



Volume XL No.11 MELBOURNE, NOVEMBER, 1957 Price— Five pence

## The Third Heaven.

“It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth ;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which is not lawful for man to utter. ” (2 Cor. 12:1-4.),

BEFORE investigating these verses which describe the wonderful experience of the Apostle Paul it is fitting to examine, to some extent, the extraordinary event of this Apostle’s conversion on the Damascus road. The full account is given in some detail in Acts 9. Briefly stated, the record reveals that while Paul was on a mission intent on persecuting the followers of Christ, he was confronted with a most amazing situation, as stated in verses 3 to 6 as follows—”And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.”

In Damascus the Lord instructed a certain disciple, Ananias, to contact Saul and inform him that he was a chosen servant to serve His cause forthwith. Ananias at first objected that Saul had come on a mission of persecution of the Lord’s people, but the answer from the Lord was unmistakable—”Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Paul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou tamest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the holy spirit. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.” (Acts 9:15-20.)

Later, in Paul’s ministry for the Lord, in his defence before king Agrippa, we find the same information beautifully revealed by the Apostle. (See Acts 26:12-20.) In verse 19 we read—”Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.” No, indeed; what a lovely witness! This spontaneous acceptance by Paul of the Lord’s revelation to him, no doubt gained for him additional

favours and blessings with increased revelations, which clearly marked the Apostle Paul as the most enlightened of all the apostles, next to the Lord Jesus Himself.

Again, in his letter to the Galatians, we find further helpful reference to Paul's ministry under the influence of the holy spirit, as follows—"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ . . . Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days . . . Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles." (See Gal. 1:11-24; 2:1, 2.)

We gather from the above references that the Apostle Paul was so fully under the guidance of the Lord, as a specially chosen vessel, and we are, then, somewhat prepared for his amazing statement contained in our text. Quoting another translation of this passage in 2 Cor. 12, it reads—"I am obliged to boast. It is not profitable, but I will proceed to visions and revelations of the Lord." Then, in verse 11, he declares—"I have descended to folly, but you have compelled me. Why, you ought to have been my vindicators; for in no respect have I been inferior to the preeminent apostles, even though I am nothing." The Apostle seemed to feel he was foolish in being required to boast of his prominence in the service of the Lord through visions and revelations, but he claimed he was compelled to do so because of the Corinthians' lack of appreciation of himself as the Lord's representative and the vital message of truth which he brought them. Even though Paul may have felt self-conscious in his boasting to some extent, yet, of course, he did all things as in the service of his Lord, and there can be no doubt that the record he sent to the Corinthian church has been most beneficial to many others as well, including ourselves.

Before examining our text, another statement from the Apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians is appropriate, as it is closely related to our subject. (See 1 Cor. 15:1-10.) Verse 8 reads—"And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." This occasion when Paul saw the Lord would seem to be when he was on the way to Damascus, and the Lord called a halt to his mission of persecution of the saints. Truly, it was "as of one born out of due time," because the brilliance of our Lord's appearance would have struck Paul dead, but for the protection given by the Lord Himself. However, He allowed just sufficient effect from the experience to give Paul the required lesson, and direct his zeal and devotion to the service of the true God.

The expression—"born out of due time"—implies that the Apostle saw the Lord, even though for a moment, just as he would see Him when raised to the spirit nature. Thus, Paul was given that privilege as though he was, for that moment, "born of the spirit." Also, in 1 Cor. 9:1, we read—"Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" So, while Paul had not seen Jesus while He was on earth, he did see Him in this most wonderful way, in glory—"as of one born out of due time." Knowing thus of the Apostle's extraordinary experiences at the time of his conversion on the way to Damascus and after, we can the better appreciate his words in our text passage in 2 Cor. 12—"I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord."

In reviewing the circumstances respecting these wonderful visions and revelations received by the Apostle, it is interesting to compare the early days of his Christian life, following the Damascus conversion, with the early part of Jesus' ministry. In Matt. 3:16, 17 we read of Jesus' baptism and receiving of the holy spirit, and in chapter 4 we find that our Lord was "led up of the spirit into the wilderness," and that He fasted forty days—no doubt in communion with His Heavenly Father, that He

may know and understand the Father's will for Him during His earthly sojourn. Likewise, we have noted that Paul did not seek instruction from the other apostles when entering upon his ministry, but he "went into Arabia," no doubt there to commune with the Lord and be guided in his important ministry. It would seem, then, that while the Apostle Paul was granted to see the Lord at the time of his conversion on the Damascus road, it would probably be in the Arabian wilderness that he received the amazing revelations we are about to examine in 2 Cor. 12.

