



Volume XXVII. No. 10 MELBOURNE, 1st OCTOBER, 1944  
Price—Threepence

## Why God Gave a Bible Hard to Understand

Is it a fact?

(Public Address)

IT would seem to be an indisputable fact, and it is presumed that there is no one who would yet be able to explain all that is written from Genesis to Revelation. Paul, in Hebrews 1, states that "God at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers by the prophets." God has spoken in various ways, i.e. in plain, simple language, in dreams and visions, in signs and symbols, in types and in parables, and we are assured by Peter that the prophets themselves did not understand their own utterances and the angels sought to know and Understand what was written. (I Pet. 1:10-12.)

We may remember how Daniel prayed earnestly that he might understand the vision; part of it was revealed to him and other parts he was told were to be "sealed till the time of the end." "But go thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." (Dan. 12:13.) See verses 8 and 9,— "And I heard, but I understood not; then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end."

No wonder then, that it is not easy to understand the wonderful symbols of Ezekiel, Daniel and Revelation, and how true it is that we must search for truth as men dig for silver.

We remember what the eunuch said in answer to Phil-ipp's enquiry, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" It was Isaiah 53, and the answer was "How can I, except some man should guide me?"

At the first advent of Christ, of which so much had been written, the religious leaders with all their education and study of the law and the prophets were unable to understand and recognise Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah. There was Nathaniel under the fig tree puzzling over the Scriptures concerning Messiah and when Phillip called him "to come and see," "we have found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth," Nathaniel said that cannot be, for I do not find any prophet comes out of Nazareth. However, Nathaniel was not like many today and in his day—unwilling to investigate. He was willing to go and see; like the Bereans of old, he was willing to search the Scriptures to see if those things were so; he was convinced and became an apostle of Jesus Christ. So we see that something more than education is required to understand the Bible and the God of the Bible. "Man by

wisdom knew not God.”

What is Necessary in Order to Understand the Bible?

We find that in each age there have been those to whom the Lord has revealed His purpose. The prophet has said, “The Lord will do nothing, but that He will reveal it unto His servants the prophets.” Before the Deluge, Noah was found loyal to God and to him was made known what was coming and how to protect himself and family. When God would destroy Sodom and Gommorah, He said, “Shall I do this thing and not show it unto Abraham.” So, in every age, there have been some to whom God has made known truth due for the time. “The meek will He teach His ways.” “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.”

Prior to Adam’s disobedience God’s providence was over them and He communed with them in the Garden. Sin entered, God’s providence was removed and mankind, represented in Adam, was sent forth out of Eden to gain experience under the rule of Satan whom they had chosen to obey. But God had known that man would fall into sin and had prearranged the great plan for his recovery. We read of the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” also that the church was chosen “before the foundation of the world.” (Rev. 13:8; Eph. 1:4.) God would never have allowed Satan to tempt our first parents had He not had the plan of the ages (Eph. 3:9, 10) in view and known that He could overrule the experience of sin and evil and death for ultimate benefit to the human race.

On account of sin God has allowed all nations to walk in their own ways winking at their ignorance. He has hidden His face from them, yet He has been ever ready to bless any who would turn to righteousness. “The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.” (Psa. 14:2.)

So then while it was not the Divine intention that the Bible should all be understood at once, but that it should gradually unfold its truths as time went on, as “meat in due season” to the household of faith, yet those who sought the Lord in sincerity have ever been supplied with that meat in due season. Things have been “hidden from the wise and prudent” of the world, while “they have been revealed unto babes.” “Man by wisdom knew not God.”

That God’s Word was intended to gradually reveal the Divine purpose is indicated in our Lord’s words to the disciples—“I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now, but when the spirit of truth is come, it will guide you into all truth and show you things to come.” Again, when asked whether He would at that time restore the kingdom to Israel, He said, “It is not for you to know the times and seasons which the Father bath put in His own power.” Prior to His death and resurrection our Lord evidently did not know all details of the Divine plan, as He said, “Of that day and hour knoweth no man, not even the angels, nor the Son of Man (himself) but God only.”

What concerns us is that we should understand the Bible in so far as it is due to be understood. “The secret things belong unto the Lord, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children.” It is evident then, that much more of God’s purpose can be understood today than in Noah’s day, or Abraham’s time, or even by Moses or the prophets of Israel. God’s Word lights the path of the just “that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” (Prov. 4:18.) Also as Peter says, “A light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.” (2 Pet. 1:19.)

