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When will the World be Converted?

Should We Look For Revived Now?

(Public Address.)

MANY good people it would seem almost agonize in prayer today, that God will send a revival of religion and thus stem the onward rush into irreligion, atheism or paganism that so threatens to plunge this present world, or order of things, into the abyss of complete destruction.

While we are in sympathy with the good desires and intentions of any people we most certainly do not desire to be numbered amongst those who would instruct the Lord as to what He should do. (Isa. 45:11.) Rather, do we seek to know His plan or method of dealing with any contingency and humbly seek to co-operate with His will or way. Failure to do this is causing some to err in judgment as to what God is doing, or wants done in these momentous days in which we live—the last days of the Gospel Age, or the time of the end spoken of by Daniel.

Some well-meaning people still hold tenaciously to teachings and doctrines that are nowhere upheld in Biblical record. But as Christians how are we to arrive at truth in any matter? Are the secular colleges and universities the seats of learning from which our deductions of the obscurity of life are to be drawn? We do not think so! Verily, they have their place and in some ways have been a present help to the groaning creation of mankind, but they have little to offer in explanation of whence came man and whither he goes.

In this day when multitudes are rejecting it, we reiterate that the Bible alone gives a satisfactory answer. The reason it is being discarded as an authentic guide regarding the life that now is and that which shall be hereafter, is because its teachings have been largely misrepresented and misunderstood.

Then again, the false doctrines or conclusions arrived at have so often a semblance of truth interwoven that only he who searches for truth as for hidden treasure can unravel the mystery and get a proper focus concerning the purpose or plan of God for mankind.

Religious systems which adhere to false teachings are termed counterfeit religions. Counterfeit coins have every appearance of the true and the difference would never be detected if no tests or inquiry of proof were applied. Therefore, it is necessary to test or prove all doctrines from the Bible. If the Bible is the touchstone or torch of truth (and we say it is) then we would expect it to be harmonious in its teachings. It could not affirm one thing in one place and deny it in another. We know it has been accused of contradicting itself but we are sure it does not.

The trouble arises through not rightly dividing it. No amount of preaching will ever convince a person of Bible truth if the one enquiring or listening does not use his reasoning powers, and study to see if the things spoken are true or otherwise. The Bereans of old were commendable for that reason. (Acts 17:11.)

These thoughts are presented with a desire to build up the faith of those who believe in God's Word, but have become mystified by current affairs and blown about by many winds of doctrine through not understanding God's plan as a whole.

As we see things from God's Word the time is not yet when unbelievers will be convinced and converted en masse. But we rejoice to know of a time coming when all shall turn to the Lord and serve Him with one consent as recorded in Zeph. 3:9. Before that time comes, however, verse 8 of Zeph. 3 must be fulfilled. That being so, it can readily be discerned how those who pray so earnestly for revival now, such as swept England in the days of Wesley, etc., might be asking amiss, and we believe their prayers will not be answered in the way they have in mind. According to God's Word we are facing the great time of trouble such as never was and never will be again, and when it has swept the earth and Armageddon's throes are over, the presence of earth's new King (Christ) will be discerned and earth's inhabitants, from shore to shore, will begin to learn of and obey the new Ruler who will enforce righteousness. That will be a revival worth waiting for, a complete answer to the prayer—"Thy Kingdom come." Meantime, God's work of the present continues — calling out and preparing the "little flock," the true church that is to share with Jesus the Kingdom reign of blessing all the families of the earth. Not only English-speaking races are to be blessed, but men of all races, colour and clime; and not only those living are to enjoy it, but those in their graves are to be called forth in the resurrection to participate also.

We are content, then, to bide God's own time for the convincing and converting of unbelievers and turn our present endeavours to that which we believe is most pleasing in His sight—the assisting and building up of His saints with the meat in due season He has provided for them. Not that we are forgetful of the world, nor ignoring the needs of men around us in this evil time, but our attitude should be like that of the Apostle's—doing good to all men as we have opportunity, but especially to the household of faith. (Gal. 6:10.)

Addressing believers it is not necessary to go over the ground of creation again. We accept the Genesis account of man's origin, also of his fall from grace or favour in God's sight, by disobedience. The wages of man's wrongdoing are clearly expressed throughout the Scriptures, and are fully testified to us by our own observation and experience. "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23.)

Many believers in God's Word begin their ship-wreck of clear reasoning right here, by believing the false theory or doctrine that death is not really death after all—that what seems to be death is only a passing to another realm where the departed one is as much or more alive than before, enjoying greater happiness or participating in more abject wretchedness, according to the particular abode to which he was destined to go. We do not believe that the Bible teaches any such thing, but that at death all consciousness ceases—the body returns to the dust of the earth from whence it came, and the spirit or spark of life returns to God who gave it.

