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A Meditation on the Shepherd Psalm

(Convention Address)

“The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want” (Psalm 23:1).

IT is doubtful if there is another passage of Scripture more fitted to inspire and strengthen our confidence in God than the 23rd Psalm, that sweet shepherd psalm which probably most of us learned in childhood. As we ponder it again afresh, may He who so often before has graciously applied the comfort of His Word as balm to our hearts, do so once again, sending us on our way with fresh courage and renewed hope; His peace, which passeth understanding, guarding our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus our Lord.

One expositor reminds us that three thousand years have passed away since the sweet singer of Israel first sang this psalm about the shepherd-care of God. Thirty centuries! It is a long time, and in that vast period all the **material** relics of his life, however carefully treasured, have mouldered into dust. The harp from the strings of which his fingers brought forth music which relieved Saul in his sadness; the tattered banner, which he was wont to uplift in the name of the Lord; the well-worn book of the Law, which was his meditation day and night; the sling with which he overcame Goliath, and the huge sword with which he slew the giant; the palace chamber in which at last he died—all these have been buried deep amid the debris of the ages. But this psalm is as fresh today as though it were just composed.

Its power lies in the fact that it dwells so much on God, so little on man. Notice, as we study it, that every verse stresses what **God** is and is doing. This is the true policy of life. Unbelief puts circumstances between itself and God, so that He is lost from view, and the soul becomes overwhelmed. Faith, on the contrary, puts God between itself and circumstances, so that it cannot see them for the glory of His shining countenance. Unbelief fixes its gaze on men, and things, and likelihood, and possibilities, and circumstances. Faith will not concern herself with these; she refuses to spend her time and waste her strength in considering them. Her eye is steadfastly fixed on her Lord; and she is persuaded that He is well able to supply all her need, and to carry her through all difficulties and straits. The **outlook** may be very dark, but the **uplook** is always bright, so faith looks away off unto Jesus, and to our Heavenly Father, and rests in them in peace.

The Song of a Shepherd-King

It has been well observed that this psalm derives no little of its beauty from the fact that it is a psalm of a shepherd about a Shepherd, the psalm of a king about a King. David himself had led a flock to the

pastures of Bethlehem, guiding and protecting them with crook and staff as they passed from hillside to hillside. He had himself welcomed to his royal table fugitives from the wrath of Hebrew and alien tyrants, anointing their heads with oil, and filling their cups with refreshing drink till they ran over. And, therefore, he is speaking from his very heart, out of what was most personal and most memorable in his experience. To him **God** was a **Shepherd** searching out for His flock pastures of grass, that is, pastures in which the grass had not been scorched up by the heat of the sun; and waters of rest, that is, waters beside which the sheep might securely lie down. To him God was a Shepherd, who, when leading His flock through desolate valleys and gorges, haunted by wolf and lion and bear, defended them with His staff and rod. God was also a bountiful and princely host, receiving to His table and sheltering in His house fugitives pursued by their enemies, offering them the oil of anointing, and gladdening them with overflowing cups of refreshing fluid. And because God was both his Shepherd and his Host, David looks up to Him with an absolute devotion, and rests in Him with a calm and happy trust.

If this were true of David it was still more true of Jesus, that great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, whom David in so many ways of his experiences typified, and it is to be true also of us, the members of His Body, as we seek to walk in His steps.

From the peaceful serenity of its tone, and the absence of any hint of doubt, misgiving, or fear, it is probable, almost to a certainty, that our psalm was written when David was well stricken in years, when, by the experience of a long and checkered life, he had learned that in God alone are strength and peace. No! this psalm is not the utterance of his shepherd days, though it perpetuates their memory. Had it been thus, men might have said that it was but the natural outflowing of a confiding boy's heart, unversed in care or struggle. But this peaceful psalm is a voice out of the maturer life of the psalmist; out of memories of care and battle and treachery; a voice that tells that peace and rest of heart depend not upon the absence of life's burdens, nor on the presence of nature's tranquilizing scenes, but solely upon the shepherding care of God.

