



We Shall Not All Sleep

(Contributed Address—Part 1)

THE lesson for us at this time is based upon a text in 1 Cor. 15:51. The Apostle Paul wrote—“Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” It is interesting to go into the book of Corinthians, and the 15th chapter in particular, and find out why Paul said that. We know that error has plagued the Church from the beginning, and it is surprising, in a way, to see how quickly certain errors crept into the Church. We know some thought in Paul’s day that the resurrection was already past, and he repudiated that in 2 Tim. 2:15-18. But here, according to the Apostle Paul, some of the brethren at Corinth thought there was no resurrection. This was almost unbelievably. We cannot imagine what caused them to get into this condition, and why they began to preach it. “How say some among you, There is no resurrection of the dead?” We do not know what prompted it, or how deep were those who began to preach it, but they had sufficient influence that the Apostle Paul thought he should do something to counteract it, and the 15th chapter of 1 Cor., is his attempt to correct that particular error.

Our lesson then is on this chapter, and as we read it we are delighted with the number of basic truths that the Apostle Paul brings to our attention; truths that are meaningless if you do not know the Plan of the Ages. When we mention knowing the Plan of the Ages, it is not with boasting or pride. God has told us clearly that we know it because of the grace of God, and that is the only reason. We are not better, more spiritual, more righteous than anybody else. It is only because of the grace of God that we see the Truth at all.

Going back to the first part of the 15th chapter, we notice the arguments of Paul as he refutes this strange error that crept in that there is no resurrection of the dead. We will find some delightful truths that, as you ponder them and go back to

their original source and see the full background of them, makes us realise afresh that we have the truth of God in the Plan of the Ages.

In verses 1-8 the burden of Paul’s testimony is to prove that Jesus was raised from the dead. This is vital to the argument, he knows. So we read—“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.” He says this was not done in a corner as far as the brethren are concerned. The fact that He was seen is established. “After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.” This is a simple statement but only the Truth makes it meaningful. The margin says—“I saw him as an abortive.” Our good friends of the churches believe that you are a “born-again Christian” when you accept Christ. But Paul makes it plain; he says, I saw Him as though I had already been born on the spirit plane. Through a miracle God permitted Paul to see Jesus as a spirit being. It was not a vision, because his eyes were actually damaged by the bright light, brighter than the noonday sun that represented the risen Lord. He literally saw Him. He says, I saw Him just as if I had been born on the spirit plane, born before I should have been. This simple little statement is meaningless except with a knowledge of the Plan of the Ages; then we understand it. Jesus was the first One born from the dead, and the Church are being born now in the spirit realm as they die on earth. It is interesting to note that it is the Truth that makes these things meaningful to us, and understandable.

Then he goes on—"For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed."

He continues—"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" How could you? He says—"If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." He could not be risen, if that were true. "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." He says—Think what your false doctrine is saying; it is making us to be false witnesses. 't is nullifying all the work we have done, and all those who have said they saw Jesus must be dupes or liars. "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." There is another point, a simple point of truth that we see but others do not see because God has touched our eyes and our ears. He is saying the Church were "asleep." I do not know of any group in all the world who claim the name of Christ, generally speaking, who believe this, except the Church of God.

But think of that 17th verse—"If Christ be not raised." That is a chilling thought. If Christ were not raised, and someone could prove it, do you know what that would do to this meeting? We would walk out of here quite crestfallen, wouldn't we. We would sing a hymn, but we could not pray in His name. We would go home, and not come back to another meeting if this were true, that Christ is not raised. Do you realise how bleak and barren our life would be, if Christ had not been raised?

But Paul starts off in this wonderful new way. He says—"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." Now the Apostle finds the need of getting into the darkness that has reigned. I know his heart was heavy when he was writing this epistle to the Corinthians; but if it was heavy then, since he is awakened I know he has been very happy. Many of these things he wrote in tears have been used of the Church from that day to now to establish, to instruct, to help us to appreciate the Plan of God. The Apostle Paul had no idea, when he wrote these verses, that his brethren would save them over and over again as they told the Truth to others. The ransom is brought out so beautifully in verses 21 and 22. The Apostle Paul realised in this discussion if any were to understand the resur-

rection of the dead, they had to understand why they were coming back. That is why he went into the doctrine of the ransom. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