From verse 2 we read again—"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth." So amazing was this experience that Paul could not tell whether he was transported bodily, or carried away in the spirit, to behold what he relates as—"such an one caught up to the third heaven."

There has been much speculation as to what Paul meant by being "caught up in the third heaven," but from other Scriptures we are able to understand this matter quite clearly. Turning to 2 Pet. 3:5-13, we see how the Apostle Peter explains the various "heavens and earth" of the past, of the present, and of the future.

From verses 5 and 6 we read—"By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world (kosmos—order of things, comprising heaven and earth) that then was, being overflowed with water, perished,"—at the time of the Flood in Noah's day.

The Apostle Peter continues — "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, (at the time Peter wrote—'this present evil world'), by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men . . . The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works of man that are therein shall be burned up,"—symbolically speaking. (Verses 7, 10.) In this connection we call to mind the words of Jesus—"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt. 24:35.)

The Apostle adds — "Nevertheless we, according to God's promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (Verse 13.) To sum up the matter from the Apostle Peter we find

The first heavens — prior to the Flood in Noah's day.

The second heavens—from Noah's day to the second advent of Christ.

The third heavens — the new heavens or spiritual ruling power in the age to come.

So, the Apostle Paul was carried forward in spirit on the stream of time to the third heaven, or period of the Kingdom Age, and it is little wonder that he could not tell whether he was taken bodily, or caught away in spirit.

In verses 3 and 4 of 2 Cor. 12, the Apostle repeats that he did not know how his "third heaven" experience was revealed, but—"He was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." This is of added interest to us, that Paul mentioned he was "caught up into paradise," as well as "caught up to the third heaven."

In Rev. 2:7 we read—"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." This is a reference to the heavenly paradise, the inheritance of all the faithful overcomers of the Gospel Age. We can but wonder at the splendour of that heavenly paradise, but apparently Paul was given a preview, so to speak, and heard "unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter." Yes, we can well realise that it would not be fitting to convey the scene of the heavenly

paradise to earthly language, but this revelation was apparently given to Paul because of the great importance of his ministry to the early church, and throughout the Gospel Age, for the upbuilding of the church which is the Body of Christ. Even though we are not able to visualise the heavenly paradise, it does us good to contemplate the grandeur of that celestial scene with the various planes of

spirit beings, all doing loving and faithful service to God and to Christ on His Kingly throne of glory, encircled by His Bride. Then there would be the Great Company serving before the throne, and the multitude of heavenly hosts, including those who were restored to obedience through the judgment of Christ and His church.

Further, Paul would behold the earthly paradise restored, the whole earth being like the Garden of Eden, and mankind restored to the “image of God” from which Adam fell because of disobedience. We are reminded of the earthly paradise by the words of Jesus to the thief on the cross—“Verily I say unto thee today, thou shalt be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:42, 43.) What a wonderful picture the restored world of humanity would also present to the Apostle in this revelation of the third heaven —“caught up into paradise.” Surely we can rejoice as we contemplate the restored paradise on earth, as well as that of which we can grasp but little as respects the heavenly paradise.

We are reminded also that the Apostle John was given many wonderful visions by our Lord on the Isle of Patmos, so that he might record the Book of Revelation. He also was apparently carried forward on the stream of time to the “Lord’s day”—the Kingdom Age—and looked back upon the scenes of this Gospel Age. (See Rev. 1:10.)

While the Lord’s people generally are not granted visions and revelations such as Paul experienced, especially in this end of the age, yet they have much spiritual enlightenment and blessing from the Lord while still in the house of their pilgrimage, as they seek to know more and more about the wonderful heavenly treasures, as expressed by Paul— “God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” And again —“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.” (Eph. 2:6; Col. 1:12, 13.)

## Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention will be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th, in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. They extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend any or all these gatherings, and further information is obtainable from the Class Secretary--Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E.13, Victoria.

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Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria Australia

## Knowledge Shall Increase.

THE wonderful achievement of the Russian scientists in hurling the earth-satellite into space to encircle the earth at the rate of about 18,000 miles an hour, at a height of about 560 miles, is certainly capturing the attention of millions of people throughout the world. The fact that this satellite has been seen by the naked eye quite readily, adds interest to such an accomplishment, which, along with so many happenings of this twentieth century, would have been thought sheer nonsense had it been deemed possible even twenty or thirty years ago.