David's emotion of entire trust receives in our psalm a three-fold expression. (1) I shall not want; (2) I will fear no evil; and (3) I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. I shall not want, for God will find me green pastures and waters of comfort. I will fear no evil, for even as I pass through the gloomiest and most perilous valleys He will protect and defend me. I will dwell in His house for ever, for He welcomes His guests with an unfailing bounty, and under His roof no enemy can make them afraid.

I Shall Not Want

The careful student will have noted that the -word "Lord" with which the psalm opens is printed in our Authorized Version in small capital letters. Wherever this is the case it stands for the word "Jehovah". This word, scholars tell us, means the Living One, the self-existent Being, the I Am. He was, and is, and is to come, who inhabiteth eternity; who hath life in Himself. All other life, from the little insect on the roseleaf to the archangel before the throne is dependent and derived. All others waste, and change, and grow old; He only is unchangeably the same. All others are fires, which He supplies with fuel; He alone is self-sustained.

Now this mighty Being David claims as his Shepherd, and if this were really the case, he needed no argument to prove that all his wants must be supplied. He knew that, when he was a shepherd, no one of his sheep wanted aught that he could get. He had watched over every one of them with an unfailing solicitude. He had often wandered on the hills till he was weary, and long after he was weary, to find what little water the drought had spared. He had driven off birds and beasts of prey with the smooth stones of his unerring sling, and had even ventured both against the lion and the bear, risking his very life that he might save his flock. And if Jehovah is **a shepherd**, will He let **His** flock lack anything that **He** can get

for them? And as there is nothing **He** cannot get, how can they ever want?

This doubtless, was David's argument, though he gave it no logical expression. We admit the force of the argument; we admire the beauty of the figure; we feel the pathos of the appeal. We love David for the vigor and the serenity of his trust in the God he had so often put to the test. But do we sometimes envy, rather than imitate him? Which of us can say, with entire sincerity, "Since Jehovah is my Shepherd, I shall not want. Because He is with me, I will fear no evil. Because He has anointed me with joy so often in the past when I have fled to Him, I will abide in His love and service for ever"? Alas! do we not feel that we want much, and are likely to be wanting much before the journey is over?

Moreover, even if we do not fear anything at present, do we not often trouble our present with anxious forebodings as to the future? And while we may have the grace to believe that we shall **ultimately** find ourselves sitting at His table on the other side, do we not sometimes fear that the journey there is likely to be anything but pleasant, that the future looks as though it will be just filled with inevitable changes, dark uncertainties, and gloomy experiences; that we have yet to pass through that narrow gorge of darkness which leads from this life to the next, and instead of a cheerful trust in His abiding faithfulness, do we not find ourselves, on occasion, wondering if, after all, we shall be able to see the Shepherd going before us all the time, staff in hand, to brush from our path any brier of offense, and to guard us from the ills which, at least to our imagination, haunt the pathway which lies ahead of us?

Beautiful as the psalm is, much as we admire it, many of us, we fear, must read it as a rebuke. We feel that we miserably lag behind the fair ideal it sets before us, that we are far from having attained the holy serenity, the calm, unwavering trust in God, which breathes through its every word.

A Simple Test

If, however, we have any doubt on that score, we may soon put it to a simple, but conclusive test. Can we repeat without doubt or misgiving even the opening words of the psalm—"The Lord (Jehovah) is my Shepherd, I shall not want"? If Jesus, His great Under-Shepherd, were to stand in our midst again, today, so that we could see Him with the eyes of flesh, and with all the graciousness of which only He is capable, were to ask us; "Brethren, lack ye anything"?, and if we felt sure that He would give us whatever we asked of Him, would there be but one answer from us all, and would that answer be—"Nothing, Lord, nothing. We lack for nothing. We have everything we need. We have lacked for nothing thus far; all our present wants are bountifully supplied, and we are sure, so complete is our trust in Thee, that this will be so always"?

