



Volume XIX. No. 3 MELBOURNE, 1st MARCH, 1936. Price - Twopence
Halfpenny

Bible Characters: Daniel and Jacob.

(Convention Address).

The Prophet, Daniel: (James 5:10; Ezek. 14.:14).

BY way of introduction, please read Dan. 1:1, 3, 6. Daniel at this time was about fourteen years old, and his companions were about the same age. These four boys were chosen by the King because of their brightness and general intelligence to be specially educated with others in his college for three years. From this college the king drew his assistants and counsellors of the State; his idea was evidently to associate with the empire the learning and skill of the world.

The first thing the king did was to change their names (see Dan. 1:7). The reason for this was that they may be identified as Babylonians, because their Hebrew names would remind everyone of their nationality and also of their religion and relationship to God. The king evidently thought also that the new names would influence them to forget the God of their fathers and adopt the idolatrous religion of the Babylonians.

Another thing that occurred was the giving to these boys of food and drink from the king's own table. Amongst some of the food provided were certain kinds of meat that were used amongst the Gentile nations, but to these Hebrews, who had been brought up by religious parents under the Law Covenant, they were forbidden. Verse 8 says, "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank." He therefore requested that he be permitted to have a plain diet of vegetable; if the request could be granted, Daniel would thus preserve himself from defilement under the Jewish law. (See Dan. 1:10-16). So the plan was carried out, and at the end of the three-year course of special study this proved to be to their benefit.

This was a severe test of faith to Daniel and his companions; they had been taken captive from their native country to Babylon, and were identified with the king's court, and even their names had been changed. They could have quite easily neglected the laws of God under which they had been brought up; they could have quite easily turned into real Babylonians, but they were determined not to disobey God's laws or violate their conscience.

This firm stand that Daniel took for God, his obedience to conscience and faithfulness to the Lord proved

to be the foundation of his wonderful career of seventy years of political life, during which he kept himself unspotted from the world. And so it is with us, for if we would be followers of Christ, we must be willing to give up all, and even life itself, rather than be influenced by any earthly ties or ambitions.

In chapter 6, we have another incident of importance in Daniel's life. He was nearly 90 years old at this time, and the Babylonian kingdom had been captured by the Medes and Persians. The new Gentile kingdom had been set up, Darius the king setting over the kingdom 120 princes, and over these, three presidents, Daniel being chief of these three (see verse 3). It would seem that because of Daniel's honesty and blameless character the Other presidents and princes sought to find fault with him. It was his good qualities that brought upon him the envy and hatred of his associates, evidently because of his standing in their way of accomplishing selfish ambitions. So his enemies sought his downfall, but could find no fault with him, nothing that they could bring against him as a crime. However, they still hated him, and decided, as verse 5 reads, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." They knew of his strength of character and could see that he would not swerve from the course his conscience approved, so they began to set a trap, as we read in verses 6 to 9, which please note. "Now when Daniel knew that the writing

was signed he went into his house, and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, lie kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." (Verse 10). This is what Daniel's enemies were waiting for, and they immediately went to the king (read verses 13 to 23).—"So Daniel was taken up out of the den of lions and no manner of hurt was found in him because he believed in his God."

What a wonderful faith in God Daniel showed in this narrative; he evidently realised that his enemies were endeavouring to bring about his death, but this did not stop him from carrying out his religious duties—he continued as usual to pray to God three times a day. We can be sure it was this constant communion with God that enabled him to endure the trials and persecutions that were brought upon him. We see, then, the necessity of prayer, for, as it would have been impossible for Daniel to maintain his faith and loyalty to principle had it not been for his communion with God, so with us. What a wonderful privilege is ours—"we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the -Righteous," in whose name we approach with courage the throne of heavenly grace, and obtain mercy with grace to help in every time of need. (1 John 2 :1; Heb. 4:16).

We note that in no case did Daniel boast of his deliverance, but knew it was through God that help came to him. "God hath sent His angel and hath shut the lions' mouths and they have not hurt me," were his words. There is a good lesson for us here, and we remember the words of the Psalmist, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them." (Psa. 34:7). We have the assurance of God's ever-present power to help, and that He will never leave us nor forsake us (Heb. 13 :5), but we must be like Daniel and have faith. Not faith in ourselves, nor in our own righteousness, but faith in God's love, faith in the great redemption price that love has provided, and faith in the great and precious promises that are ours through Christ.