A great number of people apparently have good cause to fear the ability of a foreign power to launch an earth- satellite, because it has been definitely stated that the mechanism to accomplish this could also launch intercontinental missiles. Thus it would now be possible to hurl projectiles capable of destroying the largest cities of the world from the other side of the globe. We are not surprised that a columnist in one of our Melbourne daily papers writes as follows:-

"Nearly two years ago, nine famous scientists, including Einstein, issued a warning to the world. 'Here, then, is the problem which we present to you, stark and dreadful and inescapable,' they said. 'Shall we put an end to the human race? Or shall mankind renounce war?' The presence overhead of an earth-satellite means the time to answer those questions is almost here."

The consideration of such startling inventions of our day is surely most appropriate for all thinking people, and to know the Plan of God respecting the outcome of all the achievements of mankind, which God in His wisdom has permitted at this particular time in the history of the human family, is truly most heart satisfying, and which the greatest inventions of man cannot disturb or terrify, for the simple reason that God's Plan is being worked out partly by the very accomplishments of His human creatures. A review of events leading up to present-day achievements and the ultimate outcome, as seen from the Bible record, is now presented from the study—"Divine Plan of the Ages"—which, it is thought, should prove both interesting and helpful to our readers. The extracts are as follows:—

"From a human standpoint we can account for modern inventions thus: The invention of printing, in A.D. 1440, may be considered the starting point. With the printing of books came records of the thoughts and discoveries of thinkers and observers, which, without this invention, would never have been known to their successors. With books came a general education and, finally, common schools. Schools and colleges do not increase human capacity, but they do make mental exercise more general, and hence help to develop the capacity already possessed. As knowledge becomes more general and books more common, the generations possessing these have a decided advantage over previous generations; not only in that there are now a thousand thinkers to one formerly, to sharpen and stimulate each other with suggestions, but also in that each of the later generations has, through books, the combined experience of the past in addition to its own. Education and the laudable ambition which accompanies it, enterprise, and a desire to achieve distinction and a competency, aided by the record and descriptions of inventions in the daily press, have stimulated and brightened man's perceptive powers, and put each upon the alert to discover or to invent, if possible, something for the good and convenience of society. Hence we suggest that modern invention, looked at from a purely human standpoint, teaches, not an increase of brain capacity, but a sharpened perception from natural causes.

"And now we come to the Scriptures to see what they teach on the subject; for while we believe, as suggested above, that invention and the increase of knowledge, etc., among men are the result's of natural causes, yet we believe that these natural causes were all planned and ordered by God long ago, and that in due time they have come to pass—by His overruling providence, whereby He 'worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.' (Eph. 1:11.) According to the plan revealed in His word, God purposed to

permit sin and misery to misrule and oppress the world for six thousand years, and then in the seventh millennium to restore all things, and to extirpate evil—destroying it and its consequences by Jesus Christ, whom He hath afore ordained to do this work. Hence, as the six thousand years of the reign of evil began to draw to a close, God permitted circumstances to favor discoveries in the study of both His Book of Revelation and His Book of Nature, as well as in the preparation of mechanical and chemical appliances useful in the blessing and uplifting of mankind during the Millennial Age, now about to be introduced. That this was God's plan is clearly indicated by the prophetic statement: 'O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end; (then) many shall run to and fro, and KNOWLEDGE (not capacity) shall be increased,' 'and none of the wicked shall understand (God's plan and way), but the wise shall understand ;'and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time.'—Dan. 12:1, 4, 10.

“To some it may appear strange that God did not so arrange that the present inventions and blessings should sooner have come to man to alleviate the curse. It should be remembered, however, that God's plan has been to give mankind a full appreciation of the curse, in order that when the blessing comes upon all they may forever have decided upon the unprofitableness of sin. Furthermore, God foresaw and has foretold what the world does not yet realise, namely, that His choicest blessings would lead to and be productive of greater evils if bestowed upon those whose hearts are not in accord with the righteous laws of the universe. Ultimately it will be seen that God's present permission of increased blessings is a practical lesson on this subject, which may serve as an example of this principle to all eternity—to angels as well as to restored men. How this can be, we merely suggest:

“First: So long as mankind is in the present fallen or depraved condition, without stringent laws and penalties and a government strong enough to enforce them, the selfish propensities will hold more or less sway over all. And with the unequal individual capacities of men considered, it cannot possibly happen otherwise than that the result of the invention of laboursaving machinery must, after the flurry and stimulus occasioned by the manufacture of machinery, tend to make the rich richer, and the poor poorer. The manifest tendency is toward monopoly and self-aggrandisement, which places the advantage directly in the hands of those whose capacity and natural advantages are already the most favorable.