If we were quite honest with Him, quite frank, should we not meet His question with a chorus of eager requests? More than one brother, perhaps, would say, "Lord, of course I want Thy will done, not mine, but the circumstances in which I find myself are not at all suited to my taste. I could fill another sphere of activities much more congenial to me if only the way were opened, but unfortunately I lack the means to fit myself for the change." Or another may reply, "Lord, my business is waning. I have certain ideas, which, if adopted, would make all the difference in the world, but it requires new capital, or at least a line of credit, which I seem unable to secure." Perhaps one might say, "Lord of course Thy way is best, but I had hoped to be able to spend my entire time in Thy service, ministering Thy gracious Word to others. As things are now, I am so pressed upon by domestic or business relationships, that I have hardly sufficient time to see that my own spiritual life is nourished." A few, perhaps, who now spend their whole time in "truth" activities, might be disposed to reply,—"Lord, of course I am very appreciative of my privileges, but when I succeeded in arranging my temporal affairs so as to spend my time exclusively in Thy service, I little realised how petty and trivial many of the problems of the Church were to which I would be assigned. Of course I have no idea of drawing back, but if there is another corner in Thy vineyard to which I could be transferred I feel that my labors would proceed much more happily there." How many of

us would be able to reply with absolute sincerity and joy,—”Lord, I want for nothing, save to be more like Thee. And even this, dear Lord, Thou art working in me, and I look forward with confidence in Thy love and skill, that this work of grace which Thou hast begun in me Thou wilt complete in Thine own good time and way. Meantime, I am content, whatever lot I see, since ‘tis Thy hand that leadeth me”?

Our Father’s Resources Are Infinite

And yet, as soon as we pause to consider, we may see that these cries for what we do not possess, spring more or less from distrust—most of them from ignorance of our Father’s resources. We do not pause to reflect that our God is an **infinite** God. While the cry of the worldling may be and indeed often is: “I perish with hunger”!; while it is true that even young lions lack and suffer hunger, they that seek the Lord shall **not** want any good thing.

If **God** be our Shepherd He **can** get us all we want, for there is absolutely no limit to His power; and He will give us all we need, for there is absolutely no limit to His goodness. Too often we forget, not only His resources, but His love; and how that love, which embraces all, takes thought and care for each. We want to choose our own way, to walk at our own will, and to **see** the store from which our future needs are to be supplied. We forget that, if it have a good shepherd, the flock is not permitted to ramble where it will, and still less is every sheep in the flock permitted to do so. If they were, there would soon be no flock left, but only a few sheep scattered through many failing pastures (oh! how they fail), or on many barren hills, (oh! so barren) each at the mercy of its foes. We are, too commonly, like sheep who should want to see an endless supply of food and water set apart in their own private store, as though the sun would never rise, or the rain fall, or the grass grow, again; or like a flock, which, when one pasture was consumed, and one stream dried up, should conclude that the shepherd knew of no other pasture, and could find no other stream, because they could see none. If we would at all enter into the rest of David’s trust, we must learn both that God cares for the whole flock, and that **He** has provided for the future which **we** cannot foresee, and for which **we** cannot provide.

If only we could eat our bread and do our work from day to day, without fretting about tomorrow, and pass on to new spheres of action, and to new stores of bread, when the Shepherd goes before us, relying on His higher wisdom and love, would not our days go happily enough? There is hardly any reflection more painful than this. that if we look back on our past lives, and recall all that has fretted and afflicted us, we shall find that most of our fears were groundless fears, most of our anxieties needless anxieties, most of our troubles a burden which we packed with our own hands, and imposed on our own shoulders, and that had we been content to take each day as it came, and put our trust in God, the lives that have been so fretted and sorrowful might have been bright with content and cheerfulness. Shall we not, then, for the days that remain, believe that, since Jehovah is our Shepherd, we shall not want?