What is necessary if we would know God and understand His Word, is that we receive His spirit. We must first accept the provided way of approach to God, the redemption that is by Christ Jesus; then, if we realise what is only the reasonable next step, we say, “So I am bought with a price, I am not my own, I belong to Him who hath loved me and given Himself for me, as a lamb without blemish He shed His

blood that I might have life.” (1 Pet. 1:19.) When this step of consecration is taken and the holy spirit is received, we are able to understand spiritual things, and to grow in knowledge and in grace. It is as we act upon and live up to the knowledge received that more is given.

But there are many hindrances, many ways and means of the prince of darkness, the god of this world who blinds the minds of men that believe not—those who do not gladly accept the light, the truth, in the spirit of the truth. They

never get sufficiently emptied of their own spirit, to make room for the filling of God’s holy spirit. They become attached by social ties or agreeable associations in one sect or party, and imbibe so many false doctrines such as eternal torture, immortal soulism and many other teachings so contrary to God’s Word that neither their minds nor wills are open to receive the truth.

If we desire to understand the Bible we must be willing to come to it, to be taught by it, and to let go any preconceived ideas or preferences or doctrines of men, and just dig for the truth as men dig, for silver. With many it seems more difficult to dig away all false conceptions, doctrines of the dark ages etc., than it is to dig for the truth once such crusts are broken up.

These errors were accepted as truths by our forefathers, as they read the Bible without realising that it contained figures of speech and symbolisms which we use even in our own day in ordinary conversation. So they taught for instance (like Seventh Day Adventists) that the literal earth is to be burnt up, while the Bible clearly says, “the earth abideth forever.” (Eccles. 1:4.) “God formed it to be inhabited,” (Isa. 45:18), and that it shall be like the Garden of Eden, (Isa. 35). Also that God has promised never to destroy all living from off the earth, (Gen. 8:21), and that Palestine is to be given to Abraham and his seed. (Acts. 7:2-5).

Then why has the Bible been so constructed as to gradually reveal God’s purpose instead of making it all plain so “that the wayfaring man though simple may not err therein;” as it will be in the perfect day? (Isa. 35.) It is because the truth in season is the instrument of developing God’s purpose. It is the truth of any particular age that attracted those whom the Lord would call and select. In Abraham’s day truths concerning the Gospel Age were not revealed to him, but rather truths respecting the world of mankind generally in a wide sense, not in detail, and particularly truths regarding his seed Israel. Abraham’s faith was wonderful; he left Babylon in obedience to God—“Not knowing where he was to go.” He believed God that his seed should be through Isaac, yet he was willing to obey God and slay Isaac, “accounting that God was able to raise Isaac from the dead,” to fulfil His promise. He believed God that his seed should be “as the stars of heavens and as sand on the seashore for multitude,” even though he was so old and there was no sign of such being the case. But the way Abraham received the Lord’s instructions was rewarded by the Great Promise which embraced the great salvation, first of the heavenly seed and also of the earthly seed, to bless all the families of the earth.

Notwithstanding that the Lord told Abraham of the intention to destroy Sodom and Gommorah, Abraham still believed the promise and no doubt again accounted that God was able to raise even the Sodomites from the dead, so that they could be blessed. The prophet Ezekiel informs us that this will be the case (Ezek. 16:48-63), and our Lord confirmed this in Matt. 11:23; 10:15. In Matt. 11:23, the Lord says that if the mighty works which He had done in Capernaum had been done in Sodom it would have (been converted) remained.

Then it may be asked why the Lord did not send Abraham as a missionary to Sodom and do such works and reveal to the people the one true God of mercy. Again, during the Law dispensation God did not send the Jews to convert the other nations; He dealt only with Israel and taught that nation His law. (Amos. 3:2; Psalm 147:19, 20.) He had hidden His face from mankind generally but dealt with Abraham’s seed

for the purpose of developing His great plan of blessing all the families of the earth, in due time, and while Israel sought to keep the Law, the Lord's blessing for them was Numbers 6:24-26—"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

The purpose of that age was accomplished; the Law demonstrated God's righteousness, His justice, and produced the foundation truths in the pictures, symbols, types and teachings which were to be understood and fulfilled in the Gospel Age when the kingdom of heaven was opened up, that is, the kingdom of heaven class was to be chosen. "The law and the prophets were until John (the Baptist), since then, the kingdom of God is preached." "Among them that are born of women there bath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." (Luke 16:16; Matt. 11:11.)

