



Volume XXVI. No. 2 MELBOURNE, 1st FEBRUARY, 1943 Price—Twopence Halfpenny

The Message to Laodicea.

(Rev. 3:14-21.) (CONVENTION ADDRESS.)

THE message to Laodicea—the seventh or final message to the churches—is a sad message. It seems the saddest of all, because of the advantages which Laodicea possessed. Viewed from the historical aspect, no church since the days of the church of Ephesus had such advantages in its commencement. The Ephesian period had all the advantage of being in touch with the apostles, and the effect of all their love and zeal. Those of Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira and Sardis were oppressed and persecuted, and deprived of the true teachings of Christ and the Apostles, while their elders, with few exceptions, became lords over God's heritage, and a hindrance to true godliness, instead of a help. Philadelphia commenced following the Sardis condition of deadness, with what might be termed the darkest prospects.

Yet Philadelphia is the brightest spot in church history, and received no reproof, but only commendation from the Lord.

Then comes the Laodicean period, with all the happy prospect which Philadelphia bequeathed—increasing light upon God's Word, wonderful help to its study, all the advantages of education and the perfecting of the printing press, Bibles for all who wished them, with Bible Dictionaries, Concordances, Studies and Commentaries by so many devoted and capable writers. The prospect of the early and middle of the nineteenth century was surely such as never had been, for the spread of true Bible knowledge and development of true Christianity. Contrary to all the bright hopes, and in sad contrast to the happy progress of the Philadelphian era, this last epoch of church history is the saddest of all. Instead of the continuance of the progress encouraged by increasing advantages, this church declines into coldness and indifference in self assurance, and boasts in her riches until she becomes valueless to the Lord, and we find the great Protestant system cast off because of falling away, just as the great Papal Roman Church previously had been.

The Church at Laodicea, situated not far from Ephesus and Colosse, had been found with conditions and characteristics suitable for symbolising this seventh period of church history.

Laodicea was a rich city at the time when John received the message, and had been so for some time. It had suffered some severe earthquakes, but her merchants were rich, and soon restored the damage, and the city existed down to about the 13th century, when it appears to have been destroyed by the Tartars. It

is now said that there are no signs of either houses, churches, or mosques, though the grandeur of the city that was, is well attested by the ruins. The Apostle Paul makes mention of the Church at Laodicea in his epistle to Colosse, and that he had written an epistle also to it, which he advises should be read at Colosse, and the letter to Colosse was also to be read at Laodicea.

Riches have never proved to be helpful to the Christian profession; poverty, or at least but simple moderate pro. vision for life's necessities, has always been the condition in which Christianity has prospered mostly, whether in the church or in the individual. To Smyrna, to whom there was no reproof, but a message of loving sympathy and promise of eternal riches, the Lord said, "I know thy affliction and poverty, but thou art rich." This church at the City of Laodicea was evidently rich in this world's goods, but it became poverty-stricken in respect of the real riches. Thus is seen the wisdom in the Lord's selection of His Church, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world and things that are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence." (1 Cor. 1:26-28.) "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom, which He has promised to them that love Him?" (Jas. 2 5.)

The One who gives this message to John is here described as "The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14). The description of the One sending the message seems to be appropriate to the conditions existing in the church addressed. Here the Lord is described in contrast to the things of which He complains to the church of this period.

The Amen." This appears to be the only place in the Scriptures that this word is used as a Title; it is generally used as an expression of affirmation or confirmation as in the words "verily," "surely," or "be it so." The word, is given in Dr. Strong's Concordance as meaning firm, trustworthy, true. This church was not firm in faith or doctrine or practice; it was neither hot nor cold, but luke-warm, compromising, and carried away with its affluence. This very description of the Lord, or the One who "walks amidst the candlesticks" examining the churches and noticing their works, is at once a reproof. "The Amen" —the firm one, firm for righteousness and truth, "the faithful and true witness," would call attention to the unsatisfactory state of this church

Our Lord declared before Pilate, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." "We are His witnesses," says Peter (Acts 5:32). For the Lord had said, "But when the Comforter is come whom I will send you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, it shall testify of Me, and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning." (John 15:26-27.) Again in Matt. 24:14, we read "This gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." The Apostle Paul, in 1 Tim. 3:15, speaks of "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." It is the privilege of the church to carry the Gospel message, to "hold forth the Word of Life," as the Lord has said, "Ye are the light of the world," and thus it is that the seven periods of the church's history are represented as seven churches, each being a candlestick—a light-bearer. The first church was threatened that if it did not repent the Lord would come and remove its candlestick. That is, that it would not be permitted to further represent "the light of the world"—the truth.