We must remember that Daniel was one of the Ancient Worthies, and the promise to all these was earthly. Under the influence of the promise made to Abraham and his seed, Daniel was looking forward to the time when all the nations of the earth would be blessed, and was seeking to develop a character that would prove him worthy of a position to assist in bringing about these blessings (Psa. 45 :16). If the tests of character, of faith, obedience and loyalty to God were necessary to develop those who will be "princes" in the earthly phase of the kingdom, how important they are also to us, who, by the grace of God, are living during this Gospel Age, and have been called of the Lord to be joint- heirs with the Lord in the spiritual kingdom. As ours will be a higher reward, we cannot expect that the trial of our faith will be less, maybe it will be more severe, if possible, than that of the Ancient Worthies.

Although all of God's people are not in such prominent positions as was Daniel, yet we can all have the same spirit as he, the spirit of devotion to principles of righteousness, which will be tested as we progress along the narrow way —as we endeavour to walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus. So, then, if we have experiences similar to Daniel's, and we surely will, let us keep in mind the words of our Lord in Matt. 5:11, 12. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven : for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Let us be like Daniel and take our stand for God, no matter how great may be the opposition, and let us rest in the sure promises of God. "If God be for us who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31, 28). "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for He is faithful that promised." (Heb. 10:23).

The Patriarch, Jacob.

“God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Heb. 11 :6).

ALTHOUGH those faithful ones who lived before our Saviour’s day were not invited to the high calling to which the Church is called in this Gospel Age, yet their lives are an inspiration and ensample to the Lord’s people now, because of their great faith and earnest endeavours to serve God acceptably. It is in this way that we shall consider the life of Jacob and endeavour to draw the lessons there from.

Upon looking over the life of Jacob one cannot but notice his great faith, which is typical of all the Ancient Worthies. He did not seem to doubt God for a moment, but relying entirely on Him and His promises, it was this simple trust that ordered all the affairs of his life. He had trials and difficulties, like all God’s people, but these were overcome one by one, and although often he seemed to lose much as respects worldly things, yet we see him always confident that God would work all things together for his good.

Jacob had great faith in the promises God had made to his grandfather, Abraham, but because he was not the firstborn, he knew that unless he could obtain the birthright privileges from, his brother, Esau (who was the first-born, and to whom the major part of the inheritance would rightly go), he would have no special part or lot in those promises.

He must often have dwelt on the possibilities of so great an inheritance--the blessing of God—and that his posterity would be used of God to bless every kindred, nation and tongue. Because he saw that his brother Esau laid little or no value in those promises, Jacob sought an opportunity to obtain the birthright from Esau. So one day Esau had been Out hunting and came in feeling very hungry and exhausted, almost on the point of dying, and desired some of Jacob’s pottage that he had prepared for his own dinner. Then Jacob grasped the opportunity and bartered with his brother for the birthright. And Esau said, “Behold, I am at the point to die and what profit shall this birthright do to me?” Thus Esau despised the birthright and all its wonderful possibilities and sold it for a mess of pottage.

The Apostle Paul refers to this incident in Heb. 12:16, and seems to apply -it especially to the Church, and the danger of our losing our birthright as new creatures. Esau pictured those Christians who despise the wonderful promises of God and the glorious inheritance as prospective heirs of the divine nature. They sell them for a mess of pottage—a few earthly good things, which, like Esau’s meal, last but for a short time, and then are gone forever.

But what of Jacob ? He went without his meal, but that did not concern him. What he wanted was the birthright, and he was willing to sacrifice all in the attainment of it. Not that he valued the temporal inheritance which came under the birthright, but he laid all the value on the future inheritance with which it was connected.

