



Volume XXI. No. 10 MELBOURNE, 1st OCTOBER, 1938 Price—Twopence Halfpenny

Putting Away All Bitterness, -- Be Kind

(Ephesians 4:31-32)

THAT word "bitterness," as we look upon it in a general way would seem to describe a very bad trait of character; but in this case, it is defined from the original Greek as "sharpness"—a more refined meaning, something to which Christian people in general would be more subject; a sharp and touchy disposition, or hurt feelings, which develop much from imaginations of the mind. Some people have flesh failings that way, and have what is sometimes called a "crabby" disposition, which the Apostle says should be put away, and as he advances in this verse the items seem to be more severe.

Wrath here seems to be in the mind, while anger and clamour would refer to noisy demonstration of angry feelings, because clamour means "to make an outcry"—"to give vent to the feelings." Then he mentions evil speaking or railing as something where the tongue gets busy and may develop into busy-bodging which may cultivate malice, a most undesirable and unchristian disposition.

Now it is profitable at times to stop and think if some of these things show any sign of working in us, even in the smallest measure, so that we may nip it in the bud. It is much easier to pull out these small weeds while they are yet tender, but much more difficult to remove when they take a deeper root. Observation and experience show how little roots of bitterness have sprung up and grown stronger against an individual and it does not take long to bring others under the influence which grows, so that many are defiled. The Apostle's injunction to put away evil speaking is very positive; we are to speak evil of no one.

The question arises, What is evil speaking? What does the Apostle mean when he says, "speak evil of no man?"

Does he mean that we should say nothing of) any man with an evil intention toward him? Or does he mean speak no evil whatever the intention? We surely know that to speak evil with a wrong motive, a wrong intention would be a serious crime, especially in a child of God: But we would think the Apostle meant, no matter what your motive, speak evil about nobody. If that be his thought it places a very stringent requirement upon all of the Lord's people. If the motive for speaking evil were bad, all the worse. This subject has various sides. To speak evil is to speak that which is injurious: therefore one should say nothing that would injure any man.

It is very easy to see the justice and the reasonableness of this requirement if we apply the golden rule. Would we wish anyone to speak slightly of us? Would we wish anyone to do us evil, to comment on our faults, or on what the speaker considered faults, and thus lower us in the eyes of others? If the Lord's

people would apply the golden rule to every affair of life, it would surely be very helpful. Some of the most conscientious Christians have difficulty along this line.

In considering this matter of evil speaking, some think, Is my motive right? They forget that their motive in speaking depreciatively of others has nothing to do with the Apostle's injunction. No matter what the motive, we should not speak evil. The question is not, did I have a good intention or a bad one? but am I speaking evil, am I saying anything contrary to the golden rule, something that I would not wish to have said of me? It would be good if this thought could be instilled into the hearts and minds, of everyone.

Now in propelling our boat along this stream we may run up against what is termed snags, something that jars against the smooth running of our craft. How could we apply the injunction of our text in the case of the home for instance, or the office, or an establishment where many are employed? Suppose one is connected with such a place where rules and regulations are set down for the governing of the same. Would it be evil speaking in such a case on one's part to report any violations of these rules. This is not considered to be evil speaking; because it is considered that if we ourselves were violating those rules, the person who would report us would be doing right, not doing us evil or wrong or injury. By not reporting the misdemeanor or violation of rules the person would be encouraging in us a continuation of the wrong course. One would feel it a very distasteful business to report anyone not carrying out rules very strictly, because it stirs up much ill-feeling and strife and one can soon bring upon oneself the hatred of those concerned. One case is where an employer in one department had three employees; he set down rules that none of them were to serve themselves individually; if they wanted anything they should ask the other to serve them. Two

of the employees were rather careless in regard to the rules and had a certain dislike to the more exacting one who studied her employer's interest, and perhaps also her desire that the rules should be properly applied. And of course in laying a complaint to the right authority, brought down ill-feeling upon her head, and unkind remarks that she was seeking favour from the management, when it was just a principle of being exact. So we see there are many perils with which to contend.

We find in the Christian walk, trials from one quarter or another. God's people are supposed always to have no other motive than good ones for any course pursued. A person who accepts a position in any establishment, accepts also the conditions and rules connected with such position. No doubt all rules and regulations are made, not with a view to injuring anyone, but for the general welfare of the concern; hence the observance of all these obligations should be considered a serious responsibility. One should not report an infraction of rules in an evil way, but merely as a fact. It is not necessary, for the one who informs, to judge the heart of the one reported. It is not to be concluded that the heart is bad; even though the person may have a foolish brain, or be forgetful or inattentive to the observance of important rules. We find some people willing in their bodywork, but lazy in their mind.