Laodicea was not proving a faithful and true witness, and so "the faithful and true witness" came to reprove and to take away her candle-stick, and cast off a careless, indifferent, worldly luke-warm church.

"The beginning of the creation of God." While in other Scriptures we learn that the Logos was the first of all creation, the only-begotten Son of God—God's direct creation—and that then all things were made by Him, as God's master workman, it would seem that this statement would also more particularly refer to

the fact that Jesus Christ was the first of the New Creation, which is always spoken of as the creation of God. So Jesus was begotten of God at Jordan, and He was raised from the tomb by the power of the Father, “whom God raised from the dead.” So it is that the church is the work of the Father. It is the Father who calls or invites it, “no man cometh unto the Son except the Father draw him.” It is God that worketh in you to will and to do His good pleasure.” (See also 2 Cor. 1:21-22.)

The Church of Christ, then, is the New Creation of God, and Jesus is the first, indeed He is the “Author and Finisher of our faith.” Who is the image of the invisible God, the First-born of every creature . . . and He is the Head of the Body, the Church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.” (Col. 1:16, 18.)

The Lord Jesus was the first, the beginning, of the Anointed company, this New Creation, and the Laodiceans were the last ones to have the opportunity of becoming members in the “little flock,” to whom it is “the Father’s good pleasure to give the Kingdom.” The full number of God’s elect would be completed with this, the seventh and last, church period.

“I know thy works.” These words preface each of the seven messages, and are the reminder of the fact that the Head of the church has always been fully cognisant of all the conditions of the church. What a comfort there is in this assurance to every heart that is in tune with the Lord, even though the works may be poor, for He who knows the works also knows the heart and the intention, and judges not by outward appearances. While we are seeking to please the Lord, we are just glad that He knoweth us altogether, but if our hearts are unfaithful and consent to evil works, then there could be no comfort, but rather unrest and fear to think that He knows everything.

These Laodiceans had everything of which to be ashamed, although they thought just the reverse; they thought they had everything of which to be proud. How different it was with Philadelphia. “I know thy works, thou has little strength, and hast kept the word of My patience, and hast not denied My name.” What comfort, what joy in the glad message of commendation and reward, but here this last church, with all the added opportunities, instead of receiving commendation for its love and zeal, there is stern reproof, “Thou are neither hot nor cold, thou art luke-warm, therefore I will spue thee out of My mouth,” like something nauseous, to be rejected.

What a sad condition it is to be in—to be wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked; that is surely bad enough, but when such people would be under a delusion, and think they are rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing, the sadness is intensified. This Church is blind and does not know it; it is ignorant, but thinks itself wise and full of knowledge. It is naked and is not aware of it.

What a pitiable thing it is to see even those who may know a few things assuming a position of superiority over others, in an attitude of “I’ll show you.” Generally speaking, it is those of little knowledge who so act. Those who attain any depth of knowledge are generally humbled by what they have learned, and a realisation of how much they do not know.

Laodicea has a kind of knowledge; they understand classics, sciences so-called, histories, and knowledge of a human kind; but they are blind to the deep things of God; they do not understand Spiritual things. The human sort of knowledge has puffed them up, and made them feel superior and proud, and thus unable to learn the simple truths of faith and consecration, and the beauties of God’s great Plan. “Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.”