Later on, when his father, Isaac, was nearing the end of his life, the time came for him to bestow his blessing on his first-born as was the custom. Then Jacob, instructed by his mother, took the place of Esau at his father’s bedside, and his father knew it not, for he was blind. Esau was absent hunting, and later came in to receive the blessing, but his father had given it to Jacob. Then Esau became very angry, and purposed to kill his brother, but Jacob, hearing of this, decided to leave home and all the earthly inheritance and go and dwell in the country of Haran, where his uncle lived.

Here, Jacob pictured those Christians of this Age, who, through faith in God’s promises, despise all the earthly things, and forsaking all, go forth into the world as pilgrims and strangers. Jacob had no earthly possessions, but in all he was rich, for wherever he went he carried the birthright with him and all the

wonderful blessings pertaining thereto.

As Jacob journeyed toward Haran he must often have felt lonely and wondered whether he was doing the right thing or not. God, seeing this, sent him a vision one night as he slept (See Gen. 28:10-15). Thus did God encourage one who sought earnestly the better things, for Jacob was always ready to exchange the pottage of earthly advantages for the future inheritance. And, if we, through faith in God's promises to us, have forsaken all to follow Him, and if we endeavour to please Him to the best of our ability, He will surely reward us also, and the peace of God which passeth understanding shall keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Jacob journeyed on, and eventually came to his uncle's place and dwelt with him there for a period of fourteen years, in which time he had some very severe trials, but in all these his faith never seemed to give way. Although at times it must have seemed as if God was going against him and working contrary to His promise to be with him and bless him, yet Jacob seemed to have confidence that God was working all things together for his good. Indeed, He seemed to work what would seem disadvantageous conditions to advantage for Jacob, inasmuch as when he left his uncle's place to return to his home, he had great possessions. Here again we have the example. Although at times things may not seem to work out as we thought they would; and in the way we felt sure would be the Lord's will, yet we should never be discouraged, but member His words in Isa. 55:8, 9, which please read. (See also Job. 23:8-10). How much better then, are God's ways, and as we come to realise this more and more as we meet our trials and difficulties, we come to that condition of heart in which we are able to say, "I delight to do Thy will, O God."

And we, too, like Jacob, although our hearts are full of rejoicing in God's promises, should not expect results to come to us without effort. "Faith without works is dead," says the Apostle James. Work requires effort, and a faith that expects to receive blessings without effort or works is dead, being alone. But sometimes the great Adversary may interfere, our best efforts may seem to go unrewarded, and like Jacob we may meet with much disappointment, but we should trust and hope and labour on, patiently waiting for the Lord, knowing that He is on our part and greater than all they that be against us. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all." (Psa. 34:19).

Laban, Jacob's uncle, would fain have had Jacob stop with him, for he realised that the blessing of the Lord was with him, but Jacob's mind was full of the Abrahamic promises, and he desired to return to the land of promise. Upon announcing his intention to his uncle the first time, he was hindered by an unfair advantage, but the second time he was allowed to go on his way in peace. As Jacob approached home, his confidence in God, and reliance upon Him to bless him, did not hinder him from taking a wise and reasonable course to obtain peace with his brother. Although he knew he could force his rights on his brother if he so desired, because he possessed the birthright, yet he did not do this. He did quite to the contrary; he sent his brother a gift of many sheep, goats, horses and camels, and knowing that his brother would probably still be angry with him at his arrival home, Jacob offered a prayer to God for guidance.

In this prayer, Jacob shows the beauty of his character — his wonderful trust and confidence in God. He recounts God's promises to his grandfather, Abraham, and his father, Isaac, and the renewal of the promises to himself. He mentions the promise of God to bring him again to his homeland and He would deal well with him. Then he shows his humility in the words, "I am not worthy of the least of all Thy mercies." He tells the Lord of his fear of Esau, but shows his fear is offset by his confidence in the Almighty. It was at this time, -and no doubt in answer to his prayer, that God sent His angel to Jacob. (See Gen. 32:24-30).