How was this kingdom class to be chosen or selected? It was to be done by an unfolding of God's purpose. The message or Gospel call given by the Lord and the Apostles was something that had not been known before. The Law came by Moses but grace and truth by Jesus Christ. The Law made nothing perfect because no one could keep it in its entirety. "By the deeds of the Law no one was justified," so no one could receive the reward of life. Paul tells us that Christ made an end of the Law and "opened up a new and living way." He brought "life and immortality to light." Paul again says, that this mystery was hidden from ages, but is now made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you (the church class) the hope of glory. (Heb. 10:19, 20; 2 Tim. 1:10; Col. 1:26, 27.)

Our Lord told us that the new way for the call of the "little flock" to whom it is "the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom," is a narrow way, and "few there be that find it." It was not intended that all should understand the call of the Gospel Age. The Lord is looking only for a certain class, suitable to be joint-heirs with Christ in the Kingdom. That is why it is that all cannot understand the Bible and God's dealings with the world which for the time being He has permitted to go its own way, getting the consequences of sin and disobedience—getting experience that will ultimately be a blessing to all, in that they will see that there is no lasting happiness and peace and joy and life apart from God and His righteousness. When the lessons are learned God has promised to cause all to come to the knowledge of the truth, the Books will be opened so that all (if they will) may turn to the Lord with one consent. (Zeph. 3:8, 9, etc.)

To have made the Bible so plain that all could understand it during the Gospel Age would have interfered with the purpose of the age. It is by the revealed truth that any are drawn to the Lord; it is by the truth these are sanctified.

The disciples wondered why the Lord 'spoke plainly to them but always spoke in parables to the scribes and Pharisees, and Jesus explained—"Because to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but to them it is not given, etc. (Matt. 13:11-16.)

It was after the holy spirit was received at Pentecost that the disciples perceived that quite a new dispensation had commenced and God was not intending to convert the world at this time but only "to take out a people for His name;" that it would be in another age to follow this Gospel Age that the Lord would restore Israel to their land and to Divine favor, and that then, all the remainder of mankind would come to seek after the Lord; the Bible then being made plain and all shall understand and know the Lord from the least unto the greatest. (Acts 15:14-17; Heb. 8:11, etc.)

The great Divine Plan of the Ages was as a Book sealed with seven seals. No one but the Lord God knew of the wonderful purpose. In giving the prophecies to the prophets, particularly to Daniel, Ezekiel and St.

John in figurative language and in signs and symbols, the message was sealed, to be opened and understood in its due time, "meat in due season to the household of faith." So the Books were sealed, but the Lion of the tribe of Judah by His death as a ransom sacrifice to pay the price of • sin, was found worthy to break the seals and the Divine purpose has been gradually revealed to the faithful followers of the Lamb during this Gospel Age. Revelation informs us that the Books shall be opened so that the words of the prophets and apostles shall be fulfilled and the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the great deep.

So we see clearly, that when the Church, the Bride of Christ, is completed, a new age will open up. That will be a new world order, much better, more lasting and satisfactory than any that could ever be proposed by the best of mankind. It will be "the desire of all nations," and all who will be disposed towards righteousness will be lifted up and blessed. Christ will be King over all the earth (instead of Satan) in that day.

We notice that all the world today is looking for the second presence of Christ, just as we read in the gospels concerning the first advent of Christ, "all men were in expectation of Him." Then, when He came to His own, His own (people) received Him not." So, it may not surprise us if Christendom today is looking for Him to come again as a man, and so fail to recognise His presence as a glorious spirit being, just as invisible to the human eye as is the present "prince of this world," Satan.

We must keep ourselves in humble willingness to learn, while at the same time testing everything by the Word of God, if we would be among those to receive the present truth. "Light is sown for the righteous and truth for the upright in heart."