So it is that Christendom to-day has become blind, the people are led by “blind leaders of the blind.” The clergy generally have accepted human teachings of evolution, survival of the fittest, and other Christ-

denying doctrines, and having rejected the necessity of the cross of Christ, they stand naked in their own unrighteousness. For if such doctrines as the gradual evolution of mankind from a lower to a higher and more perfect condition be true, there never was a fall from the perfect to a lower, and instead of a condemnation for original sin, man would surely have merited commendation for its steady progression. If there was no fall, no condemnation, then there was no need for a redemption, and the cross of Christ would be unnecessary.

How true are the Lord's words: "If the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch." (Matt. 15:14.)

And again, "If the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness." (Matt 6:23.) "Woe to you, blind guides" (Matt. 23:16.) Exactly the same condition which prevailed among the leaders in Israel, the Scribes and priests, Sadducees and Pharisees, has been reached to-day. How strong are the words of Isaiah 56:10-11, "His watchmen are blind. They are ignorant (that is, concerning the understanding of Gods purposes and spiritual matters), they are dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough; they are shepherds which can never understand; they all look to their own way, everyone for his gain from his quarter."

No wonder that with leaders seeking more their own gain, who are rich in worldly ways, but lack the true riches of truth and grace and heavenly prospects, that the people famish for lack of bread. So that while preserving the form of godliness and morality, they do not understand the narrow way of life; they have become confused respecting the necessity of the cross, and the robe of righteousness, and they are described in this apocalyptic message as being poor, blind and naked.

Christendom as a whole, Roman Catholic and Protestant, is surely rich in the wealth of this world, possessing beautiful cathedrals, churches, and institutions, but yet she is poor concerning the real riches of Christ, and what are all the good things of earth, which are but for so short a time, compared to the eternal riches promised to the over-comers, to those who make their calling and election sure to membership in the only true church, the mystical body of Christ.

As it was in the days of the Apostles, the Israelites indeed were called out of the Jewish system, or, in other words, the harvest time had come, and the separating of the wheat from the chaff was in progress, just so to-day the true Christians are exhorted to separate from this "wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked" condition that is Christendom.

The Lord counsels these "to buy gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eye salve that thou mayest see."

The gold represents Divine blessings, and the exceeding great and precious promises, that we might be made partakers of the Divine nature. This can only be attained by the surrender of all human hopes and aims, only by consecration, a full devotion of self to God, offering ourselves as willing sacrifices, wholly and acceptable to God, because of the white raiment, which represents the righteousness of Jesus Christ, by which we are able to approach God. By the merit of our Redeemer, all our blemishes and unintentional sins and weaknesses are covered.

"And eye salve to anoint thine eyes that thou mayest see." If we only get our sight right, we shall see the beauties of God's great plan, the exceeding riches of His grace. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the

dead.” (Eph. 1:18-20.)

We shall see how false a foundation the Laodicean Church—Christendom of to-day—has been building up. We shall see how the doctrines of evolution, spiritualism, and eternal torture, etc., are in opposition to the cross of Christ, and how if we accept them we disregard the Cross of Christ, which is the only means of atonement. We should realise how wretched and miserable and blind and naked is the condition of the Laodicean Church, and the necessity of buying the real riches of Christ, the golden promises, and the white raiment of righteousness, the covering merit of Christ.

“Jesus, Thy spotless righteousness
My raiment is, my glorious dress,
‘Midst heavenly hosts in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.”

(To be continued)

Convention News.

THE Convention held by the Melbourne Class over the four days of the recent Christmas season proved another very helpful occasion. The blessing of the Lord was very fully realised by all gathered together in His name, and the brethren are very grateful to God for all His favours in connection with the season of refreshing.

On account of the restrictions on holidays and interstate travel, fewer visiting friends were in attendance than in previous years, but it was a pleasure to have some brethren present from country parts of Victoria, as well as two members from Canberra.

, Following the words of welcome and appropriate praise and prayer to our heavenly Father, Son the opening day a Bible study on the passage of Scripture, Heb. 10:19-25, proved a very helpful session.