What a beautiful example of faith and persevering prayer we have here. We note Jacob's persistency and how he earnestly desired the Lord's blessing, and, are reminded of our Lord's words, "Men ought always

to pray and not to faint.” God wishes us to be persistent in asking for His best gifts, for if we really desire anything of the Lord we shall ask Him again and again for it. But God may withhold our desires for a time, with the view of our becoming the more earnest in seeking them. We cannot suppose that God was not willing to give Jacob the blessing, but he prevailed to obtain it by manifesting the energy, the zeal and patience which God was pleased to see and reward. Truly, God will reward those who seek for Him diligently, and no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

We also have the beautiful example of our dear Saviour when, in the garden of Gethsemane, He wrestled alone in prayer with strong crying and tears unto Him whom He believed was able to save Him out of death. Our Lord laboured for hours and finally received the blessing.

And again Jacob gave the lesson, for after he had offered his prayer to God he took reasonable steps to obtain the answer, for he sent a gift to his brother. So, we too, if we desire anything of the Lord, should do all in our power to ensure an answer, for, if after praying to God to help us to better our position in His sight, we did not watch for opportunities to help ourselves, our prayer would be useless. We must “continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving.” (Col. 4:2).

Through all the difficulties and trials of his life we can see Jacob emerge with his faith still holding firm to the promises made to Abraham. Although he may have been disappointed that the promised blessings had not yet come, yet we see his faith unmoved. Lying there on his bed and realising that his time was near, he found strength enough to rise up and bless both of Joseph’s sons and to worship God who had led him his whole life through. And so Jacob passed the wonderful promises on. Now, that promise, “in thee and thy seed,” has passed down to the Church through Christ, for the Church is the spiritual seed of Abraham, as Paul points out in Gal. 3:29. Let us endeavour, as did Jacob, to keep our faith firmly fixed, even unto death, so that we may receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to them that love Him and trust Him implicitly.

PEOPLES PAPER

Published by the Berean Biblical Institute, at National Bank Chambers, 226 Glenferrie Rd., Hawthorn, Melbourne E 2.

(Monthly) 2/6 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.

A Cross (a) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to “ Peoples Paper” is overdue.

The Way of Peace. Two Primates issue appeal.

An International Endeavour.

ALL Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued an appeal on “the way of peace,” which is published in the “London Diocesan Chronicle.” The letter states

“Moved by the situation of the world at the present time, the leaders of various Christian communions throughout Europe have agreed to send forth to their own people in their own terms during the present week a solemn appeal in the interests of peace to Christian conscience and loyalty. In writing this letter .and asking that it may be read in our churches, we, with the approval of our brother bishops, are taking part in this international endeavour to build the peace of the world on a true and lasting foundation.

Things That Are Not Enough.

“No thoughtful men can view the present situation without grave anxiety. It is acknowledged that the supreme need of the world is a settled peace. Yet the minds of men everywhere are restless, confused, fearful of the future.

“It has been made plain that international treaties, pacts and covenants are not of themselves enough to ensure the peace which the world needs. It is plain that past experience is not enough. We might have thought that the experience of the Great War had proved once for all the horror and foolishness of war. But a new generation has grown up forgetful of that awful lesson.

“It is plain that the natural instincts of men are not enough. For these instincts still cling to old and deep-rooted suspicions and jealousies. They are too easily stirred by the excitements of a self-regarding patriotism.

The Solution.

“It is plain also that what we call civilisation is not enough, for the very science on which it relies is forging weapons of war, which, if they be let loose, may accomplish its own destruction.

“Must it not then be equally plain that if these natural influences are not enough, it is only a supernatural power which can ensure peace—in a word, the incoming of the kingdom of God, God’s rule of righteousness, truth, honour, justice, brotherhood among men?”

“Christian people in every country, our own included, seem, no doubt unconsciously, to put their natural patriotic instincts, prejudices, emotions first and to regard the claim of the kingdom of God as 211 ideal true indeed, but remote from the actual affairs of men. But any real loyalty to the kingdom of God demands that this process should be reversed.”

Thus it is only too true that international confidence does not exist. While for a short time after the Great War there seemed to be a desire on the part of the nations to reach some arrangement that would make such a barbarity impossible of recurrence, selfish aims have come along gradually and broken down the machinery on which such hopes relied.

Italy, following Japan’s grasping greed and standard-of might against right, reveals how little reliance can be placed in the most solemn contracts when opportunity for gaining selfish aims or self-aggrandisement presents itself. The beastly element is seen to preponderate, and contracts become but “scraps of paper.” Human life is not considered, indeed, the slaughter of many relieves the unemployment that is draining the resources of overpopulated countries. How appropriately are the kingdoms of this world represented by the prophets as ferocious beasts.