Now we can understand why God has seemed not to mind about the terrible wars and great injustices and horrible crimes. God is love and does care but God is also just and wise. Mankind chose to disobey God and to obey Satan, and God saw that it was better to allow mankind to have the consequences of his sin, but His love and wisdom also provided a way to satisfy the justice of His throne and to deliver man from the penalty, death and sorrows, and give him the opportunity of life everlasting in happiness and peace. So the experience of the present life will be an everlasting lesson, for all who will love righteousness and hate evil.

The Scriptures have opened up in a wonderful way in these last days just as promised in Daniel 12 and elsewhere, and we can rejoice in the New Age so soon to commence, of which there is a great deal more stated in the Bible concerning the second presence of Christ and His glorious reign of righteousness than there is concerning the first advent. God's New World of Tomorrow will indeed be, "the desire of all nations."

**PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.**

Published by the Berean Bible Institute,

19 Ermington Place, Kew, E4, Melbourne,

Victoria, Australia.

## The Harvest Work.

APPRECIATION of the articles on the manner of Christ's return, appearing in August and September "Peoples Papers," has been expressed generally, and the following short article is now submitted on the closely connected and most important subject of the harvest of the Gospel Age.

"I tell you that in that night there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken and the other shall be left"—Luke 17:34—omitted in Matthew's account.

The Lord, through the Prophet, informs us that though the Millennial morning draws near, a night also approaches. (Isa. 21:12.) It will be a night of trouble in the forepart of which the saints will be gathered out of Babylon. The "bed" here, in harmony with Isaiah's use of that word (Isa. 28:20), may be interpreted to symbolize human creeds which are long enough for "babes" in Christ, but too short for a developed "man" to stretch himself in it. This is true of the various "doctrines of men," substituted for but very different from the doctrines of God's Word whose lengths and breadths surpass human knowledge. For instance, the doctrine of Election, as taught by our Calvinist friends is a quite sufficient "bed" to rest many who are only "babes" in Christ, whose senses have never been much exercised; but as in the light of present day knowledge the babes get awake and grow in grace and knowledge, they will all surely find the old creed-bed too short for comfort; and as each attempts to wrap himself in the promises of God narrowed by an erroneous theology, he cannot satisfactorily cover himself: doubts creep in to chill him with fear that after all he is not certain that he and all his friends are of the "elect;" and by and by such developed Christians find it a relief to get out of such a predicament; and to such God generally sends the light of present truth to guide them to a "large place" of true rest supplied with abundant coverings for all who seek to know and to do the Father's will. Others, however, the vast majority, remain quite satisfied and comfortable in their various little cribs, because they are "babes" and not "men" in Christian knowledge and experience. "One shall be taken and the other left."

"Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left."—Matt. 24:40.

"The field is the world," our Lord explained; and in this discourse it represents a condition outside the nominal "house;"—outside of Babylon. Thus we are taught that not all "come-outers" will be "gathered," but that the "jewels" will be sought wherever they may be—"the Lord knoweth them that are His," and in this harvest gathering He is making up His jewels,—gathering His "elect," to be joint-heirs in His Kingdom.

"Two shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left."—Matt. 24:41; Luke 17:35.

A mill is a place where food is prepared; the ministers and theological schools do the grinding of the spiritual food for "Babylon," and turn out very poor grist—not "clean provender." The complaint is a growing one that the food supplied is largely husks and chaff, which will not sustain spiritual life and strength: and each grinder is obliged to prepare what is given him by his own denomination, and he cannot hold his position and yet provide the "meat in due season," "clean provender," for the household of faith. Hence "present truth" gathers some of the grinders and leaves others—one is taken and another left. Those who are loyal to God and to His flock will be taken; all others will be left. While the world and the nominal church declare this to be a time of union and "confederacy," God declares it to be a time of separating.—Isa. 8:12.

### Whither Gathered—The Attraction.

“And they (the disciples) answered and said unto Him, Where, Lord? (Where will these be taken?) And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body (the carcass, the food) is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.”—Matt. 24:28; Luke 17:37.

The lesson is that in this day, when the Lord is gathering His “elect” from the four winds of heaven — from every quarter of the Church—He will attract them as eagles are attracted, by food, for which they have a keenness of vision and appetite; that in due time the Lord would provide the proper food, and His true people would recognise it and be gathered to it;—the ready and worthy taken and the others left.

