will of God and feel the assuring, sustaining power of His omnipotence; He knew full well that He could then bear the cross. And dear friends, have not all true followers of Christ realised that prayer is the highest preparation for every duty and burden? It quiets the soul and clears the vision so that the path of truth and duty can be seen. In entering any Gethsemane let us enter through the gate of prayer, and then we can endure the agony and may be able to come out calm and strong.

Leaving all but Peter, James and John at the entrance of the Garden, as a sort of outer guard against the sudden intrusion of His betrayer upon His last hour of prayer, He advanced with the three—the three in whose ardent natures He seemed to find the most active and consoling sympathy—and with an earnest appeal to them to watch and pray, lie left them and went about a stone’s throw beyond.

All realise that sympathy has a wonderful power to lighten burdens. Solitary suffering is doubly hard to bear. It gives us a sense of unsupported and forsaken loneliness that kills all courage and fills us with despair. The presence of a friend rallies our energies and inspires us with new life. We may reasonably suppose that it was the simple presence of these chosen disciples that Jesus wanted, not their talk. There was nothing they could say to Him that would help Him; but their watchful waiting near by would help Him. The best sympathy is not that which is most talkative and fussy. The silent presence, the sympathetic tear, the thoughtful, helpful act, these go deeper. There are chambers of sorrow in which voluble speech is an impertinence and silence is soothing to the soul.

Under the trees of Olivet, the Master had a good chance to think over the sequence of events that were to culminate on Calvary. The grass was cool and sweet to Him; the air was balmy and mild. The heavens of that night with all their gleaming brilliance betokened the love-light of His Heavenly Father which seemed as though it were bestowing a silent blessing upon His head. It was a time when lovers walk about in the joy of youth! but He, the greatest lover of all time—the lover of God and righteousness and truth walked alone, for the disciples had been left behind. And there, in that mighty temple of nature, Jesus had the final conflict of His earthly career. Knowing what was coming, He prayed, “O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” (Matt. 26: 39, 42.)

How much depended upon the Lord’s fortitude in that awful hour, awaiting the certain arrival of His betrayer and His persecutors maddened with hate and full of the energy of Satan. Oh, how the destinies of the world and of Himself seemed to tremble in the balances! Even the perfect human nature was not equal to such an emergency without Divine aid, therefore it was that He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him who was able to save Him from death,—by a resurrection. The necessary comfort was provided, as foretold by the prophet Isaiah, “Behold My servant whom I uphold, Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth . . . I, the Lord, have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold Thine hand, and will keep Thee (from falling or failure) and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles He shall not fail nor be discouraged.”

Then, though the cup might not pass from Him, His prayer was heard and a special ministry from God strengthened Him. Just how, we know not, but probably by refreshing His mind with the precious promises and prophetic pictures of the coming glory, which none of His disciples had sufficiently comprehended to thus comfort Him in this hour when the gloom of thick darkness settled down upon His soul. It was Jehovah's hand upholding Him, according to His promise, that He might not fail nor be discouraged.

The result of that blessed ministry was a reinforced courage which commands the deepest admiration. With His eye of faith upon the glorious victory of truth and righteousness, when He should see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied—satisfied with the eternal joy and blessedness of a redeemed world, with the welcome and wealth of the Father's blessing, and the love and gratitude of every loyal creature in heaven and in earth—yes, comforted and encouraged thus with a realising sense of the rewards of faith and faithful endurance to the end, He could now calmly and even courageously, go forth to meet the foe. Yes, this was the victory by which He overcame, even His faith, and so we also are to overcome.