The Bishops recognise this, and that the only hope for mankind is Christ’s Kingdom. However, they seem to think that the setting up of the kingdom depends on the efforts of Christian people to convert the world. If such were the case, how hopeless it would be. After nineteen centuries of Christian teaching the world to-day is less Christian than it was a- century ago. Many are saying that Christianity has failed and Paganism has been .fast making progress in so- called Christian lands. The trouble is that the teachings of the churches are so confusing and inconsistent, and so often contrary to plain Bible truths.

With reference to a memorial service nicely conducted by a Bishop and addressed by a free church - minister, one wonders how men like these fail to see the contradictions in their own utterances. The

church creed reads :—"I believe in the resurrection of the body," yet, in the beautiful chapter, 1 Cor. 15, the Bishop read, "But someone will say, with what body do they come? . . . that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be .

But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him." Then, again, the speaker referred to God as the great Father who received the souls of the faithful at death, yet he read through the chapter which most beautifully speaks of the resurrection—"So, also, is-the resurrection of the dead." How absurd to speak of a resurrection from death if the departed are not dead, but enjoying the bliss in the presence of God in heaven.

"How one longs for that day when the sun of righteousness will arise and dispel all the vapours of_ ignorance, superstition and false doctrine, when the great time of trouble shall have broken down the present systems of error and unrighteousness, and then shall be turned to the people the pure language—the true Gospel, apart from human dogma and creed. God will reveal Himself as a God of love, as well as of wisdom, justice and power, "that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent." Zeph. 3:8, 9.

The End of the Way.

THE passing of our dear Sister Best, of Adelaide reminds us again of the brevity of the present life and of the words of the Psalmist—"So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Much sympathy is expressed toward the members of our late Sister's household, in the loss of such a true friend and devoted mother. The knowledge which we have of the Word of •God enables us to sorrow not as others who have no such hope as we have. Our Sister's life showed that she was truly given up to the Lord ; she delighted in doing acts of kindness and service for others, and was zealous in witnessing to the Truth and in attending the Class meetings. For some weeks before the end Sister had suffered a good deal, but she showed much grace in the way she bore the pain and discomfort. We are glad that her sufferings are past and that she has gone to her reward. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them." Rev. 14:13.

Adelaide Easter Convention and Memorial.

Arrangements are being made by the Adelaide Class for the forthcoming Easter Convention, which will be held (D.V.), from Good Friday, 10th April. to Easter Monday, 13th April.

The gatherings will take place in Liverpool Buildings, Flinders St., Adelaide, and a hearty invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these meetings.

The celebration of the Memorial of our Lord's death will be held by the Adelaide Class on the Sunday evening prior to the Convention, on 5 th April.

Further information may be received on application to Mrs. H. H. Bartel, 10 Forest Av., East, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide S.A.

Memorial Service in Melbourne.

The Memorial of our Lord's death will be observed (D.V) by the Melbourne Class on Sunday evening, 5th April, at 7 p.m., in the regular meeting rooms at "Towler House," 18 Queen Street, Melbourne.

All consecrated followers of Christ are invited to attend this Service in remembrance of our Lord's atoning sacrifice.

AIDS TO BIBLE STUDY.

“Divine Plan of the Ages,” blue cloth, gold lettering, 2/9 (Other editions at cheaper rates)

• The Plan of God—in Brief” 6d.

“Foregleams of the Golden Age,” 2/6

“Some of the Parables,” 8d, 6/6 a dozen “Hopes Beyond the Tomb,” 6d, 5/- a dozen “Where are the Dead” 3d., 2/- dozen “Christ’s Return,” 4d, 3/- a dozen “I will Come Again,” 3d “Hell, Death, Spiritism,” 4d, 3/- a dozen “Tabernacle Shadows.” 9d “God’s Covenants” 8d.

“Mythology Explained” 3d.