Fellowship With Jesus

But let us also understand that, while the Good Shepherd will not let any of us want any good thing, His main care will be for the whole flock, and that at times He may do us the honor of asking us to bear trouble and bear pain, for the sake of the flock. As He Himself spared not His well-beloved Son, who was more than life itself to Him; as Jesus came and willingly sacrificed Himself; as in all our afflictions Jehovah Himself is afflicted, so He may invite us to bear toil and pain on behalf of others. Shall we shrink and complain if He should put this honor on us? We shall not, if we are wise; for in calling us to this service He is not, as we might hastily infer, asking us to sacrifice ourselves to others; He is rather asking us to serve others by toils and sacrifices by which we ourselves shall be made perfect. Christian, can you recall any labor to which you have bent, or any sacrifice you may have borne for the good of others, which has not, in the long run, made you wiser, better, and happier? Be sure, then, when the call to service and sacrifice comes again, that God is asking you to lose your life only that you may find it, to

serve His flock and to suffer for it, only that you may enter more closely into the joy and fellowship of your Lord.

I Will Fear No Evil

We have considered David's calm assurance that since the Lord was his Shepherd he could not possibly want; let us turn next to his second expression of confidence,—"I will fear no evil."

Perfect love casteth out fear. Nothing else will do it. You may argue against fear, whether in yourself or in others. You may laugh it to scorn. You may try to shame it. But all will be in vain. If you would master fear, whether in yourself or in others, you must expel it by the trust which is born of love. A simple illustration will suffice to demonstrate this. A man comes home extremely hungry. His whole nature craves food. But as he enters his house he learns that his child, suddenly stricken with fever, is lying at the point of death. What becomes of that man's hunger? It is forgotten; it is gone. In the intense love and grief with which he bends over the tiny, feverish form, his own hunger is forgotten, and he thinks only of how best he may minister to his child's needs. Thus the lower passions are subdued in the soul by the higher. Thus, and thus only, is fear dispelled. And so it happens that the most timid brother or sister, from the natural standpoint, who yet is conscious of the presence of the Good Shepherd, can sing through the gloom, with notes of music which vibrate with the buoyancy of a courage which cannot flinch or falter. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

Thou Art With Me

Have you ever noticed the change in the pronoun here? Hitherto the Psalmist has spoken of the Lord in the third person; but now, as he enters the dark, gloomy ravine, like the sheep had often done to him, he, as one of the Lord's sheep, presses close against his Shepherd. No longer does he speak **about** Him; he speaks **to** Him. In the green pastures, and beside the still waters, He was content to speak **of** Him. "**He** maketh me to lie down." "**He** leadeth me." But now, as the darkness deepens it is "THOU".

When things are going well with us we may content ourselves with talking **about** the Lord; but when the sky darkens, we hasten to talk directly **to** Him. I will fear no evil, though I walk through a gloomy ravine, even the shadow of death itself;

I will fear no evil, for **Thou** art with me, Thy rod, Thy staff, they comfort me.

For Ever With the Lord

With Jehovah as his Shepherd, then, David was assured of two things. First, he could not experience want, and second, he would fear no evil. Just a brief reference on the third expression of his trust and devotion. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over; surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Is it still the Shepherd whom we meet in the closing verses of this psalm? Are the memories of his pastoral life still giving form and color to David's thoughts? Expositors differ in their viewpoints on this question. Some think the figure of the Shepherd is maintained throughout, and it must be admitted that if this is true, the value of this brief lyric, from the literary standpoint, would be enhanced. Others think that at this point the figure changes, and that, whereas in the first four verses of the psalm we see a shepherd guiding and caring for his flock, we see in the last two verses a King, who receives fugitives to his table with a princely hospitality; despite all the threatenings of their foes; anoints them for the feast with cool, fragrant oils; fills their cup with refreshing drink till it runs over, and so bountifully supplies their wants that they resolve to stay with him for good, feeling that

in his house, and reclining at his table, they have all their hearts can desire.