At creation there was no life or living soul (sentient being) until the body and the spark of life (breath of life) were united. So, after death there is no more consciousness of life until God reunites the spark of life to the new resurrection body. Meantime, death is death —oblivion. All connected Scriptures declare that the dead know not anything.

A common inference of present-day theology is that there is a change- of nature for all at death, the words of 1 Cor. 15:49 being applied to all; but a careful reading of this passage reveals that these words apply

only to faithful followers of Jesus—His true church. However, the Scriptures do clearly testify that a time is coming when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth in resurrection. Is there a change of nature then? Yes, there is for some—a minority—but not for others—the majority. Only the followers of Jesus, the Bride of Christ, are promised the reward of a change of nature—an earthly to a heavenly, a fleshly to a spiritual. All others will be restored in the resurrection to the same earthly sphere in which they lived before and with the same kind of fleshly bodies, but the environment will be changed, for the curse will be no more upon the earth to blight the fruit it will produce, nor will the weaknesses resultant from the fall cause sickness, pain or death again if the restored one lives in accord with the righteous laws of that day. (Gen. 3:17; Rev. 22:3; Isa. 35:1, 2, 7, 10.) We rejoice in the glory that's promised when these prophecies are fulfilled, for the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea, and all shall know Him from the least unto the greatest.

Now, what of the minority who do experience a change of nature in the resurrection? In order to see who they are it may be necessary to rehearse a few facts which we probably know already. Jesus (termed the Word, or Logos, in John 1:1) who was with the Father before the world was, voluntarily left that glory He enjoyed, to become a man (the man Christ Jesus), to give His life a ransom, that what man had lost through sin, He (Jesus) might restore later by a resurrection. It was for this reason we read, "His soul was made an offering for sin" and "upon Him was laid the iniquity of us all." For His faithfulness unto death, in accomplishing the mission for which He came, the Father rewarded Him with surpassing glory than He had before, far above angels and powers and every name that is named. (Eph. 1:20, 2 1 .) Jesus, therefore, has had two changes of nature—firstly, changed from spirit nature to become a man (flesh); then, being put to death in the flesh as an offering for sin on mankind's behalf, He was raised by God's power and exalted to that aforementioned. "He was put to death flesh but quickened (made alive) spirit." (1 Pet. 3:18.)

Had this been all there was to man's redemption there would have been no other changes of nature for any, but by carefully tracing the Scriptures we see that God chose to call out, or find some companions for Jesus in His new sphere and office. The Scriptures explain these to be followers of Jesus on earth and are known as His brethren, His body, His bride and joint heirs. This "little flock" is to be dealt with, prepared and made ready for its change, before the work of restoring the dead world to earthly life begins. The first work of preparation was in convincing them of their own sin and their need of a Saviour. Then is revealed to them that the Saviour has been provided in Jesus and by believing into Him they are justified from all things. Now, in this condition, they are perfect in God's sight—they are not actually so, but are reckoned so because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. To these believers God reveals still more. He invites them to lay down their now justified life as Jesus did His, in full consecration to the service of God. If the invitation is accepted and we remain faithful unto death we will receive the crown of life with Jesus in the Kingdom, being elevated to the same high position on the spirit plane. This of course necessitates a change of nature, and it is of these that the Scriptures testify—having borne the image of the earthly they shall bear the image of the heavenly, or spiritual. It is a new creation, born or created throughout the Gospel Age.

In the beginning God created the earth and heavens, angels and men, beasts and birds, etc., but this, the companions of Jesus in the spiritual realm is an entirely new creation. When Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto Myself that where I am there ye shall be also," He was not going to prepare a place in heaven for the- whole world. No, God made the earth for man and that will be his home forever when the Kingdom is established. The place He went to prepare is for the members of His body, the true church of the Gospel Age, who are to experience a change of nature in the resurrection from earthly to heavenly bodies.

What is required of this number? What experiences will they meet as they fulfil their consecration vows here upon earth? The popular, wishful thinking belief appears to be that when a man is converted and

becomes a Christian all his troubles are over. Many measure a Christian to be a boisterously happy-go-lucky, carefree type of person upon whom the sun shines all day. It is not disputed that the Apostle exhorted Christians to rejoice, but it is to be a far quieter, more soul-satisfying rejoicing than that just mentioned.