Applying the question to our proper course in the Church, in matters relating to ourselves personally, we see where our individual responsibility lies. "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Our Lord does not refer to what he does against someone else, but against "thee." Our business is to look after our own affairs, to practise on ourselves.

Now suppose we saw something radically wrong, suppose we saw someone ill-treating an animal: should we say nothing? No doubt the spirit would rise up in us against injustice, and we would remonstrate against those evils; or it might be proper to report such things to the right authority; but it is not the business of everyone to go about attempting to straighten out matters in general. The world is full of evil, and we realise there will be evil until the kingdom shall take control. We think that as far as the Church is concerned the many difficulties we see in the world would better be left alone as a rule, for if we start out to right the things that are wrong we would not have any time left. Those who sincerely try to do what is

right' are already misjudged; therefore we do well not to add to this opposition by becoming too busy in things that are not directly pertaining to the kingdom. But regarding evil speaking in the Church; anything injurious to the real interests of another should never be spoken. None can be too careful of their words concerning others. The disposition that would expose the imperfections of the brethren is surely not the love that covers. Every follower of Christ will surely see that evil speaking is slander, that it is besmirching the good name of a brother or sisters that it is a direct violation of the Word of God, and that defamation is theft of another's reputation. Once seeing the matter from the Divine standpoint, the only true standpoint, the child of God must surely awaken to the greatest possible energy in overcoming such works of the flesh and of the devil.

Let each one search his or her own heart, and think over his or her own conduct and then ask the question, "Is it I?" And let everyone who hopes to be accounted worthy of a place in the kingdom, purge out the old leaven of malice, envy, back-biting and strife, if any yet remain, that he or she may become a copy of God's dear Son. The flesh is very seductive and is inclined to make all manner of excuses for itself. Let each one make this a matter of personal heart searching. There is a solemn need to develop and perfect our characters. Let us pray more earnestly in the words of the Psalmist, "Set a watch, O Lord before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." No one is without temptations.

The mind of the flesh may be so agreeable to suggestions of evil as to be unconscious of their nature, but he who loves righteousness can never fail to be painfully aware that evil is present with him. Even the one who has made the greatest advancement in the Christian -course is not exempt, for the attributes of the fallen human nature are still present in his flesh, though brought into subjection to the Divine will and thus deprived of the privilege of exercise. The person in whom faith and love exist in the highest degree attainable in the present life, hungers and thirsts like any other person; he is the subject of the propensities and affections which lay the foundation, and which furnish the support. of the various family relations; he loves his children; or parents and other relatives, and is the subject of other natural ties and sympathies; he suffers from fatigue and sickness; he is grieved, troubled and perplexed in various ways. While, therefore, it is our privilege, even in the present life, to be exempt from the commission of voluntary sin, it does not appear, retaining as we do our constitutional tendencies, and remaining subject to constitutional infirmities, that we either have or can reasonably expect any such exemption from temptations.

Success in meeting , and resisting , temptations should give no feeling of security that would result in a tendency to trifle with them. To linger one moment under the influence of any temptation which could be escaped, shows not only a great lack of wisdom, but is also a sin of presumption. All have been promised grace sufficient for every time of need, but this assures no measure of grace for temptations to which we are being subjected merely because of our careless lingering under the influence of their seduction. Instead, the exhortation is "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." The wise man says "Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals and his feet not be burned?" It would be foolishness to place ourselves where evil is; or to linger even in our thoughts in its vicinity. Since we are not ignorant of the devices of the wily foe who is opposed to every step of progress toward righteousness, there is no occasion for surprise as each resistance to sinful suggestions is countered by correspondingly violent attacks of the Adversary.

This no doubt explains in part how it is that some have attained a very high degree of Christian development, only through subtle temptations to later be degraded to a plane lower than ever before experienced. The result is equally lamentable for those, who, because of their very attainment have developed a false feeling of safety and have grown careless—a condition of which Satan is quick to take advantage. The one who makes little or no resistance to temptation, knows little or nothing of its power. There is little inducement for Satan to exert his strength toward one who yields easily. But once he becomes fixed in God's will, Satan will exert violent attacks to try and break down all resistance.

In an endeavour to understand temptations it is necessary to know their specific nature. We should, as far as possible, know the various weak points in our character, and the forms of temptation by which these weak points may be most successfully attacked. At these points, and against these temptations our strongest Scriptural defences should be raised. When we are doubtful as to whether or not it would be wrong to follow a suggestion that has come to us, or doubtful as to how far we may follow it in righteousness, the difficulty should be laid in faith before the Lord, nothing doubting, that He will guide to a clear understanding of the issue in due time. Then we must wait upon the Lord until He shall make the way plain. Rather than run the risk of displeasing Him we should take no step until it becomes clear that it is in harmony with His will.

