



Volume XLV II No. I MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY —MARCH 1964 Price— Sixpence

Words of Choice Silver

(Convention Address)

“The tongue of the just is as choice silver.” “O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.” (Prov. 10:20; Psa. 51:15.)

IT is not only when we stand to speak before the Lord’s brethren, but day by day in all that we have to say one to another, at home, at work or wherever we are placed that we desire that it will be the Lord who will open our lips and give us just the right words to speak that will praise Him and edify others. As Psa. 19:14 so well expresses it, our prayer is that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts may be acceptable in God’s sight.

We are all constantly aware how much we need our Heavenly Father to teach us to speak aright. Even with the best intentions and desires, words are so easily spoken that may hurt or stumble another or that may cause the hearer or ourselves later regret and sorrow. Words that are carelessly spoken can never be taken back and how we often wish such words had never been spoken.

At times we find it hard not to speak when we should be silent ; at other times when we should speak, we hesitate and an opportunity to comfort, to encourage or to correct, to witness for Jesus Christ may be forever lost.

The author of the book of Proverbs from which the topic is taken has much to say on the right ordering of our words. In many picturesque ways, he highlights how the wise words of the righteous can be a source of rich blessing and refreshing to others, while those of the foolish or the careless can bring sorrow.

A Greek philosopher who lived about 400 B.C., is recorded as saying—”Let your speech be better than silence or be silent.” This is surely sound advice, as speaking too much, if it does no greater harm, will very effectively prevent us from listening and learning of others. The Apostle James tells us in chapter 1:19,—’Wherefore my brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath,” and we read in Proverbs 17:27—”He that hath knowledge spareth his words.”

Between close friends, words are often unnecessary and much can be conveyed in the silence of mutual fellowship and understanding. This is true too as we wait on the Lord. We need to listen more than we speak, for the Lord knows our hearts’ desires and our needs far better than we can express and He is ready to speak to our hearts in the quiet hour of waiting on Him.

Of our Lord and Saviour it is recorded in Luke 4:22 that all men wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth. This referred to His public utterances, but even more precious to His disciples would be the cherished words spoken to them—alone by the wayside. Our Lord being filled

with the spirit was able perfectly to match the words to the occasion, whether of rebuke, of comfort or of reassurance. What meaning was that one word to the waiting Mary at the own tomb, or in the challenge to Peter,—”Lo rest thou me?”

We are all very conscious of short-coming in this sphere of Christian experience, even as the Apostle James so aptly speaks to us,—”If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man and able also to bridle the whole body.” (James 3:2.) He then goes on to give the illustration of the horse’s bridle which although small in itself is able to determine the course of the whole animal, and of the ship’s helm, which also is not of significant dimensions, but is able to control the course of the whole vessel. So too, the tongue can set the course for human progress, for good or evil and James counsels believers to seek that wisdom which is from above to guide both our words and our works, for that wisdom is “first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.” (James 3:17.) These surely are the qualities we need in our speech.

Despite the waywardness of the tongue, the word in season is a rich opportunity for Christian witness. As the lovely consecration hymn tells us this aspect of our lives has also been dedicated to God’s service

“Take my lips and let them be
Moved with messages from Thee.
Take my voice and let it bring
Honour always to my King.”

To neglect such an opportunity for service will deprive us of blessing. It may mean great loss to one we might well have helped along life’s way.

How often we see the wonderful floral display at a funeral service and wonder how much more pleasure the gesture could have given to the one while he or she could have appreciated it. So with the word of comfort or of encouragement or of edification, how easy it is to leave it until too late. “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath” (Eph. 4:26), is a sound principle, highlighting that tomorrow may indeed be too late, and the root of bitterness that might today have been eradicated may live on to blight another day or perhaps to remain unerased. So today, the Lord may call upon any of us to be ready to speak with soothing power, a word in season as from Him to weary ones in needful hour, and we need to be ever ready to obey and faithfully carry out His call to us.