“Emphatic Diaglott” (N.T., DeLuxe only), 10/6

“God’s Best Gift” (For Children) 1/-

Bibles, Wall Texts. Free Tracts and other Bible Helps.

BEREAN BIBLICAL INSTITUTE,

226 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, E2, Melbourne, Vic.

Obedience.

(Heb. 5 :1-9).

(Convention Address).

THIS word “obedience,” as defined by the translators from the original, contains the thought of attentive hearkening, compliance, submission. How necessary it is that we all hear and obey the voice of our Good Shepherd; .we should give attentive hearkening to what He commands (John 10:27; 14 :15), for, of Himself, it was said, “He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.”

:Now, in regard to the disposition of obedience, we all need to attain a properly balanced viewpoint. Professed followers of the Lord seem to be susceptible to the disposition of leaning to one extreme or the other, and in this there lies a danger not generally recognised. The building up of the Church in the most holy faith, and her preparation to meet the Lord; the telling out of the glad tidings to others as the Lord’s providences may open doors, are all important matters. However, the same Bible which urges upon us the fact that attention should be given to doctrine, also impresses the truth that, “if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” It follows, therefore, that through obedience one may attain that knowledge of the Lord which will adjust every feature of his Christian life, and he will be living by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The unchanging doctrines of the Word will be devoutly Rived and cherished, and the structure of Christian character will be free from wood, hay and stubble.

None more than the Apostle Paul insisted upon clearly defined doctrine as a basis for fellowship with God and His people. He did not multiply doctrines to confuse the Church but adhered strictly to the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus. A careful study of the 1;T,pistles of Paul will reveal the intensity of his desire to bring the brethren to the feet of Jesus and keep them there. How positively he spurns any attempt to have himself set before the Church as an object of worship. The Apostle had no fear for the doctrinal standing and the approval of those of his brethren who really knew his Saviour and Lord, but he did have anxiety and burden of soul for those who never seemed capable of rising above “first principles” into the regions of deeper knowledge’ of God. So, is the great longing of our hearts that of wanting others to know our Jesus in His altogether loveliness, as He Himself was consumed with a longing that others should really know of His Father?

Note the Apostle’s words in Col. 2 :6, 7, and 1 Cor. 3:11. The One referred to here is not the nominal Christ spoken of so much in the world, but Him in reality, who is a Redeemer in reality, the true foundation upon which we can build with confidence, not substituting a shadow for the substance. Sound theology ought to be the glory of all the Body members of Christ. Woe to any, if by indifference or worldly lives, they turn into a dishonour that which should be the strength and security of the Christian life.

We notice what sufferings the Master endured through obeying the Father’s will ; how it must have grieved Him when so many walked no more with Him because of the new light He brought—the teachings setting at nought the traditions of men. His claims of relationship to God, and Himself as the “Bread from heaven,” which they were to feed upon, constituted that which they termed a “hard saying.” Through obedience, to the best of his ability, the Apostle Paul suffered similar things ; some deserted him after all he had striven to do for them. If we, in obedience, pass through these experiences, let us keep heart and meet them as did our Lord and the Apostle, and think it not strange when some who walked with us, turn in another direction.

Let all rejoice in the privilege of acquaintance with God and the Truth, and by their life work and devotion to God manifest their continued worthiness. This worthiness is inquired for not only at the early

stages, but all along the path of light, and if one is not found worthy through the various searching tests that are applied from time to time, he cannot proceed in the path of light and fellowship with the Lord. Our possession of this heart acquaintance with God has thus far proved us able and meek enough to renounce various errors of belief and unbecoming traits of conduct, and to loyally espouse the cause of our Master at the cost of reproach and earthly loss, looking forward to the great joy of the Lord's approval ultimately. But the Apostle exhorts, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall," for subtle and sharp are sure to be the tests applied to prove our continued faithfulness.

These tests God will permit, and He desires to have come upon us, in order that we may be thoroughly tried and proved either worthy or unworthy of the great reward He has in keeping for those who remain faithful unto death.