However we may read them, we cannot doubt that much new meaning and beauty is thrown into the psalm by its final verses. Hitherto David has described the providence of God in neutral tints, in negative tones. The Good Shepherd supplies the wants, and relieves the fears of His flock. There is grass for their hunger; there is water for their thirst; there is the protecting staff for their weakness. Hitherto, therefore, David has said only: "I cannot want; I will fear no evil." True, even to rise above the fear of want and danger gravely tasks **our** faith. But to the faith of David this seems an incomplete result. If he is to do justice to **his** sense of the divine trustworthiness and goodness his voice must take warmer, fuller tones. If he is to give the energies of his faith way and scope he must soar into a higher strain, and breathe a more illumined atmosphere. The divine providence is far more than a mere asylum from want, or a mere refuge from peril. It is characterized by the generous warmth and bounty of **Home**. And he who sincerely trusts in that providence does far more than surmount the depressions of fear and care; he mounts into a triumphant gladness, a sacred and constant joy. Hence David depicts himself as sitting at the table of the divine Shepherd, anointed with the oil of festive mirth, drinking of a cup which runs over, so full is it of quickening joy, while his foes, the enemies of his peace, rave and threaten ineffectively, from beyond a gulf they cannot pass. I cannot want!—No, indeed. I am raised a whole heaven above want. I sit at a table lavishly supplied with all that is best and choicest; with fragrant oil to cheer my head, and the cup of refreshment in my hand. I will fear no evil!—What is there to fear in this secure abode? My enemies want, and care? Ah! see, they stand afar off—impotent, incapable of approach. Only goodness and loving kindness pursue me now, or so pursue me as to reach me. I will dwell with God my Shepherd Host. I sit at His bountiful table. I shall never more go out from His presence. And therefore, with my whole heart will I sing and give praise.

I am the happy guest of God, and dwell with Him in an inviolable sanctuary, an eternal home.

Thus the psalm, which opens in a mood of sacred and tranquil content, closes in a rapture. He who knew no want, kindles into an ecstasy of triumphant joy. He who feared no evil, wears the crown of a victorious and ever-augmenting gladness. He who was willing to wander trustfully in dark and perilous paths, finds himself in the house of the Lord for ever. So may it be with each one of us for His Name's sake.

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The Institute's Work

THE close of April marks another year's work concluded for the Berean Bible Institute, and we wish to express sincere thankfulness for all the Lord's blessings in connection with the privileges of service undertaken at our centre here in Melbourne. It has been a pleasure to receive again the hearty co-operation of our brethren throughout Australia which is warmly appreciated, enabling the work to continue steadily as in past years. Contact has also continued with our brethren overseas, and which has added to the opportunities of **service** in the Lord's harvest field.

Our bi-monthly periodical "Peoples Paper" continues as a means of contact with our brethren scattered throughout this continent, and in some overseas countries. Appreciation of the contents of the "Paper" is expressed by a goodly number, and to those brethren who have contributed to its pages, supplying copies of addresses, etc., grateful thanks is conveyed for this help in the interest of the truth.

As in past years the subscriptions to the "Peoples Paper" do not cover the costs of publishing, some deficiency being met from the General Tract Fund. It is felt, however, that the supplying of the "Paper" free to a number of new friends throughout the year, to encourage their interest, is a good means of service, the expense to the Tract Fund in this way being well used in the service of the Lord. Some of our Melbourne friends have freely and gladly continued to give assistance with the proof reading and other work connected with the "Peoples Paper", and the help in this manner is much appreciated. Extra copies of the "Paper" are gladly supplied to readers who can use them to advantage to encourage other interest, and friends who provide subscriptions for other readers are giving helpful assistance in the work.

From time to time regular lectures have been given in co-operation with the Melbourne Class, as a witness to the public respecting God's wonderful plan of salvation, and some new friends have appreciated the messages of truth made known in this way. Appreciation of the lectures often leads to interest in the regular Class Bible Studies, and so the truths of God's Word are seen to be so appealing and satisfying to both heart and mind, and Christian discipleship takes on a new meaning altogether.