He had passed beyond the need of His disciples' help. His victory was won. The cross was already as good as behind Him. With calm courage that feared no evil, with masterful faith that scattered the darkness of Calvary, He said, "Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth Me is at hand." Mark His calm, dignified fortitude, as He addresses Judas and the Roman soldiers, and its effect upon them. They were so overpowered with the grandeur and nobility of this wonderful man that they could not have taken Him had He not voluntarily placed Himself in their hands. Notice, too, His kind consideration for the bewildered and weary disciples, and His loving excuse for them, "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak," and His request to the Roman soldiers at the time of His arrest that they might be permitted to go their way, that so they might escape sharing in His persecutions. So through all the trial and mocking, and finally the crucifixion, His courage and solicitude for the welfare of others never failed.

Let the curtain go down on Calvary, on the darkness of the reeling crosses, on the death of God's beloved Son, the great antitypical passover Lamb. Let it go down on the weeping women, on the disciples, on the Roman soldiers and on the cruel Pharisees and scribes. Then let it rise on the glorious morning of His resurrection, when a mighty angel had rolled away the stone from the tomb, and said to those who came to embalm the body, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."

How the Christian feeds on these events—the death and resurrection of Jesus! They are the very essence of life and power at the present time, just as they have been for nearly two thousand years. The feast that God has provided through His Son is to be eaten with unleavened bread—the bread of pure truth—and with bitter herbs of persecution. This feast has continued throughout the Gospel Age.

"Let a man examine himself" says the Apostle; let him see to it that in partaking of the emblems he realises them as the ransom-price of his life and privileges; and furthermore that he by partaking of them is pledging himself to share in the sufferings of Christ and to be broken for others. Through lack of proper appreciation of this Memorial, which symbolises not only our justification, but also our consecration to share in the sufferings and death of Christ, the Apostle says, "Many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep." The truth of this remark is evident; a failure to appreciate and a losing sight of the truths represented in this Supper, are the cause of the weak, sickly, and sleepy condition of many in the Church. Nothing so fully awakens and strengthens the saints as a clear appreciation of the atoning work of our Lord and their share with Him in His sufferings and sacrifice on behalf of humanity. "Let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." These words are not to be taken in the sense of a discouragement by any sincere follower of the Master, but rather in the sense of impressing the solemnity and depth of meaning that should always be associated with the partaking of the emblems. Far from discouraging any who desire to walk in the Master's footsteps His own words are sufficient—"Come unto Me . . . Take My yoke upon you, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Let us never forget that unless we partake of His Cup, unless we are immersed into death with Him, we can have no share in His Kingdom of glory; we can never sit with Him in His throne. Let us then, count all the things of this earth as loss and dross that we may attain this Pearl of Great Price. As the experiences of our consecrated way come to us, let us not be afraid, nor "think it strange concerning the fiery trials that shall try us" for even "hereunto were we called," to suffer for our beloved Master now, and by and by be glorified together with Him in the Kingdom eternal!

Let us also at this time take warning as well as encouragement, not only from our dear Lord's life of sacrifice, but also from the lives of the Apostles who were with Him for the greater part of His earthly sojourn. We might particularly think of three; in the first place how sad is the case of Judas; we all know the terrible result of the secret, selfish desire of the natural heart which allowed Satan to fully enter, as exhibited finally in the betrayal of his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and that with a kiss. We may be sure that the details of Judas' act in this

way, being recorded by the four Evangelists, are so arranged as a lasting lesson for all the Lord's people. Oh, how we each need to keep our hearts with great diligence, to preserve our first love for the Lord, for if our hearts are right and we make mistakes, which we are all prone to do, we shall soon be restored to the Lord's favour and find grace and strength to be on guard against any weaknesses in the future. Such was the case with Peter; his heart was right, and after the acknowledgment of his denial of his Master and receiving necessary admonitions, we find that he was recovered and re-established in the Lord's favour and confidence. The recording of Peter's denials and subsequent forgiveness by the Lord has undoubtedly been a very great help to many Christians who have been overtaken in a fault, and then sought the Lord's forgiveness with the result that, as with Peter, they have realised much strengthening of character, with greater determination to serve the Lord faithfully in all the days ahead.