The food of “present truth” now provided by our Lord, and the gathering of His saints by and to it, fits the description of this prophecy exactly. The present call is not out of one “mill” into another “mill;” not out of one “bed” into another of about the same size. It is not the gathering by one man or many men, to him or to them, into a new denomination; but a gathering together unto Christ Himself, the true and only Master and Teacher. Where and when before was there ever such a recognition of all who trust in the precious blood of Christ and who are consecrated to Him, as the one household of faith—all brethren — and the one and only Lawgiver Christ, regardless of human creed’s and dogmas upon other subjects? Never and nowhere since the days of the apostles, so far as we may judge.

Moreover, it is worthy of note that great human ability, oratory, etc., have been notably connected with other movements, but not with this present gathering to the Lord. Here the truth, the spiritual food which the Lord is supplying, is the whole attraction: human flourish and oratory find little room for exercise here; they are lacking but are not missed. The gathered and gathering ones come together because they “hunger and thirst after righteousness:” and they are finding the satisfying portion which the Lord Himself has provided; and each for himself is eating thereof.

## Faithful Warnings.

(Heb. 12:25-29.) (Convention Address.)

HOW true it is that the storm clouds are all about us these days of our Lord's presence; and the darkness of gloom and perplexity and trouble deepens on every side. We inquire: why is this day of His presence such a time of trouble and distress of nations? It is because righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne, and He is judging the nations and weighing them in the balance. Judgment is being laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet, to the intent that before long equitable principles of His government may be established in the earth. And not only will all unrighteousness be made manifest, but "a fire goeth before Him and burneth up His enemies." This work of judgment and consequent time of trouble being a necessary preparation for the glorious reign of righteousness that shall succeed it, and will all be wisely directed by the high and holy One who is too wise to err. And we may discern in it the abundant cause for rejoicing and gladness. Indeed there is cause for rejoicing not only among the saints but in all the earth. It is in the midst of this day of trouble the word of the prophet is verified. "His lightnings enlightened the world; the earth saw and trembled."

God's lightnings are enlightening the world, and as a result there is a great commotion everywhere manifest; there is dissatisfaction, unrest, and the whole current of popular thought is set in revolutionary direction. The lightning flashes are revealing the corruption that is in the world; and the conflicting ideas and voices and theories and threats reveal the facts the prophets foretold. "The nations are angry;" and the whole earth trembles with the din.

And while the earth trembles, what is the condition among the Lord's consecrated people? How do they see it? It is written "Zion heard and was glad." It is because they dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty. These dwellers in the secret place of the Most High are provided in these perilous times with a clear knowledge of the Divine Plan, which enables them to see both the necessity for the present method of divine discipline upon the world and also the peaceable fruits of righteousness which shall result because of this. In the midst of the storm and battle of this Day of the Lord, they hear the commanding voice of the Lord of armies, and their hearts rejoice because they have full confidence in His ability to bring order out of all the confusion. They realize that in the judgments of this day it is the Lord that speaketh from the high place of authority and control; and can give thanks because of His justice, wisdom and love, and that He doeth all things well. The Psalmist intimates that while the world at large would be in ignorance of the import of present events and in fear and dread; and while the saints will be rejoicing because of His judgments and their foreseen outcome, some, all heedless of the voice which speaketh from heaven, will boast themselves of idols. He says, "Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols." *Psa. 97:7.*

These words also call to mind the warning of the Apostle Paul, "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh." The Apostle addresses these words to those who are acquainted with the Lord's voice, warning them against at any time refusing longer to heed it when it speaks in judgment. But there will be some who will refuse longer to obey it and be led by it; but turn away to the idols which their wayward hearts set up in His stead. These graven images are the work of their own hands, human philosophies and science falsely so called, of this evil day; and those who reject the testimony of Him that speaketh from heaven, having once heard it, invariably fall into some of the many forms of idolatrous worship now prevalent, or else drift from one to another in a restless kind of way. We see the gathering, darkening clouds, and how the whole earth trembles with fear, and for looking after the things that are coming; and the foretold events of this time speak in trumpet tones. How shall we regard these things? Shall it be with deep thought and reverence, lest the promise being left us of entering into the rest and glory of His kingdom any of us should seem to come short of it, or shall it be with that presumptuous irreverence which disregards all these manifestations of divine power, and, turning away from Him that speaketh

from heaven sets up some idol of a wayward heart. May such beware of any conditions of heart that would lead to such a course. We, realize that the establishment of His kingdom is accompanied with the shaking of the earth and the mountains, and as the Apostle says, "the heavens (the ecclesiastical powers) shall be shaken." What is the object of all this shaking? It is the removal of these things and the establishment of a kingdom which cannot be moved; for only, the unshakable principles of truth and righteousness can endure, and all those who do not follow these principles will be shaken out of the company called to share the honours of the kingdom. The many snares and delusions are accomplishing this very work, they are shaking out all the unstable as well as the false and faithless ones; and in the end only the true will remain.