“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Matt. 12:34), and hence our words will testify how closely we are seeking daily, by His grace, to live near to Him, to do and speak His will alone, and how we are seeking the heavenly wisdom to flavour our every thought, word and deed. All of us have been richly blessed as we have heard the testimony of many a tried and tested saint of God, speaking from the depth of personal experience of God’s grace and daily keeping power. Many of these have never stood before an audience, but they have been richly used to bless others as they have recounted how God’s grace has sustained them and we have echoed the sentiments of the author of Proverbs as we have listened and meditated on their words,—”The tongue of the just is as choice silver . . . The lips of the righteous feed many.” (Prov. 10:20, 21.) We need the same personal experience, that out of the abundance of hearts filled with His grace and love, we may speak words of rich blessing to others.

Choice silver speaks to us of great beauty, the beauty of Christ-likeness, of Christ’s love and gentleness in our words. It speaks of purity, of silver perfectly refined, that the dross of careless or foolish expression may be thoroughly purged out and leave only “that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” (Eph. 4:29.) Again, choice silver speaks to us of rich value, that what we have to say may in no way be empty or frivolous nor have any element of hypocrisy, but be wholly sincere and precious, being the vehicle for the message we have heard of God and of which we ourselves

have been fully persuaded.

The choice silver referred to in the text may possibly refer to the household treasures that would be brought out on some special occasion perhaps to set before an honoured guest. These treasures would be jealously guarded and kept spotless, to be brought out at the appropriate time for the joy both of guest and owner.

With the Psalmist, our prayer may well be —"Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips" (Psa. 141:3), that we may be preserved from saying anything that may dishonour our Saviour, or in any way stumble another in the Christian way. In Luke 21:15, Christ promised His followers that in the hour of severest trial, He would give them a mouth and wisdom which all their adversaries should not be able to gainsay or resist. It was not in rehearsing what they should say, but in constant trust in the Lord and waiting on Him, that their hearts might be ready and prepared to be the vessel for the words. Surely this is the principle for all life's situations. If the heart is fully attuned and filled with the love of God, then our words will be also imbued with the sweet influences of our Saviour's character.

It has been said that all our words should pass three tests and unless they can pass all three, then it is better they be left unsaid.—Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary'?

For the Christian, truth is not the negative quality of being not false, but it must be the whole truth from every angle. Many statements that are quite true are completely misleading, but the Christian's words must not only be true, they must be fair to all concerned, not omitting any facet of the truth. If there is any doubt, then the words cannot pass this test.

Again our words need to be measured against the standards of perfect love so well outlined in 1 Cor. 13, for love is kind and suffers long, is not easily provoked and thinketh no evil. How easy it is to fall short on these counts and to believe the worst of others. How important it is also that we be sure that God is really calling us to speak. We may feel it is essential for us to point out something that *is* wrong but unless it is the Lord's commission it cannot prosper and may well work mischief, which would be far from our desires. On the other hand, if we are assured our Father is calling us to speak, we need not be ashamed but with boldness and in love we should carry out His bidding, at all times watching carefully lest in any way we stumble another, especially those whom the Lord speaks of as His little ones.

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." (Col. 4:6.) Here the lovely quality of grace is again commended, the grace so evidenced in our Saviour, the embodiment of love and kindness towards others. The thought of seasoning with salt is also very appropriate, so that our words may have rich flavour, that they may have that touch of individuality in them. This is often what impresses us—the personal touch in one another's words, as used by our Heavenly Father.

Our desire then is that our Father's love and wisdom may guide our every thought and word aright and that we may glorify Him in every thought, word and deed. We need also that our judgments of others' words be kind and generous, giving them the benefit of any doubt, remembering our own frailty and hesitancy of speech and how easy it is ourselves to convey a false impression altogether.

Let us take every opportunity to praise God for His love and care and to glorify our Saviour in the daily round and common task. As we love to serve Him and minister to others, let us resolve by His grace that our words will be words of choice silver, beautiful, pure and rich in blessing to others in the Christian way.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual *songs*, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father, by Him.” (Col. 3:16, 17.)

Convention News.

THE Annual Convention held in Melbourne over the recent Christmas period proved to be a very helpful and profitable season of refreshing for all able to attend the four-day gatherings. We lift up our hearts in thankfulness to the Lord for His blessings bestowed throughout the assemblies; thanks is also due to the dear friends who contributed to make the occasion so helpful. It was a pleasure again to welcome brethren from South Australia, N.S. Wales, A.C.T., Tasmania and Victoria. The presence of these friends contributed considerably to the benefits received.