The words of one seem specially- appropriate, and are as follows ; "You know that you have weaknesses, special points. upon which you are aware by past experiences you are specially liable to fail, under trial and temptation. It may be the pride of life and love of the world which seem to draw your feet from the narrow way oftenest. It may be that business has such. an attraction to you that you have at times been almost swallowed up with its ambitions and cares; that its demands upon your time and talent have been for a season almost overwhelming; that you found your appetite for spiritual things forestalled by the earthly, and your consecrated time absorbed in labour for the meat that perisheth. Or it may be that your special weakness is a love of approval which absorbs consecrated time in making your person, your home and your family charming, as well as hinders you from engaging in service for the Lord and your fellow saints in carrying them spiritual food, lest some should think you strange and peculiar and should cut your acquaintance. Or you may have uncongenial family relationship and opposition to study and Christian growth from that quarter. Further, it may be that seeming duties and necessities in your circumstances demand your time and keep you, as they did Martha, from communing with the Master and engaging in and enjoying the higher and grander privilege of breaking to others spiritual food. No matter in which particular direction your besetment lies, rest assured that yours is not an exceptional case. Every soul knoweth its own burdens, and before each one Satan is permitted to lay obstacles and hindrances, in order that each may be tried and thus have opportunity of overcoming and proving his love and appreciation of the prize and of the Lord's approval by faithfulness under adverse conditions."

To be forewarned is useless, unless it leads us to action, that we may be forearmed for protection. What are we going to do about it? Are we determined to obey? Then we must break all bondage at any cost ; though it be as dear to your heart as your eye or hand, pluck it out or cut it off. We must either overcome these besetments by changing our course and cutting them off, or they will overcome us and bring us more and more under their control.

How consoling in the midst of the battle of life are the words, "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." It is one of those promises that guarantees to the faithful of God that all that comes to them in life is "good"—on the grounds, of course, if accepted in faith and in the right spirit. Of all the high and good favours enjoyed by the children of God, none is greater than the privilege of dwelling in His presence and of holding communion with Him. The exercise of this exalted position or privilege is most vital and necessary to spiritual health and to the preservation of a proper and holy relationship with God. "This is life eternal to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."

One thus in right relationship with God is in a position to think of Him intelligently and acceptably. Revelations of knowledge are given to help the devout believer to think of God as he should, and to assist him to approach very close to the heart of the Eternal. Our thoughts of God growing out of His revelation to us, form the basis of our communion with Him.

It is an evidence of growth in grace, when, having realised our unworthiness of Divine favour, we have, nevertheless, become so intimately acquainted with the Lord as to have a full assurance of faith, full confidence in Him and His providential care over all our affairs. The Apostle James says that the one who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues therein as a doer of the Word, who obediently performs what he sees to be God's will, shall be blessed in his deed. The Master said, "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Those who thus feed upon the words that proceed out of the mouth of God are nourished and strengthened in the journey of life.

In this journey of life we need to walk circumspectly and to have our desires in line with the Psalmist when he said, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after ; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in His temple." Expressions like this manifest why he was a man after God's own heart. God ever delights to show special favours to such characters as this. When troubles assail and every support seems to be withdrawn, while the fire burns and the waters seem likely to overflow, what comfort and strength may he found through God's abounding grace.

Then comes a prayer of David's, which is really a confession of a deep sense of responsibility and an utter dependence on God for guidance and instruction. He says, "Point me out Thy Way, O Lord, and guide me on a level path, because of those that regard me enviously." How suggestive such an appeal is of one who recognises his lack of wisdom. The Apostle James urges us to ask God for the enlightenment He waits to dispense liberally to all who acknowledge their need of it. The Scriptures abound with assurances that only such as are thus painfully aware of their poverty in this matter, may entertain any hope of having all their steps ordered of the Lord. And who that recognises the burden of responsibility resting upon him, because there are those who observe him and over whom he may exercise an influence for good or evil, can fail to feel that it is most important that his own vision of God and His will should be clear. Therefore, there must necessarily be a constant vigilance and obedience to the Word of the Lord.

'Gentle words fall lightly, but they have great weight.' —Anon.

The Times and Seasons.

(1 Thes. 5 :1).

THERE has been, particularly of late years, so much written regarding Bible Chronology and date-fixing in connection with events expected in the closing of this dispensation, that it would seem reasonable to suggest that such matters are not the most necessary things to spend our time and thought upon.