We have the warning of the Apostle Paul where he says, "Beware therefore lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets. Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish, for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe though a man declare it unto you." (Acts 13:40-41.) It is true today as it was near the end of the Jewish age, that there are many despisers of the truth, especially of the truth now due and coming to light. But nevertheless the work of the Lord goes steadily forward; He is doing as the prophet says (Isa. 28:21) "His work, His strange work; and bringing to pass His act, His strange act." It would seem a strange work to those unacquainted with His plan of salvation, which sets aside all human theories and imaginations, and pursues a course in direct opposition to them. The world beholds this work of the Lord and with fear and trembling as to the final outcome. And not only the world, but the vast majority of His professed followers too, who have not been living on such intimate terms with the Lord as to be led into a clear knowledge of His wonderful purposes, regard the future with fearful forebodings of His present strange work, as a preliminary preparation for the reign of the Prince of Peace and the setting up of Christ's kingdom.

Before that can be fully established, all power and authority of whatever sort it is, which belongs to this present order of things must pass away. The great crisis of this world's affairs has not yet been reached; but the preparations are progressing steadily both in civil and ecclesiastical circles, and all the wise will apply their heads and hearts to the instruction of the sure word of prophecy that shineth as a light in a dark place, for it is written (Dan. 12:10) that "none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." Not the wise of this world whose wisdom shall perish; but the spiritual wisdom which cometh from above.

Those who thus rely upon God, and take Him at His word, see light in His light; they realize the necessity for the great scourge of trouble which shall shatter all human pride and ambition, and humble the nations in the dust. They see too the vanities of human theories, and the fallacy of human arguments, and the futility of all human schemes for the uplifting and blessing of the world as they view them in contrast with the plan which God is working out.

In Acts 20:28 the Apostle, speaking to the elders, gives a warning which must not be despised. He says, "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock." If those leaders need to take heed unto themselves first, we can see the seriousness of the situation. In these last days we need to take special care of the insidious and subtle deceptions we are apt to meet, and be alert to discern the craftiness of the Adversary, and that we may be of those of whom the Apostle says "We are not ignorant of his devices." Believing as we do that in this day of the Lord's second presence there has been a special unfolding of truth in accordance with Jesus' promise (Luke 12:37), we can glance over this latter day period and note the activities of the Adversary. At the first Advent there were Satanic attacks upon Jesus and the truth ministry, and so it is in these days of His second Advent ministry. It is the truth itself that the Adversary has sought to hinder and becloud, well knowing that this instrumentality, the truth of God, is the means the Lord is using to accomplish the spiritual transformation and sanctification of the consecrated believer. (Jno. 17:17.) If we review the periods of shaking, testing, and sifting, we note that nearly always they were occasioned by brethren of prominence who had great experience in the truth, but after a time were persuaded to join the

Adversary's assault on the Truth. Why? Because it is like a two-edged sword cutting both ways from which there is no escape:

One of the most deceptive practices of Satan is to associate himself with what appears on the surface to be most logical and scriptural considerations. Among some of these in which the Adversary specializes is "Christian liberty," "progress," and "more light." God's Word has much to say concerning these subjects. Christians are advised to maintain their liberty in Christ, and to make progress in the knowledge of the Truth, His Word being a shining light that shines more and more unto the perfect day. The history of God's people definitely shows that the Adversary places himself in the front ranks of those who would walk in the light. His arts and devices in mixing truth and error are numerous. The Apostle warns us of the peril when he declares, "No marvel, for Satan himself is transformed as an angel of light." He would present himself in the vesture of light and holiness as though he were an emissary of God. He is a master at deceit. Thus the Apostle could point his finger squarely at some in the midst of the church of his time who were "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves as apostles of Christ." What carefully discerning child of God is there, that cannot understand that the apostle is here issuing a solemn warning concerning the activities and practices of the Adversary as he makes use of prominent brethren in the church afflicted with secret pride, or 'some other spiritual malady, in the perversion of the real knowledge of God, and in placing it before the Lord's flock as the unadulterated truth, and as representing real progress in the path of light. We have recognized by past experiences that many fight most strenuously to oppose the true light, under the influence of Satan blinding them against the facts, being opposers of liberty in its true sense, preferring to be in bondage through ignorance. Thus Satan keeps one class this side of true liberty; and such as cannot be held, he goes along with them to help them on to more liberty on the other side, beyond what is true, so as to suit their various tastes and appetites; and to reason with either side becomes the problem.