“Secondly: If it were possible to legislate so as to divide the present wealth and its daily increase evenly among all classes, which is not possible, still, without human perfection or a supernatural government to regulate human affairs, the results would be even more injurious than the present condition. If the advantages of labour-saving machinery and all modern appliances were evenly divided, the result would, ere long, be a great decrease of hours of labour and a great increase in leisure. Idleness is a most injurious thing to fallen beings. Had it not been for the necessity of labour and sweat of face, the deterioration of our race would have been much more rapid than it has been. Idleness is the mother of vice; and mental, moral and physical degradation are sure to follow. Hence the wisdom and goodness of God in withholding these blessings until it was due time for their introduction as a preparation for the Millennial reign of blessing. Under the control of the supernatural government of the Kingdom of God, not only will all blessings be equitably divided among men, but the leisure will be so ordered and directed by the same supernatural government that its results will produce virtue and tend upward towards perfection, mental, moral and physical. The present multiplication of inventions and other blessings of increasing knowledge is permitted in this 'day of preparation' to come about in so natural a way that men flatter themselves that it is because this is the 'Brain Age ;' but it will be permitted in great measure to work out in a manner very much to the disappointment, no doubt, of these wise philosophers. It is the very increase of these blessings that is already beginning to bring upon the world the time of trouble, which will be such as never has been since there was a nation.

“The prophet Daniel, as quoted above, links together the increase of knowledge and the time of trouble. The knowledge causes the trouble, because of the depravity of the race. The increase of knowledge has

not only given the world wonderful labour-saving machinery and conveniences, but it has also led to an increase of medical skill whereby thousands of lives are prolonged, and it has so enlightened mankind that human butchery, war, is becoming less popular, and thus, too, other thousands are spared to multiply still further the race, which is increasing more rapidly today, perhaps, than at any other period of history. Thus, while mankind is multiplying rapidly, the necessity for his labour is decreasing correspondingly; and the 'Brain Age' philosophers have a problem before them to provide for the employment and sustenance of this large and rapidly increasing class whose services, for the most part supplanted by machinery, can be dispensed with, but whose necessities and wants know no bounds. The solution of this problem, these philosophers must ultimately admit, is beyond their brain capacity.

“Selfishness will continue to control the wealthy, who hold the power and advantage, and will blind them to common sense as well as to justice; while a similar selfishness, combined with the instinct of self-preservation and an increased knowledge of their rights, will nerve some and inflame others of the poorer classes, and the result of these *blessings* will, for a time, prove terrible—a time of trouble, truly, such as was not since there was a nation—and this, because man in a depraved condition cannot properly use these blessings unguided and uncontrolled. Not until the Millennial reign shall have rewritten the law of God **in** the restored human heart will men be capable of using full liberty without injury or danger.

“The day of trouble will end in due time, when He who came to the raging Sea of Galilee will likewise, with authority, command the raging sea of human passion, saying, ‘Peace! Be still!’ When the Prince of Peace shall ‘stand up’ in authority, a great calm will be the result. Then the raging and clashing elements shall recognise the authority of ‘Jehovah’s Anointed,’ the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;’ and **in** the reign of Christ thus begun ‘shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’

“Then men will see that what they attributed to evolution or natural development and the smartness of the ‘Brain Age’ was, instead, the flashings of Jehovah’s lightnings (Psa. 77:18) in the day of his preparation’ for the blessing of mankind. But as yet only the saints can see, and only the wise in heavenly wisdom can understand this; for ‘The secret of the Lord is with them that fear (reverence) him; and he will show them his covenant.’ (Psa. 25:14.) Thanks be to God, that while general knowledge has been increased, He has also arranged that His children need ‘not be unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord’ and in the appreciation of His plans. And by this appreciation of His Word and plans we are enabled to discern and to withstand the vain philosophies and foolish traditions’ of men which contradict the Word of God.