Christians are footstep followers of Jesus, and of all that we learn of Him in the Scriptures there is not one instance recorded that He ever laughed or smiled, but we do read of Him being a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, that He groaned in spirit and was exceedingly sorrowful on more than one occasion and that He wept. While this is not insinuating that it is wrong for a Christian to smile, it does serve to show what it may mean to us who become followers of Jesus, for as He was, so are we in this world.

Neither Jesus nor the Apostles who were His mouthpieces afterward led any to believe that to become a Christian and follow Jesus was an easy or light matter. On the contrary we are plainly told that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12), that in this world we will have tribulation (John 16:33) and that if we walk in the, way seeking a place in the heavenly kingdom, we must first suffer with Jesus here below. Instead of promising us prosperity in business, happy homes and carefree days, we are told that "many are the afflictions of the righteous" (Psa. 34:19) and that a man's foes may be those of his own household. (Matt. 10:36.) True, the Psalmist tells us that the Lord will deliver us out of the affliction eventually, but He does nothing to prevent them coming upon us.

Why does a Christian suffer? Many are mystified why people whom they recognise as earnest Christians meet with such afflictive trials during their life-time, while others of more or less indifferent religious beliefs and practices escape. However, as true Christians, this should not amaze us, for we are abundantly forewarned and counselled in God's Word concerning this Age—that in this present evil world unrighteousness and evil-doers would predominate. As the Psalmist says (Psa. 37:12), "The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth," but in the same Psalm (verses 13, 10 and 9) we read, "The Lord shall laugh at him for he seeth that his day is coming; for yet a little while the wicked shall not be, for evil doers shall be cut off." Apparently, then, the Lord allows present wrong standards to continue for a purpose.

We submit, that while there is more than one reason why the Lord has allowed the reign of sin and death for so long, the chief reason is that the New Creation, previously mentioned, should be selected and prepared for the important office to which they are called as joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom. It is one thing to be called tot his number, but it is another to make our calling and election sure, for many are called but few chosen. The invitation is to all who have an ear to hear to enter this way—the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Those who respond are placed on probation, not in a preaching station for 3 years or 5 or 10 years, but for life. Faithfulness unto death is required before the prize can be won and before that is accomplished many trials and tests are permitted by the Lord—there is much rigorous training to be undergone—and the objective is not to improve our vocabulary and social standing, but to transform our character till it is like that of Jesus', perfect in faith and love. He that doeth righteousness is righteous — not mere professors.

What is the greatest factor in our attaining this likeness of Jesus. Does it seem ridiculous to say that it is suffering? It is written of our Lord that He learned obedience by the things that He suffered (Heb. 5:8), and the servant is not above his Lord (Matt. 10:24.)

In a little book called "Tabernacle Shadows" and which all sincere Christians are recommended to read, it is beautifully shown in a most clear and satisfying way how the followers of Jesus are allowed a fellowship in His sufferings in order to reign with Him later in the Kingdom. This book can be procured from the Berean Bible Institute, Melbourne, E.4, on request.

Apart from such, let us note some of the things that constitute suffering for righteousness' sake. Such suffering is something of which we should not be ashamed, but rather as Peter said, "Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." (1 Pet. 4:12.) Christ's sufferings were not for wrong-doing. He did not suffer because of disloyalty to God or failure to do His will in fulfilling His covenant of sacrifice. No, His suffering was for well-doing and for the sake of the truth. Jesus' loyalty to the truth cost Him His life by crucifixion and Christians are said to be "crucified with Christ."

What does that mean, seeing that we know that all Christians have not been literally crucified by nailing to a cross as was Jesus? Just as literal crucifixion was a torturing, slow, but sure death, so figurative crucifixion closely resembles it. When we say that one is taking up his cross to follow Christ it means that he is taking the first step in espousing the cause of Christ. Even though it may be with fear and trembling, he is submitting willingly to painful humbling and contempt in the sight of the world, ready to share with Jesus its coldness and scorn,

Our suffering for righteousness' sake includes, as it did with Jesus, every item of mental and physical pain and self-denial as a result of our consecration. It includes the reproach that comes from fellow-men for the sake of truth, especially that coming from teachers of the nominal church who repudiate the right of laymen to interpret the Scriptures, except as they shall dictate. Weariness and exhaustion caused by preaching and by giving out of vital energy to do good to others, is all a part of our sacrifice as to the Lord. It is made up of little things and does not necessarily mean the same things with each individual Christian.

