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Confidence.

(Convention Address. Gal. 5:10.)

THIS epistle to the Galatians is of immense interest to all “called to be saints.” Remembering that Paul the apostle travelled much to spread the gospel of truth, and invariably encountered serious opposition, it must have been very refreshing and encouraging to him, when on visiting Galatia, he was met with such a great welcome and had an enjoyable and profitable season in that country.

There was marked evidence of the ready, ripe condition of many of the people to receive the Truth message, resulting in several churches being established throughout Galatia, with zeal and ardour running high. When the time came for Paul to leave them and carry the message further on, his departure revealed their sorrow—they loved him so much. Likewise there was some sorrow for Paul, for on his arrival and throughout his mission among them he had special cause for rejoicing as he witnessed their sincerity and zeal; he, of course, loved them and was loth to leave them. He knew of pitfalls and dangers ahead and in that sense he sorrowed on leaving them.

Gone but a short time, Paul hears disturbing news from Galatia, so disturbing that, like faithful Paul he loses no time, but writes this notable epistle and despatches it as quickly as possible. The news he had received was that the churches were faltering, doubting, losing their confidence in the truth, and rapidly drifting into error. Serious as the matter really is, much as it affects Paul, yet through it all he exercises and demonstrates his Christian patience. Instead of railing on them, as some might have done, he begins his epistle and proceeds without even a reference to anything he knew or had heard of their errors.

Then Paul declares, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ” —now unto another gospel, which is not another, but a perversion of the gospel of Christ. He leaves it there and proceeds at length to clearly prove that the gospel he delivered unto them was not his own, nor was it of any other man, neither was he taught it by man, but received it by revelation of Jesus Christ. He reminded them in detail of his own former Jewish religion, how he zealously persecuted the church and wasted it. “But it pleased God to call me, by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; henceforth, I conferred not with flesh and blood, but immediately began the mission to which Christ called me, and many that once knew me as persecutor of the church now glorified God in me.” Then followed a lengthy account of his journeys and teachings, all of which verify the truth of the gospel he had preached unto the Galatians, and again he turns to them direct and says, “O

foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified.”

The Apostle continues, “Tell me, did ye receive the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? He that ministereth to you the spirit, and worketh miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith? Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. . . So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. . . No man is justified by the law in the sight of God; the just shall live by faith. . . We receive the promise of the spirit through faith. . . To Abraham and his seed the promise was made, and his seed was Christ.”

The existence of the law for hundreds of years after God’s promise to Abraham in no way affected the promise. The law had no part or place in the inheritance. God gave it to Abraham, and Abraham’s seed exclusively, by promise; the law merely served a purpose pending the arrival of the seed of promise. We were in the meantime kept under the law, awaiting the faith which was afterwards revealed—the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. “For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ. . . If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to promise . . . For ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Yes, “when the fulness of the times had come God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and being made sons, God sent forth the spirit of His Son into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

Paul again addresses the church, saying “Now, after ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage. . . I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. . . Notwithstanding my infirmity as I preached the gospel unto you at the first . . . you neither despised, nor rejected me, but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus . . . I bear you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Am I now your enemy, because I tell you the truth?”

It was the teachers of the law that had come into the baby church and made trouble and confusion; not sufficiently educated and experienced in the truth, they could not withstand the talk and persuasion of their would-be teachers of the law. Paul reminded the church that the zeal of their new teachers was not for their good—actually the opposite; they planned to destroy confidence in the truth, and gloried in it, and their own special victory. “Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of Him that calleth you. . . Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”

There is constant war between the flesh and the spirit and the fruits of both are the very opposite. The works or fruits of the flesh are numerous, and corrupt, requiring three long verses in the fifth chapter of Galatians to describe them, and of which Paul declares, “they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” “But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance; against such there is no law. They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the spirit let us also walk in the spirit.”

The foregoing is a brief summary of Paul’s epistle to the Galatians and is much more than an ordinary letter, the very wording and tone of it showing that it came from Paul’s heart, from which also went out aches, pains and hopes, accompanied by great concern, lest his labour among them had been all in vain.

Previously, he had nursed and enjoyed great hope of these new brethren, but this had been suddenly dashed to the ground. Confidence is rudely shaken, the foundation is trembling, the church is faltering, destruction is threatening; will the structure fall, or can it be saved? That was Paul's great concern, impelling him to say, "Oh how I long to be with you now," in this critical hour, but to be with them in person was impossible, and the only alternative was to write to them at once, with a view to saving them if possible, before it would be too late. It was an anxious time for Paul, but like the good soldier he was, he wasted no time in tactfully and lovingly re-presenting the Gospel to them, adding, by way of encouragement, "I still have confidence in you, that ye will obey the truth."

This epistle is primarily one of Confidence once established; then of Confidence lost, and thirdly a hope of its restoration.

These three aspects of Confidence cover an almost unlimited scope for meditation and thought; it carries us away back to ancient days, filling us with astonishment, even amazement, as we read of the results of Confidence that was firmly established. As we think of the old patriarchs and prophets, what they faced up to and accomplished in the presence of hostile opposition, one asks, how did they do it? Solely because they believed in God and had confidence in His promises. Try to think of it. Moses approaching Pharaoh as he did, so often without success, yet finally, by the will of God, Moses succeeded in leading the Israelites out of Egypt, overcoming immense subsequent difficulties; all, on account of his confidence in God.