Then we think of loving John, the one with whom the Lord seemed to have most fellowship of the twelve; he was ever alongside his Master, even to following Him to the judgment hall, and also to Calvary's hill, and where from the cross his Lord commended the caring of His earthly mother to his charge. Oh, that we might be more like loving John, tender-hearted, affectionate, and fully devoted to our Lord, willing, yes cheerfully rendering our all so fully, so completely to Him, to whom we belong, since we have covenanted to follow in His steps, and then willing to be used in the interests of His people and cause as He may direct.

“Saviour, Thy dying love Thou gayest me,
Nor would I aught withhold
Dear Lord from Thee.

In love my soul would bow,
My heart fulfil its vow,
Myself an off'ring now
I bring to Thee.

Lord, I would follow
Thee In all the way
Thy weary feet have trod; Yes, if I may.”

Ah, yes! How deep are the Lord's lessons! And the deeper we look, the more beauty we see, the eyes of our understanding opening more and more as we appreciate and heartily obey.

“Let us keep the feast,” then, in both senses, (1) Appropriating and feasting on the great work done for us by our Redeemer and the riches of grace granted us through Him, and (2) Appreciating our privilege of joint-sacrifice with our Redeemer—laying down our lives in His service for the brethren, and thus “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” Left behind, not because our Lord could not suffer enough for all, nor because His sufferings were not sufficient for all, but because He wished to have us with Him to share His nature and His glory, and only by suffering with Him and as His members could we be allowed to share His glory, honour and immortality.

The hour is late—the end is drawing nigh
As we gather here,
Brethren beloved, to share this holy feast,
We know the time is near
When all His loved ones shall be gathered home,
Our tears all wiped away,
And all the shadows that oppress us here
Shall yield to perfect day.
Then with rejoicing let us now partake;

Our journey's almost o'er;
The light is breaking o'er the heav'nly hills!
Our King is at the door.

Convention News

THE Annual Christmas Convention sponsored by the Melbourne Class once again proved a very refreshing season of spiritual fellowship. Our grateful thanks ascend to the Lord, the Giver of every good thing, for His blessings throughout the gatherings. It was a pleasure and privilege to welcome visiting brethren from Adelaide, Sydney, Tasmania, as well as two from Canada, and one from U.S.A., also some from nearer parts of Victoria. The presence of these dear friends from other parts, and their contributions to the programme, added greatly to the benefits derived from the assemblies in the Lord's name.

The four days of Convention were filled with various sessions, including two Bible studies on Revelation 3:7-13, and Ephesians 3:14-21. These studies were particularly appreciated by our brethren from overseas, who do not enjoy similar studies at their Conventions; also remarks on the helpfulness of the studies were expressed by friends from interstate. Brief thoughts on these studies and all the addresses given at the Convention are contained in the Convention Notes, now also available and supplied free to all desiring these.

The addresses by the brethren were greatly appreciated, the subjects being—"God's Unspeakable Gift"; "Jeremiah"; "Explanation, Demonstration, Execution"; "The Typical and Antitypical Elijah"; "Trusting in God"; "The Covenants"; "The Value of Vanity"; "In the Master's Steps"; "The Privileges of Discipleship"; "God Set the Date"; "The Sabbath"; "Obedience to the Truth"; "His Loving Care"; "To Whom Shall We Go?"; "Controlling Our Thoughts" and "The Old Paths—The Good Way." It is expected that some of these addresses will be published in later issues of "Peoples Paper", in addition to the first one which appears in this issue.

Many messages were received from brethren with Christian love and greetings and wishing the Convention God's blessing. These came from Classes and individuals throughout Australia, also from brethren in U.S.A., and Canada and were much appreciated. Just after the Convention a very warm greeting with Christian love came also from the Indian brethren at Bangalore, and was equally appreciated. Warm greetings and Christian love with the Scriptural passage Eph. 3:14-21 are sent as a Convention message to all brethren who remembered the gatherings, and to all other members of the Israel of God in every place.