During the Convention three Bible Studies were conducted, fifteen addresses were delivered by the brethren, three Fellowship Meetings and one film session completed a full programme. The Scriptural passages studied were 2 Pet. 1:2-8 ; Rev. 3:7-13; and Heb. 13:10-16.

The study in 2 Pet. 1:2-8 provided very helpful instruction from the faithful apostle as to the desired progress in the development of the Christian life for all who have “obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” The adding to the Christian’s faith all the characteristics described in verses 5-7 may seem a very formidable accomplishment, but each one walking in the steps of the Master should realise that all progress attained is possible only by completely committing one’s life to the power of God, by which He is able and willing to work in such to will and to do His good pleasure.

The passage in Rev. 3:7-13, being the message to the church in Philadelphia, impressed upon us the Lord’s great care and oversight of His people throughout the Gospel Age. This is the 6th message to the churches by the Son of man “walking amidst the candlesticks” (churches ; see Rev. 1:13, 20). The fact that the risen Lord is so fully supervising in the assemblies of His people was seen as a great comfort to all who are truly consecrated to His service. It was realised that this message to the church in Philadelphia, as with the other six messages, was directed to the particular local church. Asia Minor in the first instance.

Secondly, the very contents of the passage impressed that it had a prophetic application the period of church history covering the Reformation. No doubt the assurance that this message came from—“He that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no Man shutteth. . . and behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it’ ,” engendered great courage in the hearts of the Reformers as they were inspired to proclaim the truths then due, despite the threats and persecutions of the great Papal system in particular. The further assurance from the Lord—“I will make them of the synagogue of Satan . . . to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee,” which will be fulfilled in the kingdom age, must have been most stimulating to those noble Reformers and others “holding up their hands” in the service of the Lord and His truth.

Thirdly, it was seen that this important message to Philadelphia has an individual application to all the followers of the Master throughout the Gospel Age to our own day, the main lesson being that God will give strength and support to all who take up their cross and seek to serve Him in spirit and truth against all the oppositions of the Adversary and his adherents, whether in the “synagogue of Satan” or any of the branches of Babylon. The promise, “Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown,” was seen to be very important to each one individually, as also was the assurance to the

overcomers in verse 12, even to those who “bath an ear” and who give due heed to “what the spirit saith unto the churches.”

In the study in Heb. 13:10-16 it was seen that the apostle was contrasting the real sacrifices for sin during this Gospel Age with the typical sacrifices performed for Israel by their high priest during the Jewish Age. In the type, the sin-offerings were carried out annually, on the Day of Atonement, impressing the lesson—”In those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year; for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” (Heb. 10:3, 4.) The antitypical Day of Atonement embraces the whole of this Gospel Age, and just as the bodies of the bullock and the goat were “burned without the camp”—completely consumed—during that 24-hour Day of Atonement, so the antitypical bullock (Christ) and the goat (the church) complete their sacrifices during this Gospel Age.

Just as our great High Priest, Jesus, “that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate”—endured the contradiction of sinners against himself—so the apostle exhorts, “Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.” - The same apostle explains—”For in that he (Jesus) died, he died unto (for) sin once . • . Likewise reckon ye also yourselves (the church)) to be dead indeed unto (for) sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 6:10, 11.) This means the fulfilling of our consecration vows to be dead with Christ, “for here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.” In other words, like Jesus, our citizenship is in heaven, for we are merely sojourning here, as pilgrims and strangers, with our hearts and affections set on things above.

The importance of clearly understanding the difference between the doctrines of the Ransom and the Sin-offerings was brought out during this study. The Ransom refers to the valuable price paid by Christ for the salvation of the church and the world—”He is the propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins; and not for our’s only, but also for the sins of the world.” (1 John 2:2.) On the other hand, the Sin-offerings show how the ransom-price is made applicable to take away the sins of the world—firstly, for the church and household of faith only during this Gospel Age, and later for the world of mankind when the church’s sacrifice is completed. This procedure shows how the church’s sacrifice can be “holy, acceptable unto God,” because covered by the valuable price of the ransom, and thus constituting the church the secondary sin-offering, antitype of the goat, which followed the bullock (Christ) in the typical sin-offerings.