True safety under temptation lies in having formed the habit of unfailingly looking heavenward for guidance under every circumstance, and of having accustomed ourselves to waiting upon the Lord always for the revelation of His Will, all the while maintaining the calmness of one who knows by experience that not one of all His good promises can fail. By some means this heaven-born peace must be disturbed if Satan is to find any means of influencing us to sin.

Once introduced, it depends upon our reaction as to whether the temptation shall become an emissary of Satan to draw us from the narrow-way, or prove to be the fire of the Great Refiner for the perfecting of the gold that shall eventually be to the praise of His eternal glory. The Lord permits the temptations that they may both prove and develop this chosen class at the same time burning all the dross away. Knowing that God supervises the refining, is our assurance that not gold but dross will be burned away. We may be confident that He who is supervising the great work of preparing His people to shine as the brightness of the firmament in His kingdom, will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able; but will with the temptation make a way of escape, that they may be able to bear it.

It should not be overlooked, however, that there is no assurance in this statement that some will not find themselves in temptations greater than they are willing to bear to the praise of His glory. The thought is that those who are willing to bear the temptations, the testings, will be able to bear them, for they, like the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace, will find One like the Son of God in the furnace of affliction with them. It is not His desire that any should perish in their testings, but that by them they should be induced to flee to His protecting arms. This assurance should exclude all possibility of any disquieting thoughts.

The habit of prayer should be so fixed that there need be no time lost when temptation threatens. While the danger is still on, the horizon, ere it has time to reach us, if we would have safety, the prayer of faith should ascend to enable us to meet and vanquish the Tempter; the prayer that our feebleness be rounded out to perfectness in His strength, for He has said, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." There may be, and no doubt certainly will be, trials greater than we are able to bear if we depend on the faith of yesterday for the trials of to-day. The promise is strength sufficient for every time of need, not strength, for a lifetime, but for each and every time of need, just the strength that is needed at the time. God does not open paths for us in advance of our coming. He does not promise help before help is needed.

He does not remove obstacles out of our way before we reach them. Yet when we are on the edge of our need God's hand is stretched out. Many people forget this, and are forever worrying about difficulties which they think they see in the future. Every day and every moment brings its duties and trials, and needs its appropriate grace. There must therefore, be constantly repeated acts of faith, and by means of faith a constant application of the atoning blood, both to preserve against the power of existing temptation and also to wash the mind from the impurity of its stains if we have even in a measure yielded to it.

Since trials are truly grievous for a time, they can be an occasion of rejoicing only because they work out the peaceable fruits of righteousness, purifying our hearts and strengthening our faith. We need to be

continually teachable, and learning to attentively hearken for the voice of God in our daily path. Each one of the Lord's footstep followers must some day ascend the mount to his final test, and the record will be glorious only for those who have learned submission by the things they have suffered, whose ears have attentively hearkened.

In connection with our subject the R.V. gives this particular occasion of evil-speaking, as railing, but, whichever way we take it, there are many occasions when it would be much wiser to refrain from speaking.

The Psalmist says, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me; I was dumb with silence, I held my peace." Many times we realise that "silence is golden." The wise man says in Prov. 10:19. "In a multitude of words transgression cannot be avoided; but he that refraineth his lips is intelligent" (Leeser). Early in the life of every Christian it is realised that one's expression in his outward conduct and in his words has an important bearing on his progress in the development of Christ-likeness and true piety. The tongue, we know, is represented in the Lord's Word as a vast power for good or evil. In Eccles. 5:2 the wise man advises "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few." Careful meditation on this passage will confirm the wisdom that it sets forth. We could say it is almost impossible for such that talk a lot, to speak without saying something that is likely to be injurious or unprofitable. It would be unreasonable to expect to indulge freely in conversation with others, in the manner to which some commonly do, without conforming, in part at least, to their own views and terms of social intercourse. In a sense we seem to be under the necessity of sympathising to some extent with their lines of thought and experience, and may not be at liberty wholly to reject subjects which are pleasing to them. And who does not know that, acting on this view we are often introduced to various topics which, both in their nature and tendency are remote from a religious and edifying character.

How large a portion of the conversation of the great mass of mankind is taken up with unfavourable comments on the conduct of their neighbours. How much there is of hinted suspicion. How much of backbiting and the like. Now, if we would not be accessory to sins of this kind, we must learn the difficult art of controlling the tongue, and of forming habits of conscientious silence. And then again, too much conversation has an injurious effect upon the religious instincts of the mind by filling the soul with many vain and useless thoughts. All such thoughts take up more or less of the attention of the mind, and just so far as it is so occupied it is necessarily deprived of the consciousness of God's purifying presence. Such are the laws of the mind, that it cannot be occupied with the things of God and a multitude of worldly vanities at the 'same time.