The Fellowship Meetings provided opportunity for praise and testimony to the Lord's overruling providence and blessings expressed by the brethren, many giving helpful witness along this line. The "Hymns We Love and Why" session was also greatly enjoyed; many of our beautiful hymns were selected and sung heartily.

The attendance throughout the Convention was of a higher average than on many previous occasions, and on the last evening the number for the Love Feast completely encircled the hall. The lovely hymns "Blest be the tie that binds", and "God be with you till we meet again", were sung with hearts full of gratitude to the Lord and appreciation of His people seeking to walk in the steps of the Master. The closing prayer of thanksgiving to God, and asking His guidance and blessing upon all His dear people concluded the happy and profitable Melbourne Convention for 1971.

Making the New Year Beautiful

A young girl was hanging up a new calendar on New Year's Day, and as she did so she remarked in a confident voice: "It is going to be a beautiful year."

A friend who overheard her remark was curious to know what was passing in her mind, and asked:

"How do you know that it is going to be a beautiful year? A year is a long time."

"Well," she said, "a day isn't a long time, and I know it is going to be beautiful because I am going to take a day at a time to make it so. Years are only days, when you get right down to it, and I am going to see that every one of these three hundred and sixty-five days gets at least one beautiful thing into it."

We have a New Year given to us, and it can be a beautiful year, a year of abundant success, if we live each day at our best and serve at our highest to help others who are needing our help and comfort.

Passover Memorial 1972

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 28th March. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "In remembrance of Christ."

Memorial Services

Melbourne—**Sunday**, 26th March, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide—**Sunday**, 26th March, at 6.15 p.m., at M.U. Hall, (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Sydney—**Tuesday**, 28th March, at 7 p.m., at 81 James Street, Leichhardt.

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 March 31st, and April 1st, 2nd and 3rd 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.

To Whom Shall We Go?

(Convention Address)

Our subject refers to one of our elder brothers, Simon Peter. I like Peter, because he has some of the faults I think that I have. When we look at others we want to learn from them, so I try to learn from impetuous Peter. So many things he wanted to do in the service of the Lord, and yet he found himself so weak in his own doings. In John 6:68 we read, "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

Speaking of the conditions of today, there are many voices of inducement in the world, calling to mankind to follow the pursuits of pleasure, riches, wisdom, and I am sure we have all been affected to a degree by them. Bitter experiences have proved that as human beings we are quite unreliable, we are fallen and our ways are so depraved that we crave the things that tend to do us injury, and reject the things best for us.

In 2 Pet. 3:17 we are given a warning about this,—"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness." The Lord's consecrated people today find themselves in much the same position as Peter. Those same conditions are with us today. In the early ministry of the Truth movement we found in America that there were many zealous followers, and I am sure there were in Australia too, but as the time of trials and siftings came upon them, many fell by the wayside. They were tempted back into the world, and this happened to many of the Lord's followers at His first advent. At first the people hung upon every word He said. "Never man spoke like this man", and great multitudes followed Him, but close to the end of His ministry, as the jealousy of His enemies overtook Him, He became less popular. It is terrible that jealousy should creep in and manifest itself even towards the words He spoke. Such siftings and testings have been in process throughout the Gospel Age, and will still continue to the end. Many have, directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, repudiated the Great Shepherd and His leadings and instructions. Some listened to the priests and scribes and Pharisees, who said, He has a devil and is mad. Maybe some of you have been told you are mad because of your religious beliefs. Others cast His teachings aside because they drew the line too sharply between righteousness and sin. Haven't some of your neighbours said that you are trying to live too narrow a life? You can absorb some of the pleasures that are available. But between God and mammon there is this thin line which we try to keep. Some, because they cannot understand His teachings, say "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" Our Lord's statement was literally true, that only a little flock would be worthy (Luke 12:32).