On each of the days of Convention a Bible study was conducted, and the portions of Scripture selected, in addition to the one mentioned above, were as follows:— Matt. 25:1-13; 1 Pet.. 4:7-13 and Psa. 121. Examination of these passages at some length provided much refreshing on various truths of God’s Word for all able to attend these studies. It is very helpful to have the expressions from all the brethren gathered together, and it has been proved that the Bible studies are most encouraging to the individual Christian, as each seeks to convey some blessing as well as receive the same from the words of life.

A number of addresses were given by the brethren, all of which served to encourage and exhort the assembly in the narrow way, special reference being made to the days in which we are living, in the harvest of this Gospel Age— indeed, in the closing days of the harvest—and the privileges we enjoy in serving the Lord, as well as the necessity for special care to be taken against the many deceptions of this day, by the Lord’s grace. The topics of the addresses were: “Upheld in the Evil Day,” “1 John 2:27,” “Col. 2:6, 7,” “Living With Christ,” “Why Do the Nations War?” “Confidence,” and “The Message to Laodicea.” The last mentioned address appears in part in this issue of “Peoples Paper,” and others will follow in the months ahead for the benefit of our readers generally.

The Praise and Testimony Meetings, the Question Meeting, and the individual fellowship between the gatherings all brought their own special benefits, making the Convention one of the most successful in the highest sense.

A number of messages of Christian love with appropriate Scripture texts were received at the Convention, and all were very much appreciated; the thoughtful remembrance of our gatherings, on the part of fellow members in the Christian way who were not able to be present, impressed again the truth that the tie that binds our hearts is one of sincere Christian love. The message from the Convention to go to all dear friends is contained in 1 Pet. 4:7-11, to which is added the Christian love from the assembly as a whole.

Our brethren in every land were remembered at the throne of grace, and especially those in the war-stricken areas, that they may find grace and strength to press along the pilgrim way, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of their faith, and thus be fitted for the wonderful inheritance to which all are called, by the Lord's goodness.

The usual Love Feast on the last evening of the Convention, and the singing of the two beautiful hymns, "Blest be the tie that binds," and "God be with you till we meet again," brought to a close this helpful season in Convention, 1942, with the hope that the benefits may bring blessings not only to those able to attend, but to all who receive some helpful thoughts from the brethren or printed page, to the Lord's praise.

Radio Witness.

OUR readers will be aware of the fact that it is now possible to spread abroad the message of truth in this land by means of the Radio, to some extent at least, through station 3GL (Geelong, Vic.).

The opening broadcast took place on Sunday night, 17th January, at 9 p.m., the subject discussed being "God's Remedy." Some favourable comment has been received both from the brethren and the listening public, and it is encouraging at the outset of this effort to know that some have received help from the truths of God's Word, heard in their own homes. The prayers of the brethren for the Lord's blessing and guidance upon this work is sincerely desired, for only He can direct and give the increase for the highest good of all with ears to hear.

As we go to press, a second Sunday night broadcast has been given, the topic being "God's New Order," and these sessions are to be continued each Sunday night at 9 p.m., as it seems good. It is expected that some weeks will elapse before the broadcasts become well known, but an amount of advertising is being undertaken in appropriate papers, as well as thousands of notices being distributed by the friends who are glad to co-operate in making these sessions known. While this is quite an expense in addition to the actual broadcasting costs, it is felt that it is really essential if the effort is to have a fair trial, and the voluntary assistance of all who are cooperating in this work is much appreciated, as unto the Lord.

The advertising circular now available has some helpful thoughts on the back; so, in distributing this, even where 3GL may not be always heard very clearly, some good is likely to be done. All interested friends are asked to send for these circulars and place them to best advantage, and thus assist as much as possible to advertise the broadcasts. As weather conditions may vary the clarity of reception in distant parts, any friends who have been disappointed in not hearing clearly may find some of the broadcasts can be heard quite well. It is to be understood that the range of 3GL is intended particularly for southern Victoria, and reception at greater distance cannot be guaranteed, though it is often quite good and clear.

It will be helpful to hear from our brethren who are listening to the broadcasting, and any suggestions towards improving the sessions generally will be gladly received.