And in addition it should be remembered that words are one of the outward signs and natural expressions of the inward passions; and whatever may be true of those of a different character, it is well understood that the resentful passions which often interpose, are an obstacle to holiness and may acquire great vigor by outward exhibition.

On the contrary it is equally well understood that they generally wither and die under a system of silence. So that by upholding a practice of silence generally, we shall not 'Only find our thoughts less liable to wander, and more collected in God than they would otherwise be, but shall also find the passions pertaining to anger, and the exciting passions generally, when thus deprived of the powerful stimulation of words, more submissive and more perfectly under control.

The Apostle, after exhorting to put away these things, then informs us of the ones to put on in their place, because the mind cannot remain empty, otherwise the evils 'may return. He says, "be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted"; this latter word has the thought of being compassionate, 'sympathetic. This is a lovely and necessary 'condition of mind; to be sympathetic under the guidance 'of the spirit of a sound

mind. It is one of the principles 'of 'God. We sing it in that good old hymn, "His loving-kindness, O how great." In this respect David was a man after God's own heart—he had the forgiving disposition.

While the Scriptures inculcate the thought that God's .people are to be generous toward all, they make common 'the thought that they should have a special interest in one another. Kindness is certainly one of the elements of love, as the Apostle says, and tender-heartedness must characterise those who would have a participation with our Lord in 'His kingdom. Hardness of heart and callousness, are evidences of degradation, and many inherit these things 'from their ancestors, while many can be thankful that they have inherited from their ancestors the loving disposition which gives them a good start off in the race. When we know how much God has forgiven us, and how much we need forgiveness, it should make us more and more of the forgiving disposition which is well pleasing in:the sight of God.

There are 'times in our lives when we might brighten some amongst whom we move, with a few kind words; kind thoughts cannot be read without being put into practice. In this way generous impulses may leave footprints on the sands of time. The words of a hymn again remind us—"Thus do we pass from this earth and its toiling, only remembered by what we have done."

Our Lord said—"Blessed are the merciful." They are the kind to whom the heavenly Father will be pleased Lo extend His mercy and favour. They are the only ones who will be in a proper attitude to receive the great blessing of the kingdom. May we always apply this lesson to ourselves in regard to our dealings with 'the brethren and with our neighbours. What matters it to us whether they mean evil or good, have we not God's assurance that all things are working together for good to them that love Him? And this being the case why should we have the slightest resentment against the persons or instrumentalities in any way used of the Lord in connection with our affairs. Those who thus trust in the Lord and those only, are able to properly view and meet the affairs of life. The climax of the situation here is to cast off those things that drag one down, and hold fast and cultivate that disposition that lifts one up, as another has written—"all do not know it, but it is a fact that the grandest quality that man can exercise, and the one which brings the largest amount of blessing itself is the exercise of the Godlike quality of mercy, compassion, benevolence."

“Think It Not Strange”

Why should we think it strange when trials come?
How can we ever murmur, or be dumb
When we should peaceful be and ever say,
Let God be magnified in life alway?

Where is our faith, if we in trial fret?
God never fails, He will not once forget,
Nor will: He ever leave the weakest saint,;—
Then why should we despond, or fear, or faint?

We should look up, and trust our gracious God,
Since we are saved and bought by poured out blood;
How can we e'er forget that Glorious One,
Who died to save—God's well-beloved Son?

A life 'of praise, since saved by Sovereign grace,
Should be our aim,—saved out from Adam's race;
Our daily life for Him who freely died
Should be a song, however we are tried.

God is, and God is love, He will not fail,
But in, and over all He must prevail;
Then let us look on high, and trust in Him,
With all: our soul, with faith that ne'er grows dim.

God is our Refuge, and our strength as well,
And we are saved, and blessed in Him as well;
How can we fail to praise Him and adore,
Our Glorious Lord, whose Presence is so sure?

Come then ye saints, and sing with heart and voice,
Lift up your heads, the Lord is here, rejoice;
Trials, troubles, sorrows, only draw us nearer
To Him, our blessed Lord and Head, and Heaven seems dearer.

—Selected.

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A supply of the new edition of these helpful little books, printed by the “Dawn” brethren, is now on hand. It is an exact reprint of the original book, having also the Berean Questions bound in the back. Neat in appearance with blue, paper cover, it is Priced at 1/- per copy, post paid.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute,

19 Ermington Place, Kew, E4, Melbourne,

Victoria, Australia.