Before consecration we might have been ambitious in the exercise of legitimate business talent. Now, our Father's business comes first — the other things become secondary—and the new attitude we adopt is not understood even by our closest friends who may consider, as it was thought of Paul, that much learning in spiritual things hath made us mad. Or, if our rational conduct disproves this, they are at least as mystified as were the parents of Jesus at His evident deep interest in seeking knowledge of the Scriptures and who in answer to their questioning replied, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Prior to consecrating our life to the Lord we might have taken great pleasure in making home elegant, in having the very nicest fittings throughout and surrounding, and in dressing family and self elegantly. Now, we deny ourselves all luxury, restricting outlay, time and energy simply to providing necessary things. While providing things decent in the sight of all and seeking to fulfil our proper obligations, we redeem as much time as we can for direct service to the Lord, and of course in all that we do and say are seeking His praise, honour and glory, even to the daily round and common task in home, field or workshop.

Hours that we may have at one time spent in social chat, harmless games, etc., are now consecrated to God's service and we do not spend our time chiding those of the world who indulge in these things still, for it is only those called to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus who see better things to seek after. If we were interested before consecration in politics, temperance reform, international peace plans, labour unions and such like, they hold but trifling interest for us now, for we are pursuing a different course. God's plan of the ages has now opened to our view revealing how puny and ineffective man's best efforts are in uplifting the world, in comparison with the "times of restitution spoken of by all God's holy prophets," and now soon to be inaugurated. Whilst sympathetic to every genuine reform work for the uplift of men, we realize that they are as morphia injections which alleviate the pains of a sin-sick and dying world only momentarily. God has a work for us (His consecrated people of this age) to do, in releasing forever the groaning creation from the thraldom of sin to which it is chained by the fall. Our chief work now is to press on in the way wherein God's work is being completed in us and we are made ready for that work. (2 Pet. 1:5-11.)

Formerly, we may have delighted to do generously, giving to everything and speaking favourably of all. Somewhat carelessly and ignorantly—though benevolently—we supposed that all denominations of people who believe much alike were only different routes to heaven and that each person was quite free to choose his own form of worship.

We were considered broad-minded Christians then, and had the admiration of all, which was sweet. But when our minds were cleared from error we saw that many doctrines of the denominations such as hell-fire, purgatory, trinity, immortality of the soul, world conversion before the second advent of Christ, etc., are all contrary to God's Word and we were obliged to oppose them and adhere to the truth.

Following Jesus in consecration we found, like Him, that we had to deny ourselves the admiration of all. Jesus rebuked sin, error and hypocrisy; instead of quietly letting the scribes and Pharisees alone, He sacrificed His inclinations for peace in order to advance the truth, and honour God and bless the people. Thus consecration has meant for many a sacrifice of social standing, our good name, and broadmined reputations. We may be called narrow-minded, bigoted Christians now. And what shall. we say; have we any regrets at the loss of these things? No, like Christians of old we ought to take the spoiling of our goods joyfully. Like Paul,, we should be able to count the loss of these things as refuse in order to win Christ. (Phil. 3:8-10.) We must not love the praise of men more than the praise of God, nor must fear of man hinder us from fulfilling our consecration vows. "Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee," saith the Lord to His people through the prophet Jeremiah 1:8. Again, the Lord says to us through the same prophet, "Let the prophets that have dreams tell their dreams, but he that hath My Word, let him speak it faithfully." (Jer. 23:28.)

Let us labour, then, to please the Lord, to hear His "Well done" at our journey's end; 'twill be sweeter far than the empty commendation of men we might enjoy now. If weariness should at times overtake us, let us "Consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself." (Heb. 12:3.) Remember, we are following Him who for the joy that was set before Him (in the time to come) endured the cross and disregarded the shame of the present time, and as a result is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

This, dear friends, is what hinders large-scale revival to effect world conversion now. God waits until His work of this Age is complete—the finding and preparation of the full number of the "little flock" which composes Christ's body. All the signs today corroborate with prophecy to show that this work is almost complete. We are in the last days of the Gospel Age—the harvest time of a closing dispensation. When ye see these things come to pass, know that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand, foreshadowing the redemption of the little flock, their change from earthly to heavenly, spiritual conditions, and the establishing of the Kingdom upon earth—world conversion and blessing to all the obedient.

Peace Conference Ends in Unhappy Atmosphere.

UNDER the above heading a newspaper report on the Paris Peace Conference states that the National Delegations show signs of long strain which the last 79 days of argument have imposed.

After detailing some of the closing scenes the report states:—

“Thus ended the first consultation between the great and the small on the making of peace after the Second World War, and the apologetic or defensive tone of the closing speeches reflects grave doubts among the delegations regarding the benefits accruing from all the conference’s hard work. It was not for lack of toil that the conference finished not with a bang, but with a whimper.”