The subjects for the addresses by the brethren were—”The Light Shineth in Darkness”; “Thoughts on Psalm 27:1”» “Redemption”; “The Story of Joseph”; “Words of Choice Silver”; “God’s Inheritance in the Saints”; “Oneness with the Father and the Son”; “Our Belief in Eternal Life”; “Abiding in Christ in the Latter Days”; “Thoughts on Gen. 3:14, 15”; “Promise and Assurance of Divine Guidance”; “Exceeding and Abounding”; and “When the Son of Man Cometh.” Each of these addresses had a message of help and encouragement from the Scriptures, two of which appear in full in this issue of the “Paper.” “The Convention Notes also contain a brief outline of each address, as well as a review of other sessions of the Convention, and are available to all desiring same.

The three Fellowship Meetings were also helpful, two of these allowing praise and testimony during which a number of the brethren expressed thankfulness for the Lord’s blessing and guidance in their lives over the year past.

At the closing Fellowship meeting the Greeting from the Convention, contained in Heb. 13:12-16, was sent to all who had sent messages to the Assembly and which were gladly received on the first day of Convention. The Hymn Session was also enjoyable, when a full hour was used to offer up praise to God for all His benefits bestowed along the Christian way.

On the Saturday evening the screening of the TV film “The Unknown God,” produced in U.S.A., by the

brethren of "The Dawn" and kindly loaned by a Brother in Queensland was much appreciated. The presentation of the truth message by this film was excellent, each of the three brethren speaking very well, and those representing the Apostle

Paul and Timothy being really inspiring with their questions and Scriptural quotations. The earnestness and zeal with which they acted their parts, and the deliberate, quiet and distinct manner of speech was a good lesson and example to all who are privileged to speak for the Lord and His truth. It was nice to have a good assembly of the brethren and their friends for this screening.

The closing feature of the Convention was the usual Love Feast during which each shook hands while partaking of the symbol of cake and singing the hymn, "Blest Be the Tie that Binds." Then followed the hymn "God be with you till we meet again," and a prayer of thanksgiving and request for God's keeping power to be over all His people concluded this helpful 1963 Melbourne Convention.

Notes covering the Melbourne Christmas convention have been prepared by one of our brethren, and are available free upon application to this office.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Easter Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on the 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th of March, in the Leavitt Hall, Wakefield Street, Adelaide. Further information from the secretary —Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Edwardstown, South Australia.

When the Son of Man Cometh.

(Convention Address)

It is impossible for anyone to read God's Word, particularly the New Testament, without being apprised of the importance of the second advent of Christ. Professing Christians who ridicule this doctrine are unworthy of the fellowship of true Christians. No kingdom of God will ever function on earth before the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, yet by far the majority of those who profess Christianity have other views.

To Bible students such conclusions and beliefs are so manifestly wrong that they feel it is a waste of time to contend about them; we would let those holding them go their own way until a day of more powerful and general enlightenment comes, as come it will.

There are, however, many people, a few in the church systems, but mostly belonging to other little groups and sects, who sincerely believe in the second coming, yet they seem irrational in their reasoning concerning the event. These folk, in common with ourselves, agree that signs of the times are the important factor in looking for the Lord's return. When certain things happen we are to conclude that the time is ripe.

Two things, however, cause separation amongst such believers—the manner of our Lord's return, and the work He is to accomplish when He comes.

Almost everybody seems to know about the theory of Christ returning in the form of a man, descending from heaven in a moment of time and being visible to all. Though there are some views more rational than others, the majority of these believers expect Christ to return thus, and immediately gather Christians and take them up to heaven, and then wreak vengeance upon the rest of mankind in catastrophic judgments. One prominent sect believes the earth will then remain empty of all habitation for 1000 years. It avails little to try and reason out these various points of view ; we would prefer to state what we believe is well substantiated by God's Word.

While the majority believe that the "signs" so abundantly set forth are to be noted as signs of the near approach of the Lord's coming, we believe that they herald the fact that the Lord has already come.

The most important factor in establishing such a thought or belief is the correction of a wrong translation of *a* word which appears in the New Testament in connection with the Lord's second advent. It is the Greek word "parousia," the correct meaning of which is firmly established by scholars as "presence," whereas the Authorized Version translators have used the word "coming".