“The Bible account of man’s creation is that God created him perfect and upright, an earthly image of Himself; that man sought out various inventions and defiled himself (Gen. 1:27; Rom. 5:12; Eccl. 7:29); that, all being sinners, the race was unable to help itself, and none could by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him (Psa. 49:7, 15); that God in compassion and love had made provision for this; that, accordingly, the Son of God became a man, and gave man’s ransom-price; that, as a reward for this sacrifice, and in order to the completion of the great work of atonement, He was highly exalted, even to the divine nature; and that in due time He will bring to pass a restitution of the race to the original perfection and to every blessing then possessed. These things are clearly taught in the Scriptures, from beginning to end, and are in direct opposition to the Evolution theory; or, rather, such babblings of science, falsely so called,’ are in violent and irreconcilable conflict with the Word of God.”

## Correspondence.

U.S.A., Aug. 13th, '57

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brethren—Loving Christian Greetings. Once more it is my privilege and pleasure to be able, by our dear Lord's goodness, to herein send you my check for to help in a small way with the publishing of the little paper, "The Herald and Peoples Paper."

Now, as I'm becoming so old (in 83rd year) I shall appreciate your continuing the sending of the "Paper" to me without my sending in renewal notice from time to time. Memory is not so good as formerly, and I do not wish to miss any copies of the pamphlet. It is my hope that you at the office may be able, by God's grace, to go on publishing the paper for some time to come. By the obituary notices in different truth publications I note that so many of our dear brethren are going "Home," or else health is failing, so that they are not able to continue with the work, and certain journals have ceased publishing, therefore we are becoming more dependent upon the few still able to continue sending out the truth as we learned it so many years ago.

I have been very sick since July, but some better now, praise the Lord. Please pray for me as I daily do for you all. Commending you to our Heavenly Father's love. Your Sister in Him.

England.

My Dear Brother—Greetings in the Name of Jesus, our Dear Saviour. I almost feel ashamed of myself at times when I come face to face with my correspondence, which I am afraid I neglect very badly. Last Sunday evening I spent on the Notes of the Adelaide Convention, which made me feel very close to you in "Spirit and in Truth" even though we are separated by so many miles, and I resolved that I would get down to send you a few lines of acknowledgement for your letters.

It was very sweet of you to take so much trouble over my enquiry about the book "The Treasure of the Humble," and I do sincerely thank you and the dear friend in Adelaide who so kindly procured it and sent it along via your good self.

Melbourne always brings back to me memories of my childhood days at the Church of England Sunday School which I attended with great regularity and at which I was awarded a book in which was a picture entitled "Christmas in Australia," the picture being of children picnicking on a lovely sunny hillside in Melbourne.

Am sorry to say that I agree with your comments on the book; that it is rather disappointing in its reading and does not contain much to add to the precious truths which we so much treasure in these closing days of the Gospel Age; certainly not in doctrine, and very little with which the Garments of Praise can be adorned. How blessed indeed we have been to have our eyes opened to the wonderful Harvest Truths which it has pleased our Loving Father to reveal in His own appointed way through channels of His own appointment.

We must not be like the little boy who was told to hold his brother's hand when crossing the street and insisted that he would be alright, he would hold his own hand and thus he crossed the street full of self-confidence. Our Father has had many faithful servants down through the years whom it has pleased Him to use, in various ways and not the least of them has been many of the hymn writers. The little incident of the boy and his self-confidence brings to mind that dear hymn No. 132 in the "Bible Students Hymnal"—"Hold Thou my hand! So weak I am and helpless," and the closing verse of that same hymn brings home

the thoughts which must have impregnated the mind of John Bunyan in his "Pilgrim's Progress" which contains some thoughts which are bound to be helpful to one whose heart has been opened to the knock of the Master, and recognised in Him—"The Way, the Truth and the Life."

400.)

On August Bank Holiday Monday I went to Ilford to the Convention of the Aldersbrook Class at which there was an Immersion Service in the morning (4 candidates), and spent a lovely and inspiring day with about 80 dear ones of like precious faith. (A very sound Class there.)

With Acts 20:32 I must conclude, sending you sincere Christian Greetings in which my dear wife joins, and our prayers continually ascend to the throne of heavenly grace with Numbers 6:24-26 on our lips for you and all His dear saints everywhere. Pray for us also; we need them and your love in Christ. In whom I remain your Brother, by divine favour.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—I have recently been introduced by an old friend to some of your literature. I have read "The Divine Plan of the Ages" and it interested me greatly. I am afraid my brain has become rusty of late years, as I do not grasp things quickly. Without help I find the Bible difficult to follow, but I would give much to find that peace of mind and spiritual happiness I have seen in some few others. I "gave away" all churches years ago, because I felt they had nothing to offer; I still think the same . . . .