(Monthly) 2/6 (60 cents) per annum, post paid,

While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported,

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The Resurrection Body of the Lord and His Saints

SOME still think that the Lord now wears the the body of humiliation with its five bleeding wounds received on Calvary. If such were true, then all the martyred saints, “planted together in the likeness of His death,” and to share “in the likeness of His resurrection,” (Rom. 6:5) would also have their poor rack-mangled bodies and broken limbs, and some like St. Paul, having been beheaded, would he either heads without bodies, or bodies without heads; and what of those ‘whose poor bodies were burned to ashes! .

A proper understanding of the resurrection saves all such confusion. “And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be . . . But God giveth it (the individual or new creature, the being) a body as it bath pleased him” (1 Cor. 15:37, 38). “It is sown a natural, body, it is raised a spiritual body” (see verse 44). “If the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Cor. 5:1). So, St. Peter says Christ was “put to death in the flesh but quickened (raised) in the spirit” (see literal Greek Diaglott translation, 1 Pet. 3:18).

The body of Jesus was no doubt taken care of and during the six weeks prior to His ascension, He did on one occasion appear in that form in order to convince Thomas of His resurrection, but He did not always appear in that body. As a spirit being, He had power to materialise, miraculously assuming a human body as did the angels appearing to Abraham and others of old time. Once He appeared as a gardener to Mary and again as a stranger to the disciples on the way to Emmaus. Then again in another form as a stranger on the sea shore. On no occasion (excepting to convince Thomas) was He recognised by His bodily appearance; it was always by His tone of voice or His words and the way He had of “breaking bread and giving thanks.”

After His ascension and glorification, He was never again seen in human form, for He is now in the “express image of the Father’s person” (Heb. 1:3); highly exalted above all principalities, and powers in the heavens (Col. 1:16, 17). The Apostle assures us that on coming again, it will not be in any body of humiliation, but in great power and glory, and our Lord says the same thing in the parable in Matt. 25:31. “In His glory and all the holy angels with Him.” The Apostle John (1 Johri 3:2), says we do not know what our Lord is like, so we do not know what we shall be like, but we do know that when we shall see Him we shall be like Him.

Some seem to think that the angel said as Jesus ascended in the cloud, that He would come again in the same bodily form as they saw Him, go, but the angel did not say anything of the kind. What was said was, “This same Jesus which ye have seen taken up into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go.” There was no mention that anyone would see Him come back, but simply that He would come back and in the clouds. It was like the parables, a picture with a large meaning. The clouds picture the clouds of trouble by which His presence will be made known, and these clouds we see hovering over the world to-day.

Jesus was no longer a human being; He gave His flesh, His humanity, for the life of the world. “He was put to death flesh, raised spirit,” and highly exalted “to the express image of the Father’s person,” “whom no man can see.” So Jesus never again appeared in human form. When Paul got a glimpse of His glory on the way to Damascus, he was blinded; he could not see. His form but just saw the brightness and heard the voice.

Jesus truly said, “The world seeth me no more, but ye (the church) shall see me,” because “I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also” (John 14). Paul also states, “Though we have known Christ after the flesh henceforth know we Him (.4:)) no more” (2 Cor. 5:16).

No, He does not come again to suffer death for the world, in a body of humiliation, but He comes in power and great glory to dethrone Satan, the wicked “prince of this world” and to take the control of earth and bring in righteousness and peace and goodwill and to make the whole earth as the garden of Eden.

Satan is a powerful spirit being, invisible to human eyes, having much more power than if visible and confined to the limitations of human nature, in a human body. Christ is a much more powerful spirit being; He is the “stronger man” that is going to bind the “strong man” (Satan) and reign in his stead. He, too, will have much more power to assist mankind by His influences, His spirit of love, mercy, goodness, justice, truth, righteousness and wisdom, than if He were again in human form with its limitations. He was made flesh, “a little lower than angels, for the suffering of death.” He paid the price of sin and purchased the world—“He died, rose and revived that He might be the Lord (owner) of the dead and the living.” Having chosen His Church as joint-heirs in the Kingdom, during the Gospel Age; (Rev. 3:21), He now comes to lift up the poor, groaning creation out of its depravity and restore mankind to the image of God. “To bless all the families of the earth.” (Rom. 8:19-22: Gal. 3:16, 29).

Ransom Points to be Remembered.

Ransom used in Scriptures.

WHEN EVER the word Ransom is used in the Scriptures it has the sense of ransom-price according to the Greek—a corresponding price, a sufficient price.

Meaning of Ransoming.

Ransoming signifies the application of the ransom-price. Thus when we read that our Lord Jesus gave himself a ransom-price for all, the meaning is that His sacrifice, finished at Calvary, is a sufficient price to effect the ransoming of all mankind, if so applied or when so applied.