Another has said, "Liberty is a grand word, yet it does not always spell true blessing and happiness." In Genesis we read how Satan broke loose from righteousness, and ship-wrecked his eternal interests. The history of the Jews shows what a rebellious people they were. They rebelled against regulations, desiring liberty to please themselves, and subsequently had experiences of sorrow and repentance. Would it surprise us that the Adversary still holds up the bait of liberty, and leads the world into all kinds of excesses. Should it surprise us that amongst God's people too, he uses similar tactics; telling them that they are enslaved when they hold closely to God's Word. He would urge them to break the bands of their consecration and re-assert their freedom. Nor is it peculiar that some in leaving the truth, begin a warfare against it, in that they promulgate new theories not really endorsed by Scripture.

Some imagine licence as liberty, which is certainly easier to drift along instead of fighting against the current. Let all the children of light rejoice in the only liberty that is really a blessing; the liberty wherewith Christ makes free those who become His bond-servants. These are set free from the bondage of sin. These are bound with the cords of love to their Master, and to the spirit of His teachings: bound to the altar of sacrifice with cords of devotion strengthening as the days go by.

Another deceptive device of Satan is that of placing so-called "unity," "harmony," and "love," as of more importance than God's truth, that constitutes the message for the last days. What wonderful consolation we have in those words of Psalm 91:1-7. The security we have in the secret place is a safe-guard against the wiles of the Adversary. Idolatry was a great besetting sin of Israel, through the machinations of Satan, and so it is handed down to these latter days, through subtle snares in indirect ways. Too often there are many tangible things assuming the place of supremacy in heart and mind which belongs only to God. The worship of the idol of self often drives out the worship of God. Satan sends out decoys not seen in their true import until the victim becomes ensnared by their influence. Sectarianism, an old form of pitfall, is now brought out in a new form by the great deceiver. Paul warned the Corinthian brethren and others against its dangers. Following the lead of a man or an organization may become a popular thing among

those setting out to be footstep followers of Christ. An organization though once used as a vehicle for the promulgation of truth, may become an idol of substantial proportions. Thrusting itself forward as the only true way it may alienate many from their single-hearted devotion to God, into a slavish obedience to human mandates. How much we need to watch and beware in these our busy days of the subtle snares of Satan that hedge about us to draw our attention away from the narrow and only straight way. Let us be awake and beware.

## Correspondence.

Victoria.

Dear Friends—Will you please send your Talks on last two Sundays, also any other literature you care to. I have listened to your Talks for some time, and have been pleased to find someone who has beliefs similar to my own.

Since a child, I have disbelieved in the doctrine of “Hell” as taught by the organized churches, also it didn’t appear reasonable to me that those dying in ignorance should have no chance of eternal life, which I am glad to see is clearly explained in your Talks.

Would you also let me know where you meet in the city, as I would be glad to attend your services. Yours sincerely.

To Frank and Ernest—Will you please send me copies of your last three Talks on the Trinity.

I would also like to express, on behalf of my wife and self, our deep appreciation of your Talks each Sunday morning.

May our Heavenly Father bless you in the work you are doing. Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Having heard your inspiring message over the air this morning, I would deem it a great personal favour if you would forward me a copy of the book “Christ’s Return.” Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest—I received your parcel with reading matter; thanks very much. I see you gave a Talk on “The

Millenium” on July 30. Could you send me a copy; I would appreciate it very much, also copy of “Where are the Dead?” I enclose stamps to cover cost.

I would also like, say, three or four copies of your last Talk, last Sunday; it was very interesting and I would like to send it to my friends. Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I was interested to hear your discussion on Sunday on this world passing away; however, there were texts that you did not quote and I would like to know how you could explain these away. Gen.