We are living "in the bush" and as I have young children, it is not easy for me to get out very often. Finances at the moment are "below par" so I cannot send anything to you, but my friend assured me there was no "Welles Scheme" attached to your group, so may I leave it to you to send me whatever papers you think would be helpful to me.

I do not now send my children to Sunday School, as I refused to force them, and also I am not in favour of what is taught at any of them, but it does worry me. What am I to teach them? I do hope you can give me some help, it's awful to be just drifting on any old current. Yours very sincerely.

(The Bible stories "God's Promises Come True" and other smaller books are most helpful to assist in conveying the truths of the Bible to children.—B.B.Institute.)-

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Brother—I have received the parcel of books, "Divine Plan of the Ages" and the booklets for which I **am** truly thankful. I would like you to send me if possible "The Book of Books" reviewing the Bible as a whole. Enclosed please find cheque, any balance from this and my other letter please put it forward as a donation for the work. Thanking you again. Yours sincerely in Christ.

Dear Sir—Would you please accept the enclosed small donation to the cost of 3GL Sunday morning broadcasts. They remind me very much of the books "Divine Plan of the Ages" which I read many years ago with great profit. One does not expect the broadcasts to be successful in a commercial sense, but it is nice to know they are appreciated; hence this letter. Yours sincerely.

Dear Friend—Thank you very much for the last package of Frank and Ernest Biblical Dialogues and copies of the "Peoples Paper" you sent me. Thank you also for the book you left the last time you were out—"The Atonement Between God and Man." It is a wonderful book, and has made things clear to me that I did not understand before. Have you any other similar book you could let me have? I particularly like the sound of the one listed—"The New Creation"—but would be quite happy to receive anything else instead that you care to send. Small covering cheque enclosed. Once again my most grateful thanks. Yours very sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs—Would you kindly send me a copy of the discussion given this morning from radio station 3GL? I listen to your broadcasts whenever possible, and find them very helpful. This morning a friend called while the session was on and I was able to hear only the beginning and the end. If still available may I have a copy of the talk “The Lamb that was slain” and the one of the following Sunday. Thanking you in anticipation and blessings on your witness. Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest—I listen to your broadcasts on 3GL Geelong on Sunday morning, and find much help in my Bible study. “The Lamb that was slain” was a topic taken by you last week, and I would like a copy of it please.

Can you also explain to me what the holy spirit is; and is this the spirit people say they have when they love God as their Saviour and govern their life by His laws? To find a place in the Kingdom of heaven is it necessary to be baptized by immersion in water. Can you give references to the Bible please ? Thanking you; yours faithfully.

(Literature on the above questions, giving the Bible explanation, is gladly supplied free to all—  
B.B.Institute.)

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book. ‘—Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 1 0 /- post paid.

Bible Student’s Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 24/- post paid.

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## Question Box'

Question.—Please explain Rev. 14:1-5. If the women referred to are unfaithful church systems, just where are we to draw the line; where do they start and finish as such ?

Answer.—These verses seem clearly to picture the church triumphant—the overcomers of the Gospel Age. The statement is that these have not been defiled with women. That would appear to intimate that they had kept the faith and not had their hearts deflected by the allurements which are associated with these women, i.e., church systems which have lost their first love, and become entangled in earthly matters and confused in doctrine.

Woman in the Bible appears to represent a church. Virgins represent those who have preserved their hearts in purity, looking forward to the great marriage of the Lamb. The “woman” that “sits as a queen,” or “Jezebel,” represents the unfaithful church—a church married to the world, leaning on a secular arm. So “women” in this passage would refer to any church that has become allied with the world.

The worldly spirit has taken possession of the churches today. There can be no doubt we are living in the Laodicean period, and that the message of Rev. 3:14-21 is applicable. Worldly alliances and associations have crept in and the spirit of Christ has been quenched. The congregations are mostly kept together by sports, games, socials, dances, card parties, etc. The true Church, the “chaste Virgin,” is not attracted by such things, but by the glorious hope of sharing with her Lord in the joys of His Kingdom. Instead of the spirit of the world she is held together by the holy spirit of consecration, of faith in Christ and fellowship around the Word of God.

The true Christian must consider just how far such Laodicean conditions prevail, or whether there is food from the Word of God provided; whether the doctrine is pure and God is glorified by the revealing of His glorious character and plan of salvation, so that there may be growth in grace and in knowledge and progress made in the work of transformation into the likeness of Christ.

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Perth, 6KY, 227 M.                   ,, 4.45 p.m.