The programme following will be heard over the air on Sunday night, 31st January, from 3GL (222 metres, 1350 k.c.), at the usual time-9 p.m.

Freedom from Fear.

ERNEST: I have been thinking somewhat lately, Frank, about one of the “Freedoms” that President Roosevelt has put on his “must” programme for the new world order.

FRANK: The President’s original list of four freedoms has been added to considerably, has it not?

ERNEST: That’s true, but I am thinking of one of the original four, which is Freedom from “fear.” Frank, I wonder if we can fully realise what a wonderful world it would be if all people could have freedom from fear? FRANK: There never has been a condition like that since Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s law.

ERNEST: You’re probably right, and as I remember the account, Adam and Eve became fearful right away; in fact, they hid themselves because of their fear, did they not?

FRANK: That’s right, but not until modern times has the evil of fear been so widespread; at least not sufficiently to cause the leaders of the nations to emphasise it as Mr. Roosevelt has done by offering the people freedom from it.

ERNEST: Frank, would you say that the widespread fear in the world to-day has anything to do with the fulfilment of Biblical prophecy?

FRANK: Yes, very definitely so. Jesus, in His great prophecy of conditions that would exist at the end of the age, lists among other things the fact that at this time men’s hearts would be failing them for fear as they look forward to the things coming upon the earth. (Luke 21:26.) And how true that is to-day.

ERNEST: Indeed it is. It’s because it is so true that we are now promised freedom from fear; I can see that all right. But, Frank, will the people ever be delivered from fear; and if so, how?

FRANK: The Bible answers, Yes.

ERNEST: President Roosevelt has it right, then.

FRANK: He has the right desire, but it remains for Divine intervention in human affairs to translate this and other noble desires into reality. Sincere and honest men of all ages have desired better conditions along all lines of human endeavour and behaviour, but apart from God’s plan, these desires, for the most part, remain in the realm of wishful thinking. However, when we accept the testimony of God’s Word as to the final outcome of present world distress, we can have freedom from fear right away.

ERNEST: How do you figure that out?

FRANK: On the basis that God has told us definitely, through His Word, that His Kingdom is soon to be established, and His will to be done on earth even as it is now done in heaven. In Isaiah 35:4 the Lord’s people who believe the Bible are authorised to say to others, “Fear not, for behold thy God cometh with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He cometh to save you.”—Isa. 35:4.

ERNEST: Does that mean that the God of the Bible is a vengeful God?

FRANK: No, it means God does not propose to permit sin and selfishness to rule forever in the earth.

There are many prophecies in the Bible which speak of the time in which we are now living as the day of God's vengeance.

ERNEST: How does that harmonise with the thought that the God of the Bible is a God of love?

FRANK: The day of God's vengeance is not a manifestation of His wrath against the people, but against the selfish institutions of the people, which He proposes to set aside in order to make room for His Kingdom. God's wrath against a selfish world order is in reality a manifestation

ERNEST: Is that why we Christians can now say to the people, "Fear not"?

FRANK: Yes. We can hold out this message of hope to mankind now. We can explain that the ultimate purpose of God in permitting the downfall of a world-order is that He may establish His Kingdom, and through that Kingdom, extend the blessings of life, liberty and happiness to the people. "He cometh to save you," is the way the prophet puts it.

ERNEST: And God's salvation of the people will be through the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, is that it?

FRANK: Yes, but remember, it was first of all necessary that Jesus die to redeem the people from death. Death, as well as fear, entered into the world because of the transgression of Divine law. Provision had to be made to set aside the death penalty before salvation could be given to the world. Since then He has been selecting His church from among all nations to reign with Him, and now that the time is near for the actual setting up of His Kingdom, Satan's world is being overthrown.

ERNEST: Well, if that is to be the final outcome of the present trouble, there is really nothing to fear. In fact, those who really believe the promises of God should rejoice.

FRANK: Quite true. As a matter of fact, Jesus said as much, declaring that when we see these things, that is, the distress of nations with perplexity, and men's hearts failing them for fear, we should lift up our heads and be encouraged. Christians do not, in fact, cannot, rejoice in human suffering, but they can rejoice when they see evidence that soon all suffering and all death is to cease.