The above report is but another fulfilment of the Bible prophecy which predicted the saying—"Peace, peace, when there is no peace.” And if the leaders of the peace delegations show so little of the spirit of peace-making, what can be expected of the masses of mankind? The answer is given in the world-wide unrest today in almost every land. Industrial upheavals of great dimensions and racial riots, etc., are of daily occurence.

A newspaper leader sums up the industrial position as follows:

“Our own experience after the 1914 -18 war showed the serious ills of an uncontrolled economy, with an early boom of inflated prices, only to be followed by collapse, depression and unemployment. There is common ‘ agreement that under present conditions the basic wage itself is too low in relation to living costs, and ought to be adjusted as speedily as possible. Wages pegging and price control are counterparts, inextricably bound up with each other. Both are integral to stability, and neither can be suddenly lifted without destroying the value of the other. Even Labor leaders in the United States have been driven to admit that the idea of increasing wages without price increases is a pipe-dream. The fallacy of thinking otherwise has been likened to a ball game, in which first the people in the front row stand up to gets a better view, then the second row stands up, then the next, and so on, till soon everyone is standing up and nobody can see better.”

Even the proclaiming of the truths of God’s Word, that the Lord alone can, and will, deliver the human race from all its chaos, after sufficient lessons in present-day sin have been permitted, appeals to so few. As one has declared—”Our Socialist friends urge us to join with them, saying, We are tired of the preaching about what God will do by and by; come and join us; be Socialists and do something now.’ We reply that we appreciate the fact that many Socialists are intelligent and that many of them are sincere; but in our opinion their wisdom is the wisdom of this world, which, from God’s viewpoint, is foolishness. They are not able to bring about the great changes which they desire, and if they could bring them about, they would be unable to maintain those changes so long as sin and death reign in this world. What the world needs is what God has provided, a Saviour and a Great One, able to save to the uttermost—completely.

“We tell our Socialist friends that we know they will succeed beyond their expectations. Like Samson of old they will pull down the house not only upon others, but also upon themselves—There shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation,’ as our Lord Jesus foretold--=Matt. 24:21.”

We should follow the course directed by God’s Word, and urge God’s people everywhere to do the same — to wait upon the Lord to bring about the great change of dispensations which He has purposed and promised. Ultimately the light of the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth; the desire of all nations shall come. (Habakkuk 2:14; Haggai 2:6, 7.)

The End of the Way.

In recent weeks three of our elderly brethren have finished the pilgrim way at Gosford, N. S. Wales, Adelaide, S. Aust., and Auckland, N.Z.

Brother Berry, of Gosford, N. S. Wales, was well known by most of the friends in N. S. Wales, and had rejoiced in the truth for over 30 years. Until about 10 years ago he paid regular visits to the brethren in Sydney, but advancing age restricted his contact with other friends. However, our dear Brother maintained a regular correspondence with a number of brethren and in this way sought to encourage others along the Christian way. His cheery letters came regularly to Melbourne and over the past eighteen months he had rejoiced in the broadcast sessions on Sundays. Portion of his last letter reads :—" the broadcast this morning on the 'Sons of God' came over very nicely—I enjoyed it very much myself ; I thank our Heavenly Father for keeping me in the precious truth and rejoice in the precious knowledge that in the coming Kingdom all tears will be wiped from all faces."

The end came following a stroke, and we rejoice that our dear Brother Berry has entered into his reward. "Blessed in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

The following is to hand from Adelaide :—

On 27th September our late elderly Brother, Joseph Thoday of Adelaide (late of Gawler, S. Aust.) passed peacefully to his reward. He had been in ill-health for some two or three years, having also lost his eyesight

He showed much of the Lord's grace and spirit in the way he bore the infirmities of failing health and eyesight. He was 79 years of age. He was one of those who had learned to trust the Lord fully, and to cast all care upon Him. Those who knew him best found him to be always the same ; simplicity, sincerity, humility and gentleness characterised his life and conduct; always eager to discuss the truth. He possessed a good memory of the Scriptures which was a valuable asset to him during the period of his blindness. We feel he was truly one of the Lord's "little flock." "Blessed and holy is he that bath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

From Auckland, New Zealand, word is received of the passing of Brother Hille, following a stroke, at the age of 80 years.

Brother Hille was known personally by the few friends in Auckland and other parts of New Zealand, and while differing with some of the brethren on some features of the truth, always seemed most earnest and zealous in his service for the Lord. His appreciation of the literature, including a number of truth periodicals, was well in evidence. We trust for our elderly Brother the Lord's reward in His Kingdom.