I recall one time talking with a good man, a minister, and being much younger than I tried not to tell him anything, but to ask questions, and show respect for his age. So I said, Why did Jesus have to die? He said, Son, it was to save us from sin. I said, Why did He have to die to save us from sin? He said, Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. I said, Why? He said, That is what has been decreed. I said, I read something once that interested me. I read in a book—then I told him about the ransom, the corresponding price. He said, That is interesting; what was the book you read it in? I said, "The Divine Plan of the Ages." He said, Be careful; anybody can have some truth. I said, But don't you think that is right? He said, I would not consider the book if I were you, because it is filled with heresy of the worst kind. I said, I will bring you the book, and you mark out what is wrong and let me know. He said he would, but it never got back to me. We do not say things like this to tell others how much they do not know, but to emphasize the Truth that God has given us to say. God has enlightened our minds to see everything we see.

Getting back to 1 Cor. 15, verses 21 and 22 are so simple, beautiful and precise as they describe the ransom price necessary for the resurrection of the dead. Paul knew they had to understand why there was to be a resurrection of the dead, because Jesus died in Adam's place. Then he goes into this neat little detail of the Plan—"But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits." Here is a simple truth that Jesus is the Head and the Church is His body. "Afterwards they that are Christ's at his presence. Then the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." There is the Plan in brief! He is explaining this to help those who were confused about the resurrection, showing them that the reason for the resurrection was the payment of the ransom price.

Then he goes on—"For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Here is an intermediate thought which Paul introduced. But then he continues to expand the thoughts given in verses 20-22—"But now is Christ risen from the dead . . . even so in Christ shall all be made alive." In verse 29 he continues this theme with the words—"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at

all? why are they baptized for the dead?" If the dead rise not, there could be no point in being baptized for them. What does he mean by that? This is a simple truth which is meaningful when we understand the Plan of the Ages. In the teaching of the Mormons a Gentile (as they call us) can go through their Temple before it is consecrated, but afterwards only a Mormon in good standing can go to the Temple. But if you should be allowed to go through, you would see quite a large area set aside for many people to change into baptismal robes. They are baptized in water for the dead, many generations back. They take this statement of Paul's literally. Paul says, If the dead rise not, why are we baptized for the dead? What did he mean by this? He says in Rom. 6—"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into **his death**?" What does this mean? We realise when Jesus presented Himself to John at Jordan He was saying, I am willing to die. God said to Him, in effect, My Son, I will let you take the place of Adam in death, but I am going to start a new life in you right here, and if you yield yourself faithfully in laying down your life as I instructed you, you shall be awakened on the spirit plane, and born on the spirit plane; but you must lay down your life in this way I have outlined. That was His baptism into death, for the world of mankind. Jesus made this clear when Mrs. Zebedee came and said, Lord, when you enter into your kingdom, could James and John be at your side, one on the left hand and one on the right? He said, It is not for me to give such favours in the kingdom. Turning to the two disciples, He asked them—are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and be baptized with the baptism I am being baptized with? This was the laying down of His life sacrificially. We realise He has invited His body members to die His death, to be counted in with Him. They do not contribute a thing—any value. His death does it all. But they are invited to share in that. "Know ye not, that as many of us as are baptized into Jesus Christ are baptized into **his death**?" This pictures the sacrificial laying down of the life of The Christ. Jesus died for the world; just as the blood of the bullock and the goat was taken in as one blood and applied on the mercy seat, in two operations, for the atonement of the sins of 'srael (first the bullock's blood for himself and his house, then the goat's blood for all the people) picturing the atonement for the sins of the whole world.

Getting back to our chapter in Corinthians, Paul is saying, If the dead rise not, why are we dying sacrificially, as we covenanted to do? "And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." I am laying down my life every day, as the Lord outlined I should do. He says, I am doing it because I know that if I am faithful in being counted in as dying His death, I shall be awakened as part of the Christ and be used in the blessing of the rest of mankind, in bringing back

the dead in the resurrection process. He says—"If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die. Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners." Don't be discussing these errors and going over and over them. That will confuse them. If you know the Truth, stay with the Truth. "Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame."