Providing and Applying Ransom-price.

Our Lord laid down His life; He died on our behalf; He gave our ransom-price into the Father’s hands when he offered Himself without spot to God. But the putting of that vicarious sacrifice into God’s hands and the application of that merit to mankind are two different matters.

Laying down the Ransom-price.

The laying down of the ransom-price was finished at Calvary; but the application of it was not even begun for fifty days. Three days our Redeemer was dead—arising on the third day. Then for forty days He was with the Disciples, appearing occasionally for their instruction. Then He ascended upon high, there “to appear in the presence of God for us,” and promptly on the fiftieth day, Pentecost, the outpouring of the holy spirit upon God’s believing and consecrated servants and handmaidens began.

Proof that the Church had been Ransomed.

Pentecost was the proof that our glorified Lord had applied the merit of His sacrifice, had applied His blood as our ransom-price. Pentecost was therefore a proof that the Church had been ransomed—that the antitypical sprinkling of His blood by our great High Priest on the mercy-seat, or propitiatory, “for us” had been accomplished, and that it was satisfactory to justice, and that our sins were cancelled. Thereupon

the High Priest began at once his secondary offering of His “members”— “living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God.” (Rom. 12:1.). This in the type was represented by the killing of “The Lord’s Goat”—”The goat of the sin-offering that is for the people.”—Lev. 16:15.

Ransom-price all necessary for the Church.

The ransom-price all went for the atonement of our sins when the great High Priest appeared “for us.” That ransom-price bought us (1 Cor. 6:20); but was applied for no others and blessings came upon no others. It is “for all” (1 Tim. 2:6), but has not yet been so applied. .

Philosophy of applying Ransom-price.

It took all of that merit or ransom-price to make atonement for our sins—because it was so applied. It would have required all of it for even one man’s release. It is because the penalty or sentence of death passed, “upon all men to condemnation,” through one man’s offence or sin, that the one man’s death can be applied for more than one man’s release from condemnation. But whatever the number it is applied for, it takes it all to effect the release from condemnation.

High Priest now has no merit to apply.

So, then, the High Priest, having applied the entire ransom-price “for us,” “on our behalf” (Heb. 9:24), for the blemishes or condemnation of those now accepted as His members and His house—the household of faith—it follows that he has no merit now remaining to apply for the world. The ransom-price which was sufficient for one man or for all men was applied only “for us,” “for our sins.”

The Hope of the World.

Ah, it has not been forgotten in the divine purpose, and in due time it will be ransomed—”the precious blood,” the ransom-price, will be applied on the mercy-seat for the sins of all the people. Then the holy spirit will be poured out upon all flesh.

Re Church paying World’s Ransom-price.

What ! will the Church pay the world’s ransom-price ? Not so. It is the divine arrangement that in all things He (Jesus) should have the preeminence. Jesus’ merit, as we have seen, is now fully in use—accredited to us who are of the household of faith, for our justification by faith. We are counted, or reckoned, as possessing the earthly rights and life forfeited by Adam and redeemed by Jesus. But this reckoning or justification is confirmed to us of God by the holy spirit’s begetting to a new nature only because of our consecration vow to the Lord that we would lay down our lives, sacrificing all earthly interests and rights as He did—walking fully in His steps, being baptised into His death, drinking of His cup of ignominy—partaking with our Head of “the blood of the New Covenant,” by which as a legacy or testament the ransom-price blessing shall in due time be bequeathed to natural Israel—with the proviso that all mankind may be blessed by becoming Israelites indeed on the human plane of restitution—Abraham’s earthly seed— as the sands of the sea for multitude.

Re returning Ransom-price to High Priest.

Note, then, that the one ransom-price, laid down by our Lord at Calvary, was all paid over to Justice “on our behalf,” “for us,” as was acknowledged at Pentecost and since, by the holy spirit upon the Lord’s servants and handmaidens. Note also that the restitution rights which we are now using as sharers in our Lord’s sacrifice must all be surrendered back to justice before the great High Priest can present that same

ransom-price again on behalf of the world, under the New Covenant conditions.

Classes developed under original Abrahamic Covenant.

“Ye shall all die like men,” or as men, writes the Lord through the prophet. (Psa. 82:7.). There are three classes developed under God’s original Covenant with Abraham—The Grace or Sarah Covenant. (1) The “little flock” of under-priests —members of the Body of the High Priest. These suffer with Him, sharing “His death,” “His cup,” “baptised into His death.” (2) The “great company,” who consecrated unto death and were begotten of the spirit, but who “through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” These must die, but not as parts of Christ’s body, not as parts of His sacrifice. They must suffer “the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit (new nature) may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” (3) Those who wilfully turn from and repudiate their consecration to sacrifice must die the Second Death. These are described by St. Paul as treating despitefully the One who paid their ransom- price and accepted them as His members, sanctifying them apart as His joint-sacrificers and joint-sharers of His glory in connection with the great work of mediating the New Covenant, under which Israel and the world will be blessed.— Heb. 10:29.