Four important texts in Matthew where this word is used are Matt. 24:3,—". . . What shall be the sign of thy presence, and of the end of the age?" Also verses 27, 37, 39, (read each corrected). We conclude therefore that certain prophecies fulfilling are to be taken as signs that the Lord has come. Our friends who look for the Lord's coming visible to the natural eye of man must have difficulty harmonizing all the Scriptures relative to the second advent.

The Apostle's declaration that He comes "as a thief in the night" surely suggests a "secret" coming and then a period of presence. His presence first will be secret to all except those who rightly divide the word of truth and watch in the right manner.

There are other Greek words also used in connection with the second advent which seem to clearly show that Christ's second presence will be revealed gradually to all men. First, the watching saints only will be

apprised of His presence, but later, as a result of more comprehensive fulfilments of prophecy, an ever increasing number of earth's inhabitants will know He is present and causing the changes in the world. These later, fuller revelations of the Lord's presence we need not be too concerned with ; the most important matter for the Christian living in these days is to know of His secret presence. Signs of the times and fulfilment of prophecy are the only means whereby we shall know.

Our Lord never promised to appear in any miraculous way to any of His followers ; He merely told us what to expect at the end of the age", and that when we should see "all these things" happening, our conclusion that He was present would be quite justified.

It would entail considerable work to table every detail of fulfilment of prophecy in relation *n our Lord's second presence, but some of the main points are presented as follows—Wars and rumours of wars, nations rising up against each other in exceptional manner, a decline in morality world-wide, a break down of parental control of children and lack of respect for parents by children, deterioration of homest dealing in practically all walks of life, mankind becoming increasingly pleasure loving and tending more and more to a craze for speed lacking all contentment despite the provision of labor-saving devices, etc., never before known. Further, the various church systems in a defensive fight against a new philosophy formed by mankind who are enlightened by access to knowledge upon all subjects never before known; earthly governments striving to retain the sanctions of the church they have enjoyed for so long, yet anxious not to become involved in the creedal disputes that threaten—verily the heavens passing away with a great noise, melting with the fervent heat and the earth and its works being burned up. (2 Pet. 3:10.)

There are also the remarkable happenings of the last few decades in connection with the establishment of the new State of Israel and the return of the Jews to their Homeland.. Many people do not see any fulfilment of prophecy in any of these unusual world occurrences, saying it is merely history repeating itself ; thus how true are our Lord's words in Matt. 24:37-39; and Luke 17:26, 27. As it as in the days of Noah (in the days when he preached a coming catastrophe and showed his belief in his preaching by preparing the ark during a period of over 100 years) so shall it be in the days of the Son of man. In the days of our Lord's secret presence the world' goes on just the same, planting and reaping, buying and selling, building and marrying just as it always did, and there is nothing improper in these things. The point our Lord made for the benefit of His disciples was "they knew not." In all their activities the world is engrossed, without any knowledge of the terrific changes soon to occur. The Lord's people too may well be obliged to continue a normal course' in providing a living and things decent in the sight of men, a home to live in and clothing to wear, etc., but it cannot be said of them that they "know not" concerning the special day in which they live.

Recently, a helpful illustration concerning God's people at the end of the age came to our notice. Written by Mr. H. G. Guinness who' lived many years ago, it is necessary to abbreviate and alter the text slightly, but we hope to present his helpful thought. He said in part—"We are in the position of travellers, approaching a large and unknown city, at the end of a long railway journey. We are aware of the distance to be traversed, of the stations to be passed on the way and the time required for the transit. The milestones have shown that we are rapidly nearing our goal, the time the journey was to occupy has elapsed and the station just passed shows it was the last but one. Yet the terminus in a large, strange city has several platforms, each separated by short distances; the train may pull up at one or two, yet there is still a little way to the main platform where the train comes to its final stand. We are ignorant of the exact locality in a *great* metropolis, and hardly know at which platform we shall be met by our waiting friends. Still we have no hesitation in making preparations to leave the carriage and can say to each other, 'We are here at last.' If one platform is not the right one, the next may be ; it is easy to be patient if there is any momentary disappointment, for the main result is certain and the end close at hand."