But he knew what some were going to say who did not believe in the resurrection. They would say, Paul, when a man dies we bury him, put him in a grave. Do you know what happens then? His body disintegrates, just becomes dust. All right, what do you mean about the resurrection? He knew they would say that. He says—"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." Even if you plant wheat, the wheat dies, but you get a crop of wheat from it. It does not have to have the same literal body. Some think it will be the literal body brought back; they get mixed up and also think it will be a spirit body, and all sorts of things. Some think on the Judgment Day the air will be filled with the various dead bodies reassembling themselves. But what Paul is saying here is that all those who have died in the past, when they are brought back by the power of God given to Christ and the Church, that it will not be the literal body that was put in the grave or drowned or burned that will be resurrected, but each individual will be given a body by God, through His power. He says, Remember this, the kind of body will depend upon whether the person died as a man or as a New Creature. He says this is important—"That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." He says if it is an earthly being who dies, it will be given an earthly body. If it is a spiritual being, it will be given a spiritual body. He is showing the two phases of the resurrection. The fact that there will be several kinds in the resurrection, earthly and spiritual, should not be too confusing to us, because even in the earthly realm there are different kinds of bodies. "All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds"—they are distinct and have different kinds of bodies. He says it should not be too disconcerting for us to think there can be an earthly body and a spiritual body when we see different bodies on the earth. Then he says—"There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial", or heavenly and earthly bodies, "but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another." He says there is a great

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Convention News

IT is a pleasure to report a very helpful season of spiritual refreshing which was experienced during the Annual Christmas Convention, sponsored by the Melbourne Class of Berean Bible Students, and held over the four days of the Christmas period. The Lord's blessing was evident throughout the gatherings, and we are indeed thankful to Him for the benefits received. The attendance each day was very good, a nice number of visiting friends attending from Queensland, and others from New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Victorian areas. It was pleasing also to have a goodly number of our local Polish brethren (now Australian brethren) joining in to serve and fellowship with us.

During the Convention two Bible studies were conducted, 15 addresses were delivered by the brethren, Fellowship Meetings were held and with informal fellowship a well balanced feast of the truths of God's Word was provided. The Bible studies on the Scripture passages in Phil. 3:7-14; and 1 Cor. 15:48-54 were very helpful. In the former passage we saw how beautifully and helpfully the Apostle Paul explained the privileges of Christian discipleship, as he counted all previous earthly blessings as absolutely nothing in comparison with the spiritual new creature experiences he was enjoying in fellowship with Christ. And further, he was seeking additional intimate attachment to the Lord—to know Christ more and more, even "the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead"—the first or chief resurrection, as a member of Christ's Bride. When the Apostle wrote this message to the Philippian Church, he did not "count" himself to have attained the mark for the heavenly inheritance, but "this one thing he did, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, he pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"—a wonderful example indeed for all followers of the same Master.

The study in 1 Cor. 15:48-54 was also spiritually invigorating, dealing with the gracious assurance of the heavenly inheritance for all consecrated disciples of Christ, who, by the Lord's grace so run as to obtain. The article in this

"Peoples Paper"—"We Shall Not All Sleep"—which is to continue also in the following issue, covers this study in detail; we trust the presentation of this vital subject will be profitable to all readers.

The subjects selected by the brethren for their addresses provided a wide range of spiritual food which was enlightening and stimulating, the topics being—"God's Great Restoration Project"; "The Six Cities for Refuge"; "God so Loved—He gave us Jesus at Christmas"; "Spirit of Service"; "Why Believe in Jesus?"; "Adam's Fall and Pride of Nebuchadnezzar"; "The Lightning of His Presence"; "Faith"; "Our Sufficiency"; "Time—Our Moments and Our Days"; "Living Our Faith"; "Sabbath"; "Grace and Knowledge"; "Victorious Faith" and "Learning in the School of Christ." A brief outline of each of these addresses is to appear in Notes on the Convention to be available at the same time as this issue of "Peoples Paper."

A number of very kindly greetings with Christian love and assurance of prayers were much appreciated from Classes and individual brethren throughout Australia, and also from U.S.A., brethren who had visited Australia over previous years. Other messages were gladly received from Canada and Vienna, Austria, where two of our Melbourne brethren were passing through on their visit to brethren and relatives in Poland. The message from the Convention to all who sent greetings and remembered our gatherings in prayer, as well as to the Israel of God in every place, is found in Phil. 3:8-11. The sentiment of these verses with warm Christian love was sent from all assembled in Convention.