ERNEST: According to that, then, Christ's Kingdom is to bring freedom from sickness and death, as well as freedom from fear.

FRANK: That's right. The Revelator tells us of that time, that there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things have passed away.—Rev. 21:4.

ERNEST: Frank, some time ago you called my attention to one of God's promises in which He said that none shall "molest nor make afraid," in Christ's Kingdom.

FRANK: Yes, that's right. That promise is recorded in the 4th verse of the 4th chapter of Micah. In the preceding verses we are told of the destruction of war machines, and assured that nations will then learn war no more. Then follows a promise of economic security for the whole world, when every man shall dwell under/ His own vine and fig tree. This economic security will be made so sure for all that according to the promise, "None shall molest nor make afraid."

ERNEST: That will mean the end of aggression, won't it?

FRANK: It surely will. In Isaiah 11:9 we are told that nothing will be permitted to hurt nor to destroy in that Kingdom.

ERNEST: Well, I can believe that all right. If it's the Kingdom that will be established in answer to the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, 'Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven,'" certainly no evils of any kind will be permitted. But, Frank, there's one more point I would like to mention while we are on the subject of freedom from fear, and from all the evils that are associated with it. It is this: What about fear of the hereafter? Is there also to be freedom from that fear?

FRANK: When Christ's Kingdom is ruling in the earth the whole aspect of the hereafter will be changed. We might say that the hereafter will have arrived, for not only will the obedient of that time not need to die, but it will be the time when those who have died will be raised from the dead.

ERNEST: Will that really be the hereafter of the Bible? FRANK: Yes.

ERNEST: It seems to me then that there is really nothing to fear, even now!

FRANK: Quite true. The old-age custom of frightening people into being good is one of the evils that will disappear when Christ's Kingdom is established. The God of the Bible is a God of love and mercy, and He is the God the people will worship in His new world of tomorrow.

ERNEST: But, Frank, don't you think that it has been necessary to hold the whip of fear over the people to some extent in order to hold them in check?

FRANK: Human reason has said so, but the Bible doesn't agree. The Bible holds out love as the incentive to serve and obey God. Righteousness that is based upon fear of the future is negative at the best. In Isaiah 29:13 the Lord condemns the teaching of fear toward Him, declaring that it is based upon the precepts of men.

ERNEST: It just occurred to me, Frank, that if the dead are to be brought back to life from the earth, under the favourable conditions of Christ's Kingdom, it will be a very pleasant awakening for many of them, won't it?

FRANK: Yes, for millions it will mean that for the first time they will learn that God truly is love. In the last verse of Isaiah 35 we are told that they shall return from death with songs of everlasting joy upon their heads, that they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

ERNEST: According to tradition, the resurrection was to mark the time when sorrow and sighing would just be beginning for many, isn't that true?

FRANK: But, Ernest, the best thing for us to do is to believe what the Bible says.

ERNEST: Are we to understand, then, that it doesn't really make any difference how one lives during this life, that he'll receive happiness in the next life anyway?

FRANK: No, that's not in harmony with the Bible, either. The Bible teaches that whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap; but what the Bible doesn't teach is that there is any kind of a sowing that will result in a reaping of eternal torture in a fiery hell. The Bible also teaches that one's responsibility before God is in proportion to the knowledge he possesses. In a word, God is just, and whatever punishment He administers will be commensurate with the enormity of sins and the amount of wilfulness in of His love for the people, because it is a step in the preparation for their blessing. God told Adam that he would die

if he sinned, but nowhere does the Bible authorise the holding of a threat of torment over the people in order to make them be good. The Kingdom of Christ will bring complete freedom from this sort of fear.

ERNEST: How will the Kingdom operate to correct the wrong doing of the people?