The witness to the truth by means of the radio has continued throughout the past year over 3GL Geelong, and in January last an additional radio station, 3XY in Melbourne, commenced the broadcasts on Sunday evenings at 8 o'clock, thus giving a Sunday morning (10 a.m.), and Sunday evening broadcast of the Frank and Ernest Dialogues. While the range of 3XY is quite extensive, the response up to date has not met expectations, but it is evident that a goodly circle of listeners are appreciating the messages. Reception of 3XY is said to be quite good in Adelaide, and from about the same distance into far-out N.S. Wales a listener writes,—"Have been tuning into broadcasts from Melbourne over 3XY and been getting them fairly clear; they are very good and hoping you keep going with them." The expense on 3XY is considerable, and it may not be possible to keep these broadcasts going for any length of time; however, we are glad of the opportunity of giving this witness, and if the interest increases and the means is provided by those appreciating, by the Lord's overruling, this witness will continue as seems good in the service of the Lord and His truth. In recent times, quantities of slips advertising Free Literature and the Radio Stations have been distributed, and our friends are invited to obtain supplies of these, for passing out to encourage those who have ears to hear the glad message of truth. These "Do You Know?" slips are quite effective and are supplied from the General Tract Fund for general distribution. Other tracts are also available on various subjects for use where it is seen there is some definite interest in spiritual things.

The balance sheets of the General Tract Fund and Radio Fund presented show the financial position of the work.

The voluntary contributions of our friends have provided the means of continuing the work as in former years, in the Lord's providence. The sacrifices of present day earthly things by so many to assist in this way, is greatly appreciated, in the service of the Lord. We continue to look to our Heavenly Father for His guidance and blessing upon all that is undertaken in His name, asking also for the prayers of our brethren that the work in the Lord's cause, in the days ahead, may be rendered in humble and faithful service, in accord with His will and to His praise.

Looking back over the twelve months past it is evident that world conditions indicate a working up for the great climax of the ages—the passing of this “present evil world,” to make way for the Kingdom of Christ. Happy are the Lord's people who know that God has His own timetable for certain world events to take place, and while deploring the suffering and distress caused by “man's inhumanity to man” their confidence and trust is in the Lord, knowing that “all things work together for good to those who love the Lord.” How favored

also are God's people as they “dwell in the secret place of the Most High” and look forward to the promised inheritance to the faithful, esteeming it also a privilege in the meantime to give a message of hope and encouragement to all who have “ears to hear” that while “weeping may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning.” (Psa. 30:5.)

Convention News

It was a privilege and a pleasure to attend the Easter Convention at Adelaide, and it is with thankfulness to our Heavenly Father that we acknowledge the many blessings bestowed upon us during the four days of the Convention.

A number of brethren from Melbourne and Geelong, and a brother from Queensland were present, and their presence contributed to the helpfulness of the meetings. The assistance of the various brethren who served as speakers and Class leaders was much appreciated also. It is good to meet together in the Name and in the spirit of the Lord, and we realised the Lord's blessing upon our gatherings in a marked manner.

The Bible Studies were in 1 Cor. 13; Heb. 10:19-25, and Rev. 3:14-22. The topics of the addresses by the brethren were—“The Fruits of Repentance”; “Be of Good Courage”; “Those Who Serve”; “The Hour of Temptation”; “Prayer”; “The Grace of God”; “God's House of Many Mansions”; “Sojourning and Dwelling With God”; “Unity, Liberty and Charity”; “The Time is Short”; and “A Meditation on Psalm 23.”

It was a pleasure to receive some messages of greeting from various Classes and individual brethren; and to those who thus kindly remembered us, and to the brethren everywhere the words of the Apostle in Heb. 10:19-25 are sent as a Scriptural message with the Christian love of the brethren in Convention.

The “Hymns We Like and Why” session was entered into very heartily; what a privilege it is to praise the Lord in this way with heart and voice. Also the Fellowship, and Praise and Testimony Meetings afforded opportunity to express our thanks and praise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for His continued goodness and mercy.