A brief comment on Rev. 1:7 may be desirable in reference to our Lord's coming; it says, "every eye shall see him." We believe this does not refer to a visible coming, but that the real meaning of the word "see" is "discern". This thought has been challenged by some who point out that the word used is "opsetai" and not "horao" which should be used if mental discernment is the thought. It is revealed, however, that both these words are used in the Bible with both meanings, the context dictating the proper meaning. In John 3:36 and Luke 3:6 and other similar Scriptures the word "opsetai" is used. In the Old Testament, Zech. 9:5 is an important text in this connection. In these and other texts it is clear that the reference is not to persons seeing anything with their literal eye-sight but clearly suggests the thought of mental discernment. A student has pointed out that some, taking Rev. 1:7 literally, could hardly explain how those who pierced Jesus could literally see Him return. They would have to be resurrected first, and all our understanding of the plan of God is to the effect that Jesus must return before any resurrection takes place. It is true, however, that those who pierced Jesus will in due time discern that He is on the throne, and that they did Him a gross injustice in treating Him as they did on the cross, and we hope they will be prepared to show desire to amend their thinking and ways.

The cry of the Lord's saints down through the Gospel Age has been, "How long, O Lord, how long," for it has been largely a suffering experience during the reign of sin and evil; perhaps the cry has risen louder since the train pulled into the city and the travellers wait for the last platform.

In this connection the parable of Luke 18:18 is very interesting and reassuring. It is spoken, we see, following the record of the coming of the Son of man, as shown in the last verses of the preceding chapter when the present Lord takes one here and one there and gives them understanding, so that they change from the class who "know not" to those who are enlightened with present truth—the keen-eyed ones.

Then our Lord speaks a parable to impress that at this time particularly we should pray and not faint. The widow who came to the judge persistently had an adversary, someone who was unjustly tormenting or persecuting her, and she sought relief. At last, though he still did not feel obligated to do so, the judge befriended the widow and relieved her distress. He did it for selfish reasons—she was wearying him with her complaints and he would fain get rid of her, and the Lord says in verse 6 that we should note well that fact. How forceful is the application of verses 7 and 8. Like the widow, God's elect, the church, are crying unto Him continually for deliverance from the oppressions of Satan and his agents—their adversaries. Shall not God avenge His elect? He certainly will, in due time, when His purpose is complete and the time ripe.

As speedily as possible the Lord will avenge His people, and when the Son of man cometh, in the days of His secret presence, deliverance is right at hand. But at this time, "when the Son of man cometh (is secretly present), shall he find this belief on the earth?" (Diag. translation).

Ah, yes, will the church grow weary of waiting?. Does she complain and show desire to turn aside to other things because of the seeming "tarrying"? Other disciples earlier in history felt the Lord is at hand. True enough. A short life time is all that precedes the Lord's coming, so to speak, for any Christian. When James said, "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh," (chapter 5:8), he had 3 years to live. When in Rom. 13:12 Paul said, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand," he had 6 years to live. When Peter (1 Pet. 4:7) said, "The end of all things is at hand," he had but 6 years to live. As each passed into the sleep of death it brought them right up to the Lord's second presence, so to speak, for the intervening years sleeping in death meant nothing at all to them. Even if the present order should continue another 50 years, the end of all things respecting the present order is as close as the span of life we shall each individually enjoy.

The kingdom is not tarrying; it is surely coming in God's appointed way and right on time. We may prepare to leave the carriage; we will soon arrive at the last platform. God is about to avenge His elect speedily. Let us pray in the stress of the last moments and not faint.

FIRST PONTIFF SINCE PETER TO VISIT THE HOLY LAND

UNDER the above and similar headings the press has been giving detailed accounts of the recent visit of Pope Paul to the Holy Land. One report stated—"The 66-year-old Pope is the first to use a plane (a DC8 jet) and the first to visit the Holy Land since Peter, first Pope, left Jerusalem in 42 AD."

The claim that the Apostle Peter was the first Pope is wholly without Scriptural authority. At no time did the Lord ever exalt one apostle above others in a place of authority, and Peter beautifully described his place of service for the Lord as one of many elders in the church,—“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, . . .

Feed the flock of God which is among you. . . . Neither as being Lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.” (1 Pet. 5:1-3.)