FRANK: The Bible tells us that first of all the people will be enlightened concerning God and His law. (Isa. 11:9; Zeph. 3:8.) The way of righteousness will then be made plain, the prophet tells us. (Isa. 29:18, 24.) The knowledge of God's glory will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. The books of divine Revelation will be opened that the people may know what is right and how to do it. (Rev. 20:12.) Upon the basis of this knowledge, and their reaction to it, the people will be judged. Stripes will be administered to the erring ones, and rewards of health and happiness to the obedient.

ERNEST: What about those who continue to be disobedient?

FRANK: In Acts 3:23 we are told that they will be destroyed from among the people. That will be what the Bible calls the Second death.

ERNEST: Why the "Second" death?

FRANK: The expression is used in contrast to the death that all experience because of Adam's sin. That was the first death.

ERNEST: Christ redeemed the world from that death, did He not?

FRANK: That's right, and when His Kingdom is established, and the people, the dead as well as the living are enlightened concerning Jesus and His work for them, they will have the opportunity of accepting life as a gift of God's grace through Christ. Those who do not accept, and who continue to disobey God's law, will again go into death, not because of Adam's sin, but because of their own; they will die the Second Death.—Jer. 31:29, 30.

ERNEST: From that standpoint, then, those who get everlasting life will obtain it upon the basis of their intelligent appreciation of God's love, and because divine love has inspired them to obedience.

FRANK: Yes, and thus will fear, as a frightening influence to salvation be destroyed.

Out of Babylon the Great.

A sinner, lost, and in my guilt I lay,
Although a son, devoted son of Rome;
But Jesus in His love pass'd by that way,
And now I am a child of God become.

My soul was famish'd, till I found my God;
Rome gave me nothing to supply my need.
But since I've known the merits of Christ's blood,
My soul is with the richest dainties fed.

Confession to a priest ne'er gave me peace,
But lull'd my soul to sleep in carnal ease,
Till God awoke me, in His sovereign grace,
And taught me not myself but Him to please.

And, now, my peace doth like a river flow,
Since I have known redemption, through that blood
Which makes the sinner whiter than the snow,
And constitutes him, now, a priest with God.

The rock on which my peace with God is built
Is Christ, who is God's righteousness for me ;
His precious blood, for sin, on Calvary spilt,
Is all my trust, and my security.

Lord Jesus! Thou the mighty work hast done !—
Has vanquish'd death and hell and set me free:—
Has glorified thy Father, and art gone
A place, in heaven, to prepare for me.

Thou art my only true Advocate there,
The one High Priest,—by God Thou wast ordain'd,
Nor Mary—mother of our Lord—may share
That office, which by Thee alone is claim'd.

My prayers and praises I present through Thee,
My only Priest ! my only Saviour thou!
From Romish bondage thou hast set me free,
Nor need I fear her maledictions now.

My Lord will soon His injur'd name defend,
And all corruptors of His word shall find,
When He in clouds of glory shall descend,
That they have been blind leaders of the blind.

Oh! give me grace to praise thee more and more,
That light e'er shone on my benighted soul;
Thee, only, would I love, and Thee adore,
And pray that light may shine from pole to pole.

Lord ! bring Thine own from 'neath her blinding
power,
Her superstitions, and her priestly thrall;
Ere Thou on her Thine indignation pour,
From earth sweep Babylon—both great and small.

—"London Times."

Passover Memorial, 1943.

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death falls this year on the evening of April 18th, according to the Jewish date. Sunday evening April 18th will therefore be the appropriate time for the' brethren to celebrate the Memorial of Christ's death.

Correspondence.

31st December, 1942.

Dear Brother in Christ,

Greetings in the Name of our dear Redeemer.

The New Year at hand is an appropriate time to fill our minds with good resolves. The passing year has been to me one of very rich blessing, and truly one can say, "Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness." This expression from the Psalmist seems to us very appropriate at this time, in view of the very many special blessings received during the Convention. How good the Lord is to His trusting people. We should be very much encouraged to press on steadily and faithfully in His service during the new incoming year. "His compassions fail not. They are new every morning, great is Thy faithfulness." (Lam. 3:22-23.)