Now it may sound harsh to some without the proper conception of the subject when we say that the Lord's ministry and leadings were as much intended to shake off and repel one class as they have been to attract and help another class. There is nothing to say that the ones shaken off were to be shaken off into eternal torment, but on the contrary, the attraction and the drawing was to the Kingdom and the repulsion was from the Kingdom, so the sifting and separation of our Lord's day and since and at the present time is to find the true followers, those who are seeking a share with Him in His Kingdom, and to separate all unworthy of these blessings. We are assured by Scripture that none who are fit for the Kingdom will be sifted out. See 2 Pet. 1:10, and John 10:26. So it is like the magnet that attracts the iron filings; and mixed with these iron filings there is sawdust—some of the sawdust

sticks to the iron, and we see this among the brethren; some do come along but are sifted away by the trials of life. The Truth attracts us as individual filings to the magnet, and if the winds and trials of life blow upon us there is no disruption, we are held firmly.

It is important to have our minds thoroughly made up as to the voices we should obey. "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." (Matt. 6:24; James 1:8.) We cannot hear and obey the voices of sin and Satan and the world and self and the flesh and at the same time hear and obey the voice of the Good Shepherd, of peace and truth and love. There are many voices operating upon our minds. In order to take a proper position from which we will not have to turn, it is well we should know the different voices, and to what they lead. We have heard the Word of Truth. The flesh and the Adversary and the world work upon our mind by trying to persuade us that we can be at harmony with them and still be faithful to our Shepherd; but we are warned that this will not be the case. I use examples at random, to emphasize the co-operation which the New Creation and the flesh would like to harmonise to. Wealth is one of the voices, holding out its golden dreams and great promises. It suggests our religious zeal is right enough, it does not want us to depart from pursuing the Truth, but just to leave the Lord in a temporary sense and after we have acquired enough wealth we could pursue after Him with renewed energy and help the brethren. Alas, how elusive; but how many are attracted. The Bible says "the love of money is the root of all evil." I was told of a brother in America, who during the war-time thought he could take leave from his studies of the Scriptures by going into the interior and buying a hotel and making a great deal of money by working night and day, and at a certain time he would go back to the brethren and spread this wealth he had accumulated. That brother has about 10-15 hotels now, and is still working night and day, but the brethren have not seen him since. How few who pursue wealth ever find it! But how it draws our heart affections away from the Truth and its service!

Fame is another example. Not many look for fame, but many look for prominence. It may affect you and me greatly. This is one voice one might pursue in hope of becoming famous, highly esteemed among men. This is a false voice, for how many could gain fame or worldly renown, or attain to fame in any considerable measure? It leads to false hopes. It is soon destroyed in death, if not before, and should not entice us to turn aside from Divine service. The Word of God promises glory, honour and immortality at God's right hand, and not as a statue in a city for the birds to rest upon.

Others hear the voice of worldly pleasure, and see the millions seeking for any gratification of the flesh, and there is a great drawing to go with the multitude, seeking pleasures for our perverted natural tastes. Efforts are made to blend or mix the pleasures of the world with the heavenly joys, only to find that they will not blend. Those who would abide in Christ must reject all pleasures which cannot be harmonised and enjoyed in fellowship with our Lord and Saviour. "We should always bear in mind that the Lord is beside us, and the pleasures we enjoy should be in harmony with His instructions and in line with our consecration vow. When we resist the false voices, this will establish for us a strong character, rooted, grounded and fixed in righteousness and love, that will resist the weaknesses of our own flesh as well as the influences of Satan and the world. Only such developed characters can possibly be overcomers of the world and share in the Kingdom.