Christmas Convention.

As announced last month the Melbourne brethren are arranging for their Annual Convention to be held (D.V.) over the Christmas period, the days for the gatherings being 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th December, to be held at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, Melbourne. An invitation is extended to friends able to be present. Further information is obtainable from Mr. J. Hiam, 44 Heath Avenue, Oakleigh, S.E.12, Melbourne.

Ransom and Restitution.

“For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord [Ruler, Controller] of both the dead and the living.”

THAT is to say, the object of our Lord’s death and resurrection was not merely to bless and rule over and restore the living of mankind, but to give Him authority over, or full control of, the dead as well as the living, insuring the benefits of His ransom as much to the one as to the other. He “gave Himself a ransom [corresponding price] for all,” in order that He might bless all, and give to every man an individual trial for life. To claim that He gave “a ransom for all,” and yet to claim that only a mere handful of the ransomed ones will ever receive any benefit from it, is absurd; for it would imply either that God accepted the ransom-price and then unjustly refused to grant the release of the redeemed, or else that the Lord, after redeeming all, was either unable or unwilling to carry out the original benevolent design. The unchangeableness of the divine plans, no less than the perfection of the divine justice and love, repels and contradicts such a thought, and gives us assurance that the original and benevolent plan, of which the “ransom for all” was the basis, will be fully carried out in God’s “due time,” and will bring to faithful believers the blessing of release from the Adamic condemnation and an opportunity to return to the rights and liberties of sons of God, as enjoyed before sin and the curse.

Let the actual benefits and results of the ransom be clearly seen, and all objections to its being of universal application must vanish. The “ransom for all” given by “the man Christ Jesus” does not give or guarantee everlasting life or blessing to any man; but it does guarantee to every man another opportunity or trial for life everlasting. The first trial of man, which resulted in the loss of the blessing at first conferred, is really turned into a blessing of experience to the loyal-hearted, by reason of the ransom which God has provided. But the fact that men are ransomed from the first penalty does not guarantee that they may not, when individually tried for everlasting life, fail to render the obedience without which none will be permitted to live everlastingly. Man, by reason of present experience with sin and its bitter penalty, will be fully forewarned; and when, as a result of the ransom, he is granted’ another, an individual trial, under the eye and control of Him who so loved him as to give His life for him, and who would not that any should perish, but that all should turn to God and live, we may be sure that only the wilfully disobedient will receive the penalty of the second trial. That penalty will be the second death, from which there will be no ransom, no release, because there would be no object for another ransom or a further trial. All will have fully seen and tasted both good and evil; all will have witnessed and experienced the goodness and love of God; all will have had a full, fair, individual trial for life, under most favourable conditions. More could not be asked, and more will not be given. That trial will decide forever who would be righteous and holy under a thousand trials; and it will determine also who would be unjust, and unholy and filthy still, under a thousand trials.

The ransom given does not excuse sin in any; it does not propose to count sinners as saints, and usher them into everlasting bliss. It merely releases the accepting sinner from the first condemnation and its results, both direct and indirect, and places him again on trial for life, in which trial his own wilful obedience or wilful disobedience will decide whether he may or may not have life everlasting.

One difference between the experiences of the Church under trial now and the experiences of the world during its trial will be that the obedient of the world will begin at once to receive the blessings of restitution by a gradual removal of their weaknesses—mental and physical; whereas the Gospel Church, consecrated to the Lord’s service even unto death, goes down into death and gets her perfection instantaneously in the first resurrection. Another difference between the two trials is in the more favourable surroundings of the next age as compared with this, in that then society, government, etc., will

be favourable to righteousness, rewarding faith and obedience, and punishing sin; whereas now, under the prince of this world, the Church's trial is under circumstances unfavourable to righteousness, faith, etc. But this is to be compensated for in the prize of the glory and honour of the divine nature offered to the Church, in addition to the gift of everlasting life.

Adam's death was sure, though it was reached by nine hundred and thirty years of dying. Since he was himself dying, all his children were born in the same dying condition and without right to life; and, like their parents, they all die after a more or less lingering process. It should be remembered, however, that it is not the pain and suffering in dying, but death—the extinction of life—in which the dying culminates, that is the penalty of sin. The suffering is only incidental to it, and the penalty falls on many with but little or no suffering. It should further be remembered that when Adam forfeited life, he forfeited it forever; and not one of his posterity has ever been able to expiate his guilt or to regain the lost inheritance. All the race are either dead or dying. And if they could not expiate their guilt before death, they certainly could not do it when dead—when not in existence. The penalty of sin was not simply to die, with the privilege and right thereafter of returning to life. In the penalty pronounced there was no intimation of release. (Gen.