So we just wish to send to you our message of love and good-will for the New Year; trusting the Lord to bless our experiences and daily lessons to us, so that we may each one continue to so abide in Christ and in the love of God that we may bring forth "much fruit" to the glory of God, and ultimately be privileged to hear the Master's words of commendation: "Well done . . . enter into the joys of thy Lord."

Be assured of our continued fervent prayers for the Lord's blessing upon our feeble and united efforts to hold forth the word of life. We trust His blessing will go richly with the message over the air in this land, as it has done in other parts; and may the dear ones whose consecrated hearts and voices will speak His message have wisdom and grace so that the words of comfort may reach many hearts.

There are many, many people around us to-day who I feel sure can be helped, and while our main work is to gather the ripe wheat we must not neglect the opportunity of witnessing to the truth to all who have an ear to hear. Anyway, we do not know where the grains of wheat are to be found. All we can do is to sound out the message as the Lord gives the opportunity and grace and strength to do so. He will see to it that those in the right heart condition are reached.

With much love in the Lord,

Yours in the best of bonds.

Victoria, 17/1/43. Frank and Ernest,

Dear Sirs,

Please send me the booklet and talk broadcast from 3GL.

I am very thankful for the talk and I pray it will bear fruit, for it is something very needful to bring the people to a real understanding of God and His plan for mankind.

May God bless the work.

I am, yours sincerely.

To Frank and Ernest, January 18th, 1943.

(Sunday) and appreciated it.

We listened-in to your Biblical Dialogue over 3GL last night

Would you please send us a copy of "The New Dictator" the announcer spoke of.

Yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest, January 17th 1943.

Bible subject, "God's remedy for present day evils."

I have just been listening to your Dialogue on the important

As a Bible -student for many years, I have been looking forward to the good time coming of which you spoke, and am fully persuaded that Jesus Christ our Saviour will very soon return to earth to take over the reins of government and establish God's Kingdom on the earth. Then there will be "Glory to God in the Highest, on earth peace, and goodwill among men."

I am endeavouring so to live now that I may be among the "little flock" you mentioned, who will have the great privilege of being associated with Jesus as Kings and Priests, instructing the people of earth in the ways of truth and righteousness. None of us are of our own righteousness able to attain to this wonderful position, because all have sinned and come short of the commandments of God; but in His mercy through Jesus our Saviour, we may look for forgiveness, and so hope for this salvation which God has promised.

I would be pleased to receive a copy of your dialogue. Yours faithfully.

God's Best Gift.

A new supply of this little book for children is now on hand. It is nicely illustrated, and conveys the truth of God's Plan of the Ages in an interesting manner. Containing 30 pages, it is a nice addition to the larger book, "The Ten Camels," With bright paper covers, title in gold, at 1/- per copy, and special rates for quantities.

The same story, in smaller size without illustrations, at 4d. each, and four for 1/-.

Booklets Reprinted.

"God and Reason," originally produced by our U.S.A. brethren, has now been printed in our office to supply local needs. In paper covers, 64 pages, this booklet is very helpful for general witness work. Single copies 5d., two for 9d., or 4/3 per doz., post paid. Special rates for quantities without postage.

"Hell, Death, Spiritism," has been recently reproduced, and will be found most instructive on the particular subjects. In improved paper cover, 24 pages, price 4d. per copy, four for 1/2, or 3/3 per doz., post paid.

"Hope Beyond the Grave," as supplied previously from our U.S.A. brethren, has been printed in our office recently for local needs. The following subjects are very well explained:—What Is Death?, Is Man Immortal?, What About Hell?, Spirits and Spiritism, What Is Heaven?, Where Is Paradise?

A great amount of truth is presented in this 72-page booklet, and it is most suitable for witnessing to the Bible teachings on the particular subjects. Price, 5d. -each, 3 for 1/2, or 4/6 per dozen, post paid.

BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

19 Ermington Place, Kew, E 4 Vic. Aust.

Printed by Hickling es Powell Pry. Ltd., Lygon St., East Brunswick for Berean Bible Institute, Ermington Place, Kew, Meth. E4.