The sessions for Praise and Testimony provided opportunity for a number to express their thankfulness to the Lord for all His favors and blessings experienced over past times and day by day, and also to relate their appreciation of the privilege of attending the gatherings and receiving the benefits from the Lord's hand through the brethren. The session "Hymns We Love and Why" added helpful enjoyment as the favourite hymns of the friends were sung with heartfelt expression. Appreciation of the services of the Sisters in providing refreshments each day was also sincerely expressed, all such service being undertaken as a labour of love, as unto the Lord.

The Love Feast was the closing feature of the Convention, when all present bid each other farewell with a sincere handshake while singing the well-loved hymn—"Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love." The hymn—"God be with you till we meet again"—and a prayer of thankfulness to God, seeking His guidance in His service in the days before us, and asking His blessing upon all His dear children the world over, brought to conclusion the helpful season of refreshing in Melbourne for 1976.

When I feel like finding fault, I always begin with myself and then I never get any further—Ray Stannard Baker.

A Study in Matthew 24:34

(Contributed Article)

ABOUT 25 years ago an article appeared in a Truth journal drawing attention to certain facts which inspired further investigation and study. As a result of this, a review of these facts was published in the "Peoples Paper" in 1961. They are now presented again with some additions. Facts had been previously pondered carefully and checked with Concordances and the Diaglott word for word translation. More recently a dictionary of New Testament words has been consulted and all should provoke thought.

To whom did Jesus refer when He said, "This generation"? The evidence seems to suggest that He had in mind the generation of His time—those living about Him as He spoke. The word translated "this" is "haute." A few instances where it is used should help to convince how Jesus meant it to be applied here. Matt. 22:20—"whose is *this* image and superscription"; Matt. 26:8—"to what purpose is *this* waste"; Mark 8:12—"why doth *this* generation seek after a sign"; Luke 4:21—"This day is *this* scripture fulfilled in your ears." It can be seen that the word definitely carries a *present* meaning—Jesus was not referring to a future generation.

In our Authorized Version more than one Greek word is often rendered by the same English word and the shades of meaning cannot be appreciated without recourse to a Bible concordance.

In our text the word "generation" is from "Genea" and it is practically always so rendered, but there are other Greek words rendered "generation" which have different shades of meaning. Examples where the same word is used as in our text are—Matt. 11:16, "But whereunto shall I liken this generation." Matt. 12:41, "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it." Mark 8:12—Here the Greek text is exactly the same as in Matt. 24:34 and reads, "And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth *this generation* seek after a sign." These are a few of many examples serving to show how difficult it is to make Jesus' words fit any other generation than that of His day.

The 23rd, 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew are all related to our subject. The latter portion of the 23rd unquestionably is linked with the three questions asked of Jesus by His disciples, while chapters 24 and 25 are in answer to the questions asked in Matt. 24:3. Parable after parable Jesus gave in answer, which was not completed until "Jesus had finished all these sayings." (Matt. 26:1). He spoke of many things,—the destruction of Jerusalem, and the scattering of the people, wars and rumors of wars, persecution of the saints, nations and kingdoms arising against each other, tribulation upon earth such as never previously was experienced, the second coming and

the manner in which He would come, and the effect it would have upon Christians and upon men generally, of returning favor to the dispersed Jews as they assembled together in their own land again, while even the parable of the sheep and goats from Matt. 25:31 would relate to *signs of His presence* in the Millennial Age.

As Bible students we know that these events cover thousands of years, therefore it is manifest that all these things were not fulfilled before the generation of Jesus' day had passed. The translation of the latter part of the verse appears to be at fault. The Greek word "pleroo" means fulfilled, and is so translated to give that meaning on all occasions where it is used, but quite a different word is used in the verse of our study. Both Young and Strong verify in their concordances that the Greek word used by Jesus in our text was "Genetai," a derivative of the Greek "Ginomai." A Greek scholar says that the meaning of the word Jesus used is "to begin to be", or "to come to be," and in support of this Professor Young in his concordance shows the word to be translated 249 times with the meaning of the verb "to be," and 82 times "come to pass." Professor Strong also lists many places where the word is used indicative of a *present beginning*, but not the thought of the thing mentioned as being finalized.