2:17.) The restitution, therefore, is an act of free grace or favour on God's part. And as soon as the penalty had been incurred, even while it was being pronounced, the free favour of God was intimated, which, when realized, will so fully declare His love.

Had it not been for the gleam of hope, afforded by the statement that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, the race would have been in utter despair; but this promise indicated that God had some plan for their benefit. When to Abraham God sware that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, it implied a resurrection or restitution of all; for many were then dead and others have since died, unblessed. Nevertheless, the promise is still sure: all shall be blessed when the times of restitution or refreshing shall come. (Acts 3:21.) Moreover, since blessing indicates favour, and since God's favour was withdrawn and His curse came instead because of sin, this promise of a future blessing implied the removal of the curse, and consequently a return of His favour. It also implied either that God would relent, change His decree and clear the guilty race, or else that He had some plan by which it could be redeemed, by having man's penalty paid by another.

God did not leave Abraham in doubt as to which was His plan, but showed, by various typical sacrifices which all who approached Him had to bring, that He could not and did not relent, nor excuse the sin; and that the only way to blot it out and abolish its penalty would be by a sufficiency of sacrifice to meet that penalty. This was shown to Abraham in a very significant type: Abraham's son, in whom the promised blessing centred, had first to be a sacrifice before he could bless, and Abraham received him from the dead in a figure. (Heb. 11:19.) In that figure Isaac typified the true seed, Christ Jesus, who died to redeem men, in order that the redeemed might all receive the promised blessing. Had Abraham thought that the Lord would excuse and clear the guilty, he would have felt that God was changeable, and therefore could not have had full confidence in the promise made to him. He might have reasoned, If God has changed His mind once, why may He not change it again? If he relents concerning the curse of death, may He not again relent concerning the promised favour and blessing? But God leaves us in no such uncertainty. He gives us ample assurance of both His justice and His unchangeableness. He could not clear the guilty, even though he loved them so much that "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up [to death] for us all."

As the entire race was in Adam when he was condemned, and lost life through him, so when Adam's life was redeemed by the man Christ Jesus, a possible race in his loins died also, and a full satisfaction, or corresponding price, was rendered to justice for all men; and He who thus bought all has full authority to restore all who come unto God by Him.

“As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” (Rom. 5:18, 19.) The proposition is a plain one: As many as have shared death on account of Adam’s sin will have life-privileges offered to them by our Lord Jesus, who paid their penalty to Justice, who became Adam’s substitute before the broken law, and thus “gave Himself a ransom for all.” He died, “the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” (1 Peter 3:18.) It should never be overlooked, however, that all of God’s provisions for our race recognize the human will as a factor in the securing of the divine favours so abundantly provided. Some have overlooked this feature in examining the text just quoted—Rom. 5:18,

19. The Apostle’s statement, however, is that, as the sentence of condemnation extended to all the seed of Adam, even so, through the obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Father’s plan, by the sacrifice of Himself on our behalf, a free gift is extended to all—a gift of forgiveness, which, if accepted, will constitute a justification or basis for life everlasting. And “as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many shall be [not were] made righteous.” If the ransom alone, without our acceptance of it, made us righteous, then it would have read, by the obedience of one many were made righteous. But though the ransom has been given by the Redeemer and has been accepted by Jehovah, only a few during the Gospel age have been, though many during the Millennial age will be, made righteous—justified—’’through faith in His blood.” Since Christ is the propitiation (satisfaction) for the sins of the whole world, all men may on this account be absolved and released from the penalty of Adam’s sin by Him—under the New Covenant.

There is no unrighteousness with God; hence “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9.) As He would have been unjust to have allowed us to escape the pronounced penalty before satisfaction was rendered, so also He here gives us to understand that it would be unjust were He to forbid our restitution, since by His own arrangement our penalty has been paid for us. The same unswerving justice that once condemned man to death now stands pledged for the release of all who, confessing their sins, apply for life through Christ. “It is God that justifieth—who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”—Rom. 8:33, 34.