The Convention closed with the Love Feast, and singing “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love,” and “God be with you till we meet again,” followed by the closing prayer of thanks to God for a most helpful Convention, and requesting His continued blessing to remain with us all, and for the Israel of God in every place. “Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”

‘Notes on Adelaide Easter Convention are now available free from this office.

Memorial Observances

MELBOURNE

THE Melbourne brethren gladly assembled on the evening of April 23rd to observe the Memorial of our Lord's death in accord with His special request that this be done in remembrance of Him. A number of our Polish brethren joined us again, and it was a pleasure to have them in our company, the attendance being very good for this sacred service.

A previous study on Exod. 12:1-15 refreshed our minds and hearts on the type and antitype of this important observance, which took the place of the annual Jewish Passover service from the time it was instituted by our Lord on the night in which He was betrayed. Indeed, all the typical sacrifices, including the Passover lamb, held no value in the sight of God from the time of the sacrifice of Christ as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

Prayers were offered on behalf of all the Lord's dear people, hymns were sung from the "Bible Students Hymnal" numbers 166, 180, 437, 2 and 414. Scripture readings were from Matt. 26:17-53; John 18:12-40 and John 19:1-30. An address presented the important features of both type and anti-type, impressing the privilege of being invited to share with our Lord in His sacrificial life, if so be that we may also share with Him in His heavenly glory.

Again this year some of our elderly members were not able to attend with us, but gladly partook of the emblems in their homes, thus appreciating also the privilege of conforming with the Lord's request by observing the Memorial of His death, in spirit and in truth. We feel sure that this remembrance of our Lord's great sacrifice on our account, and the renewing of the vows of consecration to walk in His steps is a means of much blessing and encouragement to the Lord's dear people throughout the world.

Geelong

We are thankful that it was possible again this year to keep the Memorial of our Saviour's death; thankful that a room was again provided where we could do so, and for God's help assisting us to meet together. The simplest of services preceded the partaking of the emblems, all of which reminded us of the great cost of our redemption, and the wonderful privilege opened up for sharing our Lord's experience upon earth, that we might reign with Him in glory later.

Adelaide

In harmony with our Lord's request,—"Do this in remembrance of Me,"—the Adelaide Class met on the evening of April 23rd to observe the Memorial of our Saviour's death, as the ransom-price for our sins (the Church's sins) and also for the sins of the whole world.

We are glad and thankful that our Saviour has left us this simple Memorial to observe annually, because it brings to our minds, as we meditate upon the Scriptural records, the events associated with our Lord's last hours which reveal the depth of His devotion to the Father's will. It also affords us the opportunity of examining ourselves (see 1 Cor.

11:28-31), respecting our faith in the shed blood of Christ, and also respecting the consecration of our hearts and lives to be "dead with Christ." It gives us the opportunity of renewing our covenant of sacrifice to be dead to self, and dead to the world, that we may live unto God.

What a privilege is ours. Phil. 1:29, Diaglott "Because to you it was graciously given on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer on his account." We do thank God for the blessings which come to us at the Memorial season. We thank Him for the great Gift of the Son of His love, and for the privilege of being permitted to share in Christ's sufferings, that we may also be prepared to share in His great work of bringing in the blessings of His Millennial Kingdom to "whosoever will" of all the families of the earth in God's due time.

We thank God for the privilege of prayer, and we do earnestly pray God's blessing for the Israel of God in every place, that we may be developed in the graces of His spirit, and be prepared for the "abundant entrance into His kingdom" according to His gracious will. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift."

Perth

Again we gladly kept our Lord's Memorial in memory of Him. Our minds went back to our Lord's 31 years of suffering and laying down His life, culminating just after the "Last Supper" when He said, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."

We were reminded of the great love our Lord had when He suffered and died for mankind as the Passover Lamb which subsequently released from condemnation the first-borns whose names are written in heaven. Such suffering

and sacrifice on our behalf impels us to reciprocate, and by the Lord's grace to walk in His steps, being justified by His blood, that we may suffer with Christ and partake of that communion.