Reviewing the more recent work, we find the above is corroborated fully. The author points out that the Greek word "Ginomai" is translated in the New Testament 39 times with a different English word each time. It is an interesting study to look up all these Scriptures, note the context, and the word used which the translators believed best expressed the thought in each case. The full exercise is too extensive here, but the evidence seems loaded in favor of the thoughts herein expressed. Some examples show how convinced the Greek scholar is as to the meaning of the word "Ginomai." He points out several Scriptures where the word is used to express the thought "arise" (examples Acts 6:1—"there arose a murmuring . . ."; Matt. 13:21—"tribulation and persecution ariseth"). He expresses the meaning here—"to become, to take place." In Acts 19:10 we find the word rendered "continued," and he comments here—"to begin to be"—suggesting ORIGIN. The Diaglott renders this—"and this was done for two years." How clear the thought is of something *progressive*.

In John 13:2 we see "Ginomai" is wrongly rendered in our Authorized Version, but the mistake is more generally known here and has been corrected by several translators. Supper was not "ended", but *about to commence*. The Diaglott renders it—"As supper was preparing." In Heb. 4:3 we have the word rendered "were finished." This may seem on the surface to have the thought of fulfilled. Noting this Scripture more closely it reads—"although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." The Greek scholar comments here, the thought is—"to

come into existence." The Amplified Version renders this—"although his works had been completed and prepared (and waiting for all who would believe) from the foundation of the world." Surely the thought is that all the things God had prepared—His Plan—would be worked out over a *period of time*, through ages and dispensations. They were "finished" only in the sense that God had the whole programme completed in His mind. Is it not reasonable that it is a similar thought in the verse of our study in Matt. 24:34? What Jesus had just told His disciples constituted a *long programme*, and before their generation passed away these things would *begin* to happen.

The long list of events tabulated by Jesus did indeed *begin* to happen to that generation. Within 40 years or so of Jesus speaking the words, Jerusalem was destroyed and the people's "house" or home made desolate, and they were scattered throughout the earth. The further events continued to happen down through the age (see Matt. 24:9, 10), and are *still* happening.

The words that Jesus spoke in relation to the questions of when the kingdom should come were intended to help *all* Christians right down the age, including those who addressed the questions to Him. To have referred to a generation hundreds of years hence would not have kept their interest alive, but to tell them that in the time in which they were living these things would *commence*, would surely make them thoughtful and WATCHFUL.

Could an event like the Olympic Games illustrate? A huge sports programme is drawn up which is to take several days or weeks to complete, and as the runners carry the lighted torch to the arena immediately prior to the commencement of the long programme, the official who opens the games might be heard to declare—Within the next hour all these things will begin to come to pass, or begin to happen. We would not expect the whole programme to begin in that hour, but only the *first* item timed for that hour; all the others listed would follow in order.

Let us now look at the word "pass." Professor Young says that the meaning of the word here is "to come, or go along." Literally, our text would read—"This generation shall not *go along* (i.e., very far, shall not pass right away) till (until or before) all these things *begin* to happen." It is further confirmatory of this translation to review the words "all these things." There is not the slightest indication that Jesus meant that all the things of which He spoke, in answer to the questions, would be fulfilled in the generation to which He referred. Let us note some examples where the same word "all" is used, Young's concordance being the reference. Matt. 6:33—"All these things shall be added unto you,"—as occasion demands or requires—the thought of progression. Matt. 9:35—"Jesus went about all the cities and villages teaching,"—progressively. Matt. 28:19—"Go ye and teach all nations,"—when or as you

can—progressively. So, in our text Jesus would not mean to suggest that one generation would see the fulfilment nor the beginning of *all* the things of which He spoke.

The question of greatest moment to His listeners at the time was the Jewish question. Jesus had just told them that while He longed to take Jerusalem to Himself and see it under His sheltering wing, it had refused to have anything to do with Him, and that this would result in its desolation. The disciple reminded Him of the magnificent temple, but Jesus explained that it would not escape either, that not one stone of it would be left upon another.

Jesus, a Jew, had kept the law perfectly and had taught His disciples to conform to the true essence of its teaching (Matt. 23:1-3); no wonder they wanted to know more about this foretold destruction. "Tell us when shall these things be?" That is the question the Lord answered principally for *them*—before this generation passes it will be so. (See Matt. 23:36).