The completeness of the ransom is the very strongest possible argument for the restitution of all mankind who will accept it on the proffered terms. (Rev. 22:17.) The very character of God for justice and honour stands pledged to it; every promise which He has made implies it; and every typical sacrifice pointed to the great and sufficient sacrifice— ”The Lamb of God, which taketh away the SIN OF THE WORLD”—who is “the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins [the Church’s] , and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” (John 1:29; 1 John 2:2.) Since death is the penalty or wages of sin, when the sin is cancelled the wages must in due time cease. Any other view would be both unreasonable and unjust. The fact that no recovery from the Adamic loss is yet accomplished, though nearly two thousand years have elapsed since our Lord died, is no more an argument against restitution than is the fact that four thousand years elapsed before His death, a proof that God had not planned the redemption before the foundation of the world. Both the two thousand years since and the four thousand years before the death of Christ were appointed times for other parts of the work, preparatory to “the times of restitution of all things.”

FRANK & ERNEST BIBLE TALKS

SUBJECTS FOR NOVEMBER

3rd November—”When There is No Peace.”

10th November—"Christian Sacrifice.”

17th November—”The Way Out.”

24th November—”Sinners in Heaven.”

1st December—”God’s Kingdom Conquers.”

SUBJECTS FOR NOVEMBER 2 KY ONLY 3rd November—’’Paradise and the Thief.”

10th November—”What is Armageddon?”

17th November—”God Has a Plan.”

24th November—”God’s Promises.”

1st December—”John the Baptist Not in Heaven.”

Correspondence.

Victoria.

Frank and Ernest, Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friends —Received your letter, also literature on two other occasions. I would like to thank you very much for sending me all this good reading. It isn’t always possible for me to listen to “Frank and Ernest” every Sunday morning, so having their Talks printed is very helpful. Not only can I refer back to them and re-read them but I can pass them on to my friends.

I am enclosing a postal note for 5 /- which is’ only a little, but hope it will help you to carry on the good work and go towards the expenses of the papers. Thanking you again; yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Will you please forward me a copy of this morning’s broadcast, and also if you have copies of some previous ones I wonder if you would send them to me. I belong to a C.E. Society and our idea is to use some of Frank and Ernest Dialogues as a topic for our meetings and discuss them. Your faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—May I request a copy of the discussion relayed to 3B0 on 6th October, also a copy of booklet “Hope Beyond the Grave.” I find your discussions helpful and instructive. Congratulations for providing a much-needed session. Your faithfully. interesting and inspiring, so I am writing for your, pamphlets “As Angels of Light,” and “Hope Beyond the Grave.” I remain, Yours faithfully.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Please forward me a copy of your broadcast of last Sunday and also the

other pamphlet available. I have been listening to your broadcasts for a considerable period now and I think they are excellent. Any other literature would be appreciated. Wishing you every success in your method of spreading the Gospel. I am, Yours faithfully.

N. S. Wales.

Dear Frank and Ernest—Many thanks for your broadcasts which my wife and I thoroughly enjoy each Sunday morning. We would be pleased to receive your booklet "Christ's Return."

It is certainly good to hear God's Word read out to the people in such a manner without the usual "gloss" that is given it by those who should know better. May God bless you in your good work, and bring about soon our expectation, even the return of Christ. Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I have been listening to your Bible lectures on Sunday mornings at 2KY. We are very interested in your lectures; we believe you are teaching the real Bible truths. If you would kindly send us some of your lectures we would be very pleased.

You might let us know if there is any place in Sydney that teaches the Bible as you do. Yours in the Master's service.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—For the past month or so I have been hearing your wonderful message on Bible prophecy over the air and am very interested. I would like you to send me a free copy of "Hope Beyond the Grave," also a copy of "Christ's Return" as soon as you can and oblige.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I would appreciate a copy of your excellent radio programme which impressed me greatly.

May your work be truly blessed. Your faithfully.

Tasmania.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—I have just heard your explanation on the parable of the Lost Sheep. May I express, Sirs, my appreciation of your very clear explanation and I might say also that it is the first time I have heard that view expressed. I would be very glad to have a copy, and as I have not previously listened to any of your Dialogues would you kindly send me any back copies which you may have on hand. I can assure you that they will be very deeply appreciated. Your sincerely.

Frank and Ernest—First of all, gentlemen, let me thank you for your wonderful response to my letter for copies of your Dialogues. I have begun to study them and I can assure you that they are proving most helpful; once again thank you very much. I would like copies of your last two Dialogues also the booklet "Parables of the Kingdom." Yours sincerely.

Dear Sirs—After listening to your very interesting session on 7EX this morning I would be very pleased if you would forward me a copy of "Hope Beyond the Grave." Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I was much impressed with your Talk over 7EX this morning ; I would indeed like to have a copy of your Talk and pamphlet. These Talks are very helpful but one cannot fully appreciate them unless he ponders over them and learns for himself where these prophecies are located in our grand old Bible. Thanking you; yours in the faith.