Death of All Sanctified.

All of these three classes, all whose justification and sacrifice of sanctification were accepted by the Lord—as evidenced by their receiving the holy spirit as His servants and handmaidens—all these must die before the New Covenant with Israel and mankind will be sealed. They must lay down all earthly justification and earthly rights, , forever, before the one ransom-price can be back into the hands of justice to the credit of the High Priest, that He may therewith appear in the presence of God to make an atonement with His ransom-price for the sins of all the people. Then, at the close of this age and the opening of the Millennium, our Lord, who as the man Christ Jesus gave Himself a ransom-price for all, will have presented that price “for all.” Thus “He is the propitiation (expiator—Strong’s Lexicon) for our sins (the Church’s sins), and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John 2:2). The expiations are separate and distinct, but the one sacrifice, finished at Calvary, is the ransom-price by which both expiations are to be effected. (Z. 1909-349.).

Correspondence.

Victoria,

11th Sept., 1938. Dear Brother,

Time passes quickly since my last letter to you. The common round, the little trials and testings are ever with one, making it ever necessary to wait upon the Lord that He might strengthen the heart.

I would mention that I have tendered my resignation as a member of the Methodist Church, feeling it the right thing to do. My feelings and emotions regarding it all are such that seems best not to write. The Lord understands and I would leave it in His hands, trusting Him to keep and guide me in coming days. I have stated my readiness to conduct services if required to do so, preaching according to the Word alone, as led of the spirit to understand it.

It appears, Brother, that world events are moving rapidly and especially lately have I noticed how men's hearts are failing them for fear. I seek ever as I can to point beyond the trouble time, but realise, too, how great the need of patience just now.

Last time I wrote I enquired about a Revised Version N.T., and would now like one for about 2/6, the price quoted for secondhand ones; and would like also two more of the pocket "Divine Plan of the Ages." Deduct this amount from the money at credit with you; also place a further 5/- to the Tract Fund Account. I would like also another copy of September "People's Paper."

I am enclosing some thoughts on Heb. 10:38. If of any use I am glad. They contain nothing but what is known to most readers I know but if of any use at all just use them accordingly.

Things are very dry up here feed for stock having been a problem all this season; crops are for the greater part very backward. Falling prices, too, all conspire together, as it were, to capture our minds to the cares of this world, but grace will be sufficient I know.

With much Christian love to yourself and to all "led of His spirit."

Victoria,

10th Sept., 1938. Dear Brother,

I was very pleased to hear from you, the letter having reached me on time. Thank you for writing. Almost daily I had planned to write you; I have worked hard, late and early, needless to say often over tired, very thankful for good health and strength, with constantly renewed faith in God; under His guidance I cheerfully press on, spiritually and temporally also.

Yes, I would be delighted to come down occasionally for the Sunday meetings, but finance is a drawback. Happily the Lord's children are always meeting new and very welcome surprises in the Lord's blessings, so that if circumstances do not permit our much desired personal contact and fellowship, we are one, just the same; never separated, one in spirit, heart and loving unity, and so it is natural to remember one another and pray for one another and so fulfil the law of Christ.

I note your progress in the studies Luke and Hebrews; I would have enjoyed it had I been there. I will read Vol. 2, "The Manner of Our Lord's Return." I think that is so vitally important; without a clear understanding we are totally in the dark. I am pleased to say that to me it seems clear—so much so, that one almost marvels at the blindness tradition has inflicted on the nominal church. I will read up Vol. 2 on it again.

I realise the hearty welcome awaiting the Brother from W.A., also Bro N. I'll be with you, though out here, in those welcomes. I am glad to hear of the good prospects for the Kingdom Cards; perhaps later I may see some scope for their circulation, also other literature in this part.

As I suppose, and it was only reasonable too, most of our Class wondered if I would continue on, or do as most others, disagree on some point of Scripture and leave. If that was so, well just for once how glad you are that you were mistaken, and now rejoice with me, for I did not know if I would remain, but I had an open mind. I heard

a few explanations that astonished me; it wrecked some of my own ideas, but I decided to look further into them, really desiring to know only the Truth. And new as it was to me I saw it clearly and gladly, and thankfully embraced it. I cannot just now tell you all the knowledge and blessing I received through those fellowship meetings; every day I am rejoicing over them.

Kindly convey my Christian love to all the brethren and assure them of my loyalty, love and prayers on their behalf.