The accounts given by Mark and Luke in their gospels, in reference to the same three questions, are interesting to compare, and it is a real study to do so. In Mark 13:30 the translators of the A.V. have given a thought of definiteness that is not justified—"Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done." The word they have rendered "done" is the same "ginomai" which previously has been pointed out means more exactly "begin to come to pass." Luke 21:32 is translated—"This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." Again it is exactly the same Greek word.

In Matt 24 we have to bear in mind that Jesus was answering three questions, and many other things He said during His discourses were in direct answer to the other two questions—"What shall be the sign of thy presence and of the end of the age?" The fulfilment of the answers He gave to these questions lay far in advance of the day of these first disciples, and Jesus did not infer that they would be fulfilled in that generation, indeed not in any ONE generation at all. In Matt. 24:23-27 and similar passages the intent is to stir up watchfulness. Verse 42—"Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." As Bible students we know that proper watchfulness would reveal the presence of the Lord when the time came, but it would seem clear that it would not have anything to do with any time feature suggested by a generation. Similarly also with the third question—"What shall be the sign of the end of the age? The answer here seems summed up in Matt. 24:33—"When ye see all these things know that it is near."

Let us think again of the Olympic Games illustration. Some days of the programme have gone by, and a newcomer may say to his friend, I have not been here before, nor taken any interest, but I am enjoying it; it is fine; how much longer does it last? His friend takes out the programme to

consult it and they trace down the events to the one that they are watching, and behold, there are only a few events to follow; thus they know it is all but over.

Jesus gave us a long programme in answer to the question, "What shall be the sign of the end of the age?"—Jerusalem sacked and the people scattered, nations rising against nations, tribulation upon earth never before known, tribes of the earth mourning over the clouds of trouble, messengers accomplishing a separating work in the "heavens," a fig tree budding again, as we'll as other trees putting forth leaves, and concluded—"When you see ALL these things come to pass, know it is near."

Like the Olympic programme illustration, the events narrated seemed all but over. The Prime Minister of Australia in 1960 pointed out that in the years just prior to that time, some 20 or so new nations had sprung into existence, and all were demanding their "p'ace in the sun." He said further, that less than a decade before it could not possibly have been realised that changes of such magnitude could ever have occurred, nor had we seen the end of it yet. He forecast that as many as 20 more would arise quickly in the years ahead. How true his forecast has proved. So we see not only the "fig tree" but ALL the trees "putting forth leaves."

Does it not seem that in our text Jesus intimated that the *initial events* in connection with the three questions asked of Him would take place during the generation then living? The other events would follow in proper time and sequence, and when they had ALL been fulfilled, the end of the age and the Kingdom of God would be right at hand. ALL real Bible students today cannot fail to believe in the close proximity of the Kingdom of God. World events hasten so dramatically now. Maybe there are notable events to happen still before the full end of the age, but things we previously thought might take a decade or two to develop, seem now to come about almost overnight. It is definitely not our thought that the present generation may not see the full end of the age. They may we'll do so; but that does not seem to be what Jesus referred to in Matt. 24:34.

It behoves us surely to be sober minded in this day. Numerous students of the past and present have busied themselves unearthing all kinds of prophecy and time features which have satisfied them that the end would come this year and that. It is we'll if we do not allow ourselves to be persuaded by fanciful notions, but to remain devout, calm students, content to wait the Lord's time for everything.

The verse following our text—Matt. 24:35—seems to say—Not one iota of all that I have said shall fail. All I have stated in connection with the three questions will come to pass. To all interested ones who pay proper attention, I have given quite sufficient information. All that anyone has to do to understand and locate events on the great

programme is to take sufficient cognizance of what I have told you—WATCH.

Pilgrimage Ended

ON the last day of 1976 our dear Brother Beuthin, of Melbourne, finished his earthly pilgrimage after a lifetime of appreciation of God's great Plan of Salvation for the human family. Being the son of a loving and devoted Christian mother who received the truth in the early years of this century, our Brother learned to love the Lord and His truth while still a teenager, and was we'll known and held in high regard by the brethren throughout Australia.

Becoming a railway employee in his early life, first of all in Tasmania, and for the greater part of his life in Victoria, he specialized as stationmaster in many parts of Victoria, finally reaching the number one position in this profession at Melbourne's largest railway station. Despite his important position his love for the Lord, His people and His truth continued throughout the years. Pressure of responsibility, however, caused an early retirement, after which he was not physically strong.