1:1—”In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Well, we certainly have the heaven and the earth as the Bible declared. In Matt. 24:35 we have Christ’s own words, this certainly describes our present heaven and earth passing away, as there are none other. In 2 Pet. 3:7, 10, 13 we read of the

destruction of this present heaven and earth. I could never quite understand when this takes place. but I know definitely by God's Word, Rev. 21, 1, that the heaven and earth and seas and we now know them will pass away to be replaced by a new heaven and new earth with no sea.

I would be very grateful if you would please send me along a copy of your book "Good News." Hoping to hear from you and thanking you. I am, yours sincerely.

(Literature explaining from the Bible the passing of the symbolic "heavens" (ecclesiastical systems) , "earth" (present social order) and "sea" (restless masses of humanity) will be sent free to all. The book "Foregleams of the Golden Age" is also recommended on this subject. A careful reading of the article in this issue, "Why God Gave a Bible Hard to Understand" will also be found helpful.)

South Australia.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I am writing as a regular listener to your series on Sunday mornings. Would you forward me a copy of the Chart which you spoke of, for which I enclose stamps?

Here let me say how much joy it gives me to hear these dispensational truths spoken so faithfully. So little is known of the deeper things of God and by so few.

Wishing your work God's rich blessing, I am, Yours in Christ.

Dear Sirs,—I am a constant listener to your session on Sunday mornings which certainly is very interesting and true, but while you are so taken up with the Kingdom theory, I have not heard a single thought on Thess. 4, re Christ's return for His redeemed, or Church . . . What are your thoughts on this matter, or event, also given us in 1 Cor. 15:52? Yours in Christ.

(An article appeared in September "Peoples Paper" explaining in some detail 1 Thess. 4. August number also has an article on Acts 1:11, and Matt. 24:27, and both these copies are available free to all.)

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I am still a regular listener to your Sunday morning Bible Talks and was more interested than usual yesterday morning. Will you therefore be good enough to send me a copy of your Talk, also a copy of the tract or booklet on "Christ Return" as per your generous offer.

This is a subject in which I have been intensely interested for many years, but there are still some difficulties that need to be cleared up for me. It is by no means a simple study; perhaps your book will help to bring me to some more definite conclusions on certain aspects of this great truth. Thanking you in anticipation, Yours faithfully.

New South Wales.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I happened to hear your broadcast of questions and answers this morning, which looks to me like the "goods." They certainly deal with many contentious questions, this morning in particular; I would like a copy of them.

I am no stranger to this message, but the form of dealing with these questions should have a great appeal. Enclosed find cheque for one guinea to assist. Yours truly.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I enjoy your Bible discussion on Sunday mornings very much. It comes through 2CA very clearly, and I hope you continue it. Would you please forward the book and discussion heard this morning which I understand is free. I am not sure of the title of the book, but think it is "When Christ

Comes.”

Thanking you and wishing your session every success. Yours sincerely.

To Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—We listen with great interest to your Bible Talks 10 o'clock every Sunday morning, but missed your last Talk, "The Coming of Christ," and would very much like your leaflet, if we could have one, as your views and ours are so much the same. I am, your very interested listener.

Tasmania.

To Bible Institute, Melbourne, Dear Sirs—Will you please send me three copies of all your booklets you have mentioned in your Talks from 3GL.

Two friends of mine have asked me to send for them, that is why I need three of each. "Christ's Return" and "God's Plan" are two and any others, please, you have mentioned.

We are Baptists in Tasmania and I think the Talks are easily the most instructive of a religious nature that I have ever heard. Thank you in anticipation. Yours sincerely.

Western Australia.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—As we have been listening (that is, my son and self) to your Bible readings for some time and are interested in them, we are writing to ask you if you will kindly send us your free booklet as we would like to study it. Thanking you for your helpful explanations of the Scriptures. I remain, yours sincerely.

To Frank and Ernest—It has given me much pleasure to hear some of your broadcasts including that of Sunday last.

I would be pleased to get a copy of your script for the last three. Yours faithfully.

Printed by Hickling & Powell Pty. Ltd., Lygon St., East Brunswick for Berean Bible Institute. Ermingeon Place, Kew. Melb. E4.