With sincere hearts and a resolute purpose the friends partook of our Lord's emblems and pledged themselves to continue in the narrow way and "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, which is the church." With the sin offering almost complete we look forward when our Lord "shall appear the second time without sin (without a sin offering) unto salvation." Praise ye the Lord!

Sydney

With an attendance of fourteen the observance of our Lord's Memorial was solemnized at West Ryde, Sydney. The elder who presided gave an able address for the occasion, type and antitype being stressed. Happy those who appreciate the privilege of observing this Memorial in spirit and in truth, who "dwell in the secret place of the Most High," to whom belong "the exceeding great and precious promises," which are "yea, and amen in Christ Jesus." With anticipation of "drinking the wine anew in the kingdom with our Lord," (Matt. 26:29), the heartfelt desire was to be found worthy of such an honor.

Queensland

From two small groups the following has been received:—"This is just a note to let you know that there were five of us who had the privilege of observing the Memorial of the Lord's death on Sunday night, April 23rd; this meeting was small but nice."

"On the 23rd April there were three of us gathered to celebrate the 'Last Supper'. At the beginning we sang hymns and then had a short study from 1 Cor. 11, which explains what the Passover means to us, and who may take part.

After that we had prayer together and then celebrated the Supper, and closed with a prayer and the hymn, 'God be with you till we meet again'."

"Ye shall know them by their fruits." And this is the only rule that never deceives, when it is properly understood; it

is that by which we must judge ourselves.

—Fenelon.

HOW KNOWLEDGE HAS INCREASED!

In 1823 a man named Ronalds applied for a patent for an electric telegraph, and proved its utility by operating over eight miles of wire. In a petition to the British Government he asked: "Why has no serious trial *yet* been made of so diligent a courier . . . Why should not our Kings hold councils at Brighton with their Ministers in London? Why should not our Government govern at Portsmouth almost as promptly as in Downing-street?"

The Government reply ran in part: "Telegraphs of any kind are wholly unnecessary, and none other than the semaphores in use would ever be adopted."

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BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE Melbourne. Vic., Australia.

Pilgrimage Ended

On May 5th our elderly Sister Johnson of Melbourne finished the pilgrim way after a devoted Christian life of over 50 years appreciation of God's great plan of salvation for humanity.

Having lived in her early life in Queensland she later spent a number of years in Tasmania in the Scottsdale district, and was well known by the brethren in that State. Coming to the mainland some years ago, our dear Sister had in more

recent times settled in Melbourne, and attended the Melbourne Class whenever possible. Advanced age made her one of the shut-ins for some time now, but visits from the brethren always found her cheerful, without complaint, and ever alert in appreciation of the truths of God's Word.

Of a humble, sacrificing disposition, our dear Sister gladly partook of the Memorial emblems a short time prior to her decease, and ever rejoiced in the heavenly hope for the faithful overcomers of this Gospel Age. We feel that our dear Sister Johnson has been a faithful follower of the Master, by the Lord's grace, and has entered into the joys of her Lord, this being His gracious provision for all now finishing the pilgrim way in "the days of the Son of man." "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels,"—special treasure. (Mal. 3:17.)

DIVINE GUIDANCE

"In the mysteries of my life
Where the threads all twist and twine,
'Mid the shadow and the strife,
Sadly missing His design,

With its gracious, loving pleading,
Breaks the tender Voice divine—
'Let Me take the threads in My hands,
Child, before they pass through thine.'

"Lo, a beauteous pattern growing
On a deep'ning ground of love,
Tints all blending, shining glowing
Mirror fairer things above;

And the quiet hands rest sweetly
In that strong, sure clasp of Thine,
All the threads now pass through Thy hands,
Dear Lord, e'er they come to mine."

—Selected.

BIBLE STUDENTS MANUAL

Copies of these Manuals, otherwise known as Berean Comments, have been published recently by brethren in Chicago, and are now in stock for the benefit of our friends. With nice appearance, bound in strong cloth, with gold lettering, the price is \$4.00, plus 15 cents postage.

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