As a member of the Melbourne Class he attended whenever possible, and loved to contribute at the Bible studies; one of his favourite quotations in honoring the Lord was—"thy gentleness hath made me great"—Psa. 18:35. Perhaps our Brother Beuthin could be likened somewhat to the disposition of Peter, zealous and outspoken at times for what he felt was the Lord's cause, and also with a heart like Peter's—full of love and devotion to his Lord, and ever using his talents to support the Lord's work. It was a pleasure to have our dear Brother attend with us for three days of the recent Christmas Convention, our last association with him being at the Love Feast, when we sang in parting—"God be with you till we meet again; Till we meet at Jesus' feet." We feel he has been a faithful follower of the Master, by the Lord's grace, and has received the commendation—"Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Sincere sympathy is extended to our Sister Beuthin and children in the loss of a devoted Christian husband and father, and also to all other family members, many of whom rejoice also in the lovely truths which enable them to "sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention for three days to be held (D.V.) on April 8th, 9th and 10th, at the M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. F. M. Gristed, 1 Wendy Avenue, Valley View, South Australia, 5093

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difference between the beings. "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory." Here we think he is concerning himself with the spiritual resurrection, the resurrection of the New Creation. He is referring to the heavenly realm, and says there shall be different offices and different positions amongst the Church in the heavenly realm. "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." I believe as he goes on he is discussing the resurrection of the Church—just the Church; and I will tell you why as we go on. "It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Here we believe he is talking of the resurrection of the New Creation, because certainly he is not speaking of the resurrection of the world when he says it is raised a spiritual body. "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. As it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." This is speaking of Jesus.

"Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven," the Life Giver, the Everlasting Father. "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Then Paul goes on—"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." Now here is the verse we commenced with—"Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. "This "mystery" becomes intriguing. This is from the Greek word "musterion", which means "that which is known to the initiated", and that definition is in Young's Concordance. Being a "mystery" does not mean something inscrutable, beyond comprehension, but something which must be revealed. For instance—If you are initiated into the Masonic Order then you are introduced to certain secrets of theirs. This is the thought here; that those who see these mysteries of God are those who have been called and spirit-berotten and are of the family of God, members of the Body of Christ. As Jesus said in Matt. 13—"Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but unto them it is not given." "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." This is a mystery, and the fact this is called a "mystery" means it is not something which is seen by a casual reading of the Bible. It is here a little, there a little, and having your minds stirred up by the spirit of the Lord to comprehend it. "I show you a mystery, We

shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." We believe that the dead in Christ have been awakened. We believe the Bible teaches that after the dead in Christ have been awakened, there are some who are still on this side of the veil, and we believe that they die like other men do, and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they are changed. But there is no need here to show that there is a time lag between when the first are awakened and the others are changed. We have to look to other Scriptures to find out, if it is true.

(To be continued)

Passover Memorial, 1977

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Friday, 1st April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season 'In remembrance of Christ.'

Memorial Services

MELBOURNE—Sunday, 3rd April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

ADELAIDE—Sunday, 3rd April, at 6.15 p.m., at the M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

SYDNEY—Friday, 1st April, at 7 p.m., at 81 James Street, Leichhardt.

Sympathy

If none were sick, and none were sad,
What service could we render?
I think if we were always glad,
We scarcely would be tender.

Did our beloved never need
Our patient ministration,
Earth would grow cold and miss indeed
Its sweetest consolation.

If sorrow never claimed our heart,
And every wish were granted,
Patience would die and hope depart—
Life would be disenchanted.

Pocket "Daily Heavenly Manna"

Copies of the pocket "Daily Heavenly Manna" are now on hand. These are nicely printed and bound in semi-flexible covers, and are very handy for the pocket or hand-bag. Three Indexes make it more valuable—Manna Article Index; Scripture Index to Manna, and Topical Index. Priced at 75c plus 33c postage.

Oxford Reference Bible, with References, India paper, Brevier clear type, Leatherex binding, thumb index, \$19.00, plus postage.

Oxford Teachers' Bible, with References, India paper, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$21.00, plus postage.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

3GL Geelong, 1350Kc. — Sundays 10 a.m.

2TM Tamworth, 1290Kc. — Tuesdays 10.10 p.m.