The Lord is seeking to prove His people by disciplines and testings, He wants those who will completely transform their wills to His will. (Rom. 12: 2). We are proving ourselves to ourselves—not to our Heavenly Father, for He already knows us better than we do ourselves. This is what life's experiences are to each one of us. It is only through the experiences that we can prove to ourselves whether we are worthy or not. Throughout the Gospel Age He has been testing us, warning us that many will fail in their covenant, allowing selfwill to reign in their hearts, loving God in a secondary manner. To become as the Lord Jesus, and love the Lord with all our hearts, is the only condition that will be acceptable. So it is not possible for a person to repent on his death-bed and accept Jesus as his personal Saviour, and be ushered completely into the realms of the heavenly hosts. Staunch characters are not developed in this way. They have not passed through the tests of faith and love and zeal to the Lord, to class them as over-comers. They may be encouraged to hope for His blessing on the earth in the Millennial Age, as our Lord pointed out to the dying thief on the cross. If we can keep in our memory that every trial and persecution and difficulty is intended to prove us, and if we diligently use them as favourable opportunities to demonstrate to the Lord the fulness of our love and devotion to Him and His cause, every trial and difficulty will prove to be a blessing. In James 1:2, 12, we read, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

We read in 1 Pet. 1:7,—"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

Thus we are again assured that those who love the Lord and who will receive the Kingdom will be those whose love will have been tested by trials and temptations on the way to it. The others, who put some idol in the place of God, will be influenced by the world, the flesh and the devil. Their theories and plans will be analysed and found to be based on selfishness or the other ambitions or upon an evil spirit, envy, hatred, jealousy, etc. Those who overcome will have the character of Christ, and when these various voices call away from the narrow way of sacrifice and humiliation and self-denial, in answer to the Lord's query, "Will ye also go away?" they will answer, "Lord, to whom shall we go?"

If you look back for a moment, can you imagine anything in the world today that would induce you back from your consecration vow? The most beautiful and gratifying things of the world, in comparison to what is ahead of us—there is no comparison! We have nothing to look back upon. So, to whom shall we go? We know nowhere else to go, and we cannot turn back. We have heard the calls of the world, the flesh and the devil, and seen the emptiness there. There is no other hope we want to embrace but the hope of obtaining this prize of the high calling, eternal life. We have no thought of turning aside or listening to the voices calling to us. As we progress in the way towards the close of the harvest, the way becomes narrower and more difficult and the tendencies to stumble more frequent. We should be more and more on guard against the wiles of the Adversary and allow the perfect will of God in our heart to bring us the promised joy, rest and peace. Let us abide in Him, fruitful branches, responding to prunings with the abundant fruitage we can produce.

If deceptions come to us, let us say, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." At this late hour some of the brethren are falling by the wayside. They are being confused in measure by conditions which are happening, and some who walked in the way for 50 years or more are at this time losing their faith in the promises. If it can happen to strong characters, as I have seen it happen, then I want to be always looking to the Lord for His direction, and if He should ever ask me if I too will desert Him, may I only answer, "Lord, to whom can I possibly go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Blameless and Harmless

To be blameless is to be devoid of any disposition to do evil; not controlled by anger, malice, hatred, strife; but, on the contrary, to be disposed to do all the good possible to all with whom we have contact. We should be harmless, not merely so far as God would see, or so far as the brethren would see, but, so far as possible, harmless in the sight of the world before whom we are to shine.

Blameless does not necessarily mean perfection. One might be blameless and yet imperfect on account of natural weaknesses. To be blameless in the sight of God is to live so that He may see one's intentions always to be just, loving, kind. The world will speak evil of us even as they spoke evil of our Lord, and will hate us; for the darkness always hates the light. If we have the friendship of the world, we are not in accord with God. The Apostle James asks, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." (James 4:4.) But if we are friends of God, the world will seek to do us injury as evildoers—"as deceivers, and yet true." While not "friends of the world," we must endeavour to be at peace with them, so far as lies in us.

We cannot, however, expect to please everybody. We are to be blameless in the sight of those of mankind who are recognised as having the best judgment amongst the people. Thus it was with our Lord. While the world blamed Him, yet in their private councils they recognised the fact that He was harmless. Pilate, who put Him to death, was honest enough to state, "what evil hath He done? I find no cause of death in this man"; "I am innocent of the blood of this **just** person."—Luke 23:22; Matt. 27:24.