The Bible evidently was not written, and prophecies were not given in order that Christians should be able to show superior wisdom in being able to declare dates for events prior to their occurrences. It would seem rather that, as with symbols and types which are not understood until the reality appears, time prophecies are given that when the prediction is fulfilled the faith of the watchful, prayerful Christian shall be so increased and strengthened that He may be enabled to endure the greater trials that may still come along.

One thing seems sure, i.e., that God has not provided us with a certain connected chronology. Again we find that we are not dependent upon Bible Chronology in order to know how near we are to the end .of this age and the setting up of the kingdom of God—the dethronement of Satan as the prince of this world and the beginning of the reign of peace and righteousness under Christ and His Church.

All the time prophecies of the Bible have their beginnings within the recorded years of secular history, and these also have had their fulfilments. These time prophecies comprise:-The seven times of punishment upon Israel, which began to count when Nebuchadnezzar subdued Israel in B.C. 606, or 604, and ended with 1914 or 1916 when the Great War resulted in establishing Palestine as the national home for Israel Jerusalem is no longer “trodden down of the Gentiles.” Daniel’s 2300 days (years) began B.C. 454, and ended in 1846. The 1260 years, 1290 years and 1335 years all began in A.D. 539 and found fulfilment in 1799 when the persecuting power of Rome was broken, and the Pope was taken prisoner to France by Napoleon ; in 1829 by the proclamation, particularly through the Millerite movement regarding the second advent, and in 1874 by the promised feast which the Lord had foretold He would provide when He came again. (Luke 12:36).

The fulfilment, of these prophecies and also the evident signs promised by our Lord in His great prophecy, Matt.

24, and in Luke, are quite sufficient to assure the watchers of our Lord’s presence —that we are actually living “in the days of the Son of Man.” The Lord clearly indicated, that just as Noah was present as a preacher of righteousness, declaring the calamity impending, so He would be present and sending out His messengers, gathering His saints into His garner.

How great is our privilege thus to know _the workings of God’s great plan, and while it is our part to especially declare the message among Christian people everywhere and witness to all men as we have opportunity, yet we must never forget that the special work of our day is the preparation of the Bride of Christ for the great Marriage.

Then, while we must all help one another, our each particular work is the preparation of ourselves. We are assured by the Apostle that we might have faith to do wonderful things, and though we had all knowledge and understood all mysteries, yet if we have not the Christian grace of love, we are nothing. We must daily keel) before our vision the beauties of the character, the disposition, the qualities of His heart and seek to do as He would do and be just like Him. That is the best way of preaching, our light will then shine to the glory of God and the edifying of those about us.

It was in this way that Jesus “preached to the spirits in prison”—the angels, who, in Noah’s day, had left their own habitation and committed folly with the daughters of men ; instead of instructing the human family they corrupted it. Jesus gave them a lesson in obedience — He became obedient to death—and preached to them by His death and resurrection. Quite possibly some of those angels have profited by the lesson.

“So let our daily lives express
The beauties of true holiness;
So let the Christian graces shine,
That all may know the power divine.”

Be of Good Courage.

Child of God, wait patiently and calmly, tho' steeper grows thy path,
Committed to His care whose grace thus far hath kept thee;
And tho' the night of trouble draweth on, with clouds both black and dense,
Follow faithfully the Lamb; the morrow will be light!

Child of God, rest fearlessly in Him whose arm securely holds;
Thou may'st trust Him as a child doth trust because thou art His own.
And tho' the night be very long, thou art His child, he not dismayed,
Confiding in His Word, for it proclaims the light of morn.

Child of God, does His commission send thee out in all the world;
Thou shalt feel, yea, very surely, how He in His love upholds.
Proclaim in North, South, East and West the Kingdom now in sight,
And gather in what still remains of children of the light.

Child of God, pursue thy journey, as doth a star;
And when thy plea to Heaven ascends, let us remembered be;
With thee, relying on His might, we come before His face;
No fear can trouble in the night, through which we pass to light.

Published by Berean Biblical Institute. National Bank Chambers, Hawthorn Printed by Hickling. & Powell. Brunswick Victoria.