Your fellow traveller to the Heavenly Kingdom.

South Australia, September, 1938.

Berean Bible Institute,

Melbourne, Vic.

I must thank you for sending along so many interesting papers concerning God's great plan of salvation and restoration. It is such welcome news after holding other beliefs for so long. Although, after having a great grief in my life, I began to think for myself there must be some other interpretation of the Scriptures.

I am so glad, to be in touch with someone who has confirmed what is more consistent with a God of love.

Yours in the blessed hope of our Redeemer,

South Australia.

To the Brethren,

Berean Bible Institute.

I had one of your papers called "The Voice" sent to me; subject, "The Troubled Word's Hope."

For the last three years I have been blessed with the knowledge that the Kingdom of our blessed Lord is the only hope for the world of mankind, and that the present age is for calling and disciplining those for that great honour of reigning with Christ for the purpose of blessing those who have not been enlightened as yet; that Christ died for them and is to give them that knowledge that they may have opportunity of believing into Him, that He may give them life free from the Adamic penalty with all its sorrow, pain and death.

As you are giving a special' offer of one of your publications, "Foregleams of the Golden Age," I would be glad if you would send one to me, as I am very interested in the good tidings that we are so privileged to know, when most people cannot see those things are taught in God's Word.

I will enclose the 2/- for the special price of the book which I. will look forward to receiving, and remain

Yours in the one hope,

South Australia.

Berean Bible Institute,

Melbourne.

Dear Sirs,

Please send per post the book "Foregleams of the Golden Age" that is quoted in your paper, "The Voice."

I have at different times received your paper from an unknown friend from Murray Bridge, S.A. The papers are very nice reading indeed. (Later.) In reply to your letter I am pleased to say I received the book "Foregleams of the Golden Age." I am progressing slowly with the reading and have read the booklet "A New Dictator," also the July and September issues of the "People's Paper" which I like very much, and will you please send me a copy each month. Postal note for 2/6 enclosed.

I will now close with Christian regards and best wishes. Yours truly,

"A Review of The Doctrines."

This book of 92 pages by Brother H. J. Shearn, of England, previously sold with a cloth cover at 1/6, is now available in paper binding at 6d. per copy, post paid.

While not agreeing with all the thoughts expressed, It will be found a useful book, especially as a Class study. The brief statements on the various doctrines leaves scope for additional expressions by individual members, and Classes interested are invited to send for samples.

"Poems of Dawn."

Friends interested in a reproduction of the book of selected poems, "Poems of Dawn," are asked to communicate with us.

Containing over 230 very helpful poems expressive of the Christian life and hopes to come, as well as numerous page fillers this little hook has been sought after quite often by the brethren since it has been out of print. While it would seem that the demand would not warrant a printing in the usual way, it is thought that it could be produced in handy size, with clear type suitable to all (not capital letters), at reasonable price, by duplicator, should sufficient be required.

All desiring copies are asked to state if possible the number they could use should the work be undertaken.

"The Photo-Drama of Creation."

A limited number of the "Scenario of the Photo-Drama of Creation" is now available. This book, well known to many of our readers, contains a very helpful description of God's Plan of the Ages, in short, complete articles, each of which is accompanied by fitting illustrations. This makes the book very interesting for children as well as grown-ups. The plan of God is traced from beginning to end by the 96 concise articles and nearly 400 illustrations.

Friends desiring copies of these books are advised to make early application. In two bindings—with

strong paper covers, at 3/6; in de luxe, beautifully bound, with gold edges, at 4/9, post paid.

Hymn Books.

The brethren of the Bible Students Committee, England, are now preparing a new hymn book of words, as all previous editions are out of print.

As the new books are to contain all the "Dawn Hymns" the additional ones found in the "Christian Hymns," and further selections making in all about 450 hymns, they will no doubt be very good and useful for those Classes or individual brethren in need of new books.

A supply is expected to reach us in the course of some weeks, and orders may be placed for delivery on arrival. The price is expected to be in the vicinity of 1/- for single copies.

Bible Class Assemblies.

Melbourne.—Clyde House, 182 Collins Street (near Town Hall), First Floor, Room 7 — Sundays, 3.30 p.m. and 6.45 p.m.; Thursdays, 7.45 p.m.

Adelaide.—O B. I. Hall, Wakefield Street, Sundays 3 p.m. and 6.30 p.m.;

Perth — Druid's Chambers, (The Basement), 459 Hay Street, East,—Sundays, 3.45 p.m. and 6.45 p.m.

Sydney.—Child Study Rooms, 75 Liverpool Street—Sundays, 3.30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Published by Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E4 Printed by Hickling 9, Powell, Brunswick Victoria.