The thought of the Apostle is that whatever charges may be made against us, our course of conduct before the world should be such that only the perverse of mind will think wrongly of us; that the better minds would think justly and note that the lives of the Lord's people are indeed blameless, not blameworthy.

The disciples were dwelling in the midst of a perverse generation, their own Jewish nation, among whom they were so to conduct themselves that their lives would be a light to their fellowmen. **Perverseness** implies unwillingness to be guided by the Lord; **crookedness** seems to apply to their course of life, not always a way of open wickedness, but a crookedness, doing both right and wrong. On the one hand was an evil heart of unbelief; on the other were forms and ceremonies.

For more than nineteen hundred years these conditions have followed the Lord's people. Everywhere there is a great deal of crookedness and self-will. Many things are done which are known to be contrary to the will of the

Lord. Amidst these conditions the Lord's people are to shine as lights; they are to seek to walk in the Lord's ways, that they may "show forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvellous light."

Dwelling in the Lord

TO dwell in Christ means to be in the closest relationship with Him; there must be agreement, harmony, and a unity of purpose, producing a feeling of confidence and goodwill. The closeness of this relationship is shown clearly in that beautiful illustration of the vine and its branches. The vine is the stem or trunk that produces and supports the branches which bear the fruit. The branch is part of the vine with which it must remain connected. "Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine no more can ye, except ye abide in me." John 15:4. Here the word "abide" has the same meaning as the word "dwelleth" in 1 John 3:24, for we surely dwell in God as we continue to abide in Christ.

We dwell or abide in Him by doing His will, keeping His commandments, and He abides or dwells in us. This union is a double one—we in Him and He in us. To establish and maintain this union it is necessary to keep His commandments; God cannot dwell in us unless we dwell in Him. "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." John 14:23.

In Psalm 37:3, we read, "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." Here also is implied a spirit of concord without which God's bounty could not be enjoyed. His commandments must be kept, then the promise of peace and plenty would be fulfilled.

Further, the prophet says, "He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his water shall be sure." [so. 33:15, 16. Again the condition attached to the promise is righteousness, and he who does righteously has the spirit of God and dwelleth in Him. Under the dispensation existing at the time of the Psalmist and Prophet, the promises were earthly, and to enjoy God's favour it was necessary to keep His commandments, just as it is now, if we would receive His spiritual favours.

"And hereby we know that He abideth in us by the spirit which He hath given us." In Rom. 8:9 and 14, we read:—"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you; for as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Being led by the spirit of God is abundant evidence of the inward presence of God's spirit which leads us to seek those things which are above rather than mind the things of the earth.

"The Creator's Grand Design" is the title of a 240 page cloth bound book, from the "Dawn" brethren. It is a helpful study covering the plan of God as a whole. Supplied at \$1.25, post paid.

Poems of **Dawn**, 320 pages of original poems with additional choice Christian poems are now in stock. Excellent as gifts. Black simulated leather, handy size, price \$2.20, plus postage 25c." **Pictures From the Past**"

The book of Bible Stories for children—"Pictures. From the Past"—mentioned in last issue of "Peoples Paper" was completed in October, and quite a number have been supplied to the brethren. Of 173 large pages, with stiff covers, the price is \$1.20 to cover cost of materials, plus postage, which varies according to distance from 35c within 30 miles of Melbourne, to 75c to Western Australia and Queensland. However, up to 5 copies may be sent for 75c to the distant states.

One of our friends who has had a number of these Story Books writes—"I am giving the Bible Stories to nephews, nieces and friends with children. I have read it right through and find the stories and the way they are told most delightful, and I am sure the children will enjoy them."

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A booklet for children—"God's Best Gift"—of 20 pages, compiled on the Divine Plan of the Ages years ago in U.S.A., has been produced in our office again recently. Written in childish language it is a splendid little book to convey the main outlines of God's Plan to young people. To cover cost of materials it is supplied at 10c per copy, 17c posted, single copies; less postage on a number.

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