During Pope Paul’s short stay in the Holy Land much publicity was given to the many Masses he celebrated at various notable places connected with our Lord’s first advent. Most people today, becoming used to hearing of the Masses, think of them merely as religious services, and likely feel that the Pope is a very devoted and holy man, and such a visit and association with other heads of churches is showing a friendly spirit which must do some good in this world of discord and uncertainty. What is not generally known is, that the Mass celebrated by Pope or priest is really dishonoring the Lord to the extent of being an abomination in His sight. The following brief explanation of the Mass is helpful in this connection

“After the apostles and their immediate successors had fallen asleep—somewhere about the third century—Roman Catholicism was becoming influential in the Church. One of its false doctrines was to the effect that while Christ’s death secured a cancellation of the past guilt, it could not offset personal transgressions after the believer had come into relationship with Christ—after baptism; but that a fresh sacrifice was necessary for such sins. On the basis of this error was built the doctrine of the Mass, which was considered a fresh sacrifice of Christ for the particular sins of the individual for whom the Mass is offered, or sacrificed ;—the fresh sacrifice of Christ being made to appear reasonable by the claim that the officiating priest had the power to turn the bread and wine into the actual body and actual blood of Christ; and then, by breaking the wafer, to break or sacrifice the Lord afresh for the sins of the individual for whom the

Mass is performed. From the divine standpoint this teaching and practice was an abhorrence in the sight of the Lord—the abomination which maketh desolate.’—Dan. 11:31; 12:11; Matt. 24:15.”

GENESIS DISPROVED BY SCIENCE

THE above claim headed a news report recently from Perth, W.A., which stated in part, — “Christians should ask themselves whether it was necessary to believe that man was made in God’s image, Dr. W. D. L. Ride told the Adult Education Board summer school. He said there was no biological evidence to suggest that this was so or that Adam ever existed.”

Such statements by educated men really reveal how little they know of the truths of the Bible. The inspired Apostle Paul, especially chosen by the risen Christ, quoted the Genesis account of the creation of man in his masterly chapter on the resurrection—”As it is written (in Gen. 2:7), The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” (1 Cor. 15:45.) If, as Dr. Ride declares, Adam did not exist as the first man on the earth, then he did not fall into sin and bring about the death penalty upon the human family ; hence, Christ’s sacrifice would not be required according to this “science falsely so called.” Well did the Apostle write —”The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it *is* the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” (1 Cor. 1:18, 19.)

Passover Memorial. 1964

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 26th March. It is the privilege of all appreciating our Lord’s request—”This do in remembrance of me”—to keep the observance at the appropriate season of the year. Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these free from this office; early application should be made, stating the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Pilgrim Way Ended

AFTER suffering a severe illness for some months our elderly Sister Osgood of Sydney finished the earthly way on December 27th last, having rejoiced in the knowledge and appreciation of the truth for over fifty years.

Being one of those drawn to the truth when the message was brought to Australia early in this century, our dear Sister Osgood was zealous for the Lord and His cause, and ever sought to comfort and encourage those who were often in isolation, as well as assisting in the work generally, as she had opportunity. Being gifted in ability to correspond on the truths of God’s Word, this talent was used over the years to good purpose amongst the scattered friends.

Sincere sympathy is extended to the members of our Sister Osgood’s family who will be comforted with the assurance of the gracious inheritance provided in God’s wonderful plan of salvation for all who, like our dear Sister, sought to walk in the steps of the Lord Jesus, by His grace and strength. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them.”

Books Available.

“Most Holy Faith”-22/- “God’s Promises Come True”-22/-

“Emphatic Diaglott,” New Testament-19/”Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages-11/- . “Tabernacle Shadows”-6/9.

“The Book of Books,” Reviewing the Bible as a whole-11/-.

“The Divine Plan of the Ages,” Cloth bound-5/6; paper covers-3/6.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy”-1/6. “Manner of Christ’s Return”-1/6. “Christ’s Return”-1/6.

“Some of the Parables”-1/6.

“Hope Beyond the Grave”-1/6 “God and Reason”-1/6 “Where Are the Dead “-1/-.

The above prices include postage on single copies; more than one copy less in proportion to postage rates.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 V. Sundays 10 a.m.

Printed by Hailing & Powell Pty. Ltd., Lytton St.. East Brunswick