We recall Abraham's firm confidence in God as he answered the call to slay his much loved son, Isaac, as a sacrifice upon the altar; his obedience was tested and was sufficient; the Lord intervened and saved Isaac, providing a substitute.

Noah also believed God with firm confidence, built an ark as directed, far in the interior on dry land; in due time the floods came and only Noah and his household escaped death by the deluge.

Nor can we ever forget Daniel, whose confidence in God enabled him to courageously face the savage lions in their den, and God protected him so that he suffered no injury.

Again the three Hebrew children, who had firm confidence in God, refused to disown the Lord and were cast into a fiery furnace, but God shielded them and they were brought out alive, without so much as the smell of fire on them.

These and many more remarkable events that have come under our notice should halt us completely and cause us to meditate and praise God for such examples of firm immovable confidence in Him, and having thus seen it, let us pray for more faith and firm confidence in God and His present truth ourselves.

The diversity of teachings of the Bible in the nominal church is in itself sufficient to shake and wreck confidence, and is borne out daily in the columns of the press by the variety of sentiments expressed accompanying death notices, showing a complete state of ignorance of anything across the line of death. They try to console themselves and others with words which, to them, have no meaning—they avail little, great sorrow, grief and doubt remains, with only time to wear down the pain, and recoup the loss, the natural reward of lack of confidence.

Contrasted with that, we have known and loved some, who, all through long years, steadfastly revealed a joyful confidence that made this life a sweet blessing to themselves and all others with whom they came in contact, and best of all, they maintained it brightly and firmly to the comfort and joy of all, as they triumphantly passed through the veil.

“Oh for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.”

Yes, confidence plays one of the largest parts in the life of the human family; its soundness and sincerity is prized by rich and poor alike; its failure and loss by all deplored.

It seems well borne out in these last, evil days, that among nations and peoples confidence was never more rare; one is looked upon with suspicion, almost contempt, being so foolish as to trust anybody. Self is the only deity; number one is all that counts—an awful picture, and cannot and will not be removed until the divinely appointed time, now near at hand, when “He whose right it is” will overthrow this present evil order of things, and under a new order establish His Kingdom of peace, equity and justice.

Since present world conditions present so little in which to place great confidence, is there really (anything inviting our confidence that would be fully worth while? We rejoice in answering, Yes, there surely is, according to the will and plan of God. He purposed to take out of the world a people for His name, to be the Bride of Christ. They are especially chosen ones, because they are a people willing and ready to comply with the conditions laid down by God. A listening ear, a singleness of eye, and a sound mind, heard, saw and understood the conditions and promptly and firmly accepted and obeyed; behind, and under all this was a confidence in the promises made to them, that if they ran faithfully to the end of life they would inherit the promises made unto them.

Having agreed and obeyed, they were begotten by the holy spirit and justified for trial in the heavenly race, and so long as they seriously and zealously hold and possess that confidence in Him that called them out of bondage into the glorious liberty in Christ, they possess a peace of mind that passeth all understanding, and as time enlarges their experiences, so also it increases their confidence, so that they not only appear, but really are new creatures, with new minds, new desires—”Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” What a confidence exists among the brethren; the like is not found elsewhere.

It reminds also how very favourable and privileged we are to be associated with such reliable warm-hearted friends. Ah yes, much more than friends, real Brothers and Sisters in Christ, by His grace. But while all this is excellent and very desirable, and we may even re-echo the words of Paul, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth,” we might not lose it as did the Galatians, by substituting teachings of the law, but we could lose our confidence just as easily, and just as completely in other ways. We are not always awake to our carelessness and procrastinations which can sap and eat up our zeal and spiritual energy. It is good, even essential that we often get on the scales; be assured we will often discover we are losing instead of gaining weight; certainly this ought not to be. When we first experienced that peace of mind the Lord gave us, our zeal and rapture was one hundred per cent.; is it so still? If not, why not? Let it not be said of us: “Ye did run well, but what hindered you?”

Finally, brethren, let us hold fast our confidence in the truth as when first delivered unto us, to the glory of God, the delight of ourselves and the beloved brethren.

Convention News from Adelaide.

ONCE again our Convention in Adelaide has proved to be a happy remembrance. Although there were not so many present as on previous occasions, on account of restrictions on interstate travel, those in attendance were refreshed and stimulated in zeal, and again encouraged in their efforts to put into practice the lessons and instructions placed before them in the various Studies and Discourses.

The various greetings and love sent by those who could not be present were appreciated, reminding us that brethren remembered us also in their prayers, and by this, though absent in the flesh, we realised a spirit of fellowship of kindred minds.

On Friday we discussed a portion of Peter's Epistle (1 Peter 4:7-11) which was very timely, as we know by the various signs that we have approached the end of the age. Because special evils and confusion would prevail there is the greater need for soberness of mind by the Lord's people. We were reminded too of the need of watchfulness and prayer, so that our hearts do not become overcharged with the cares of this present life. But if we are alert to use our opportunities and abilities faithfully, it will keep us away from following the old natural desires of the flesh, recognising too that the object of all our endeavours should be to glorify God in the name of Jesus our Lord.

Following the study the brethren discussed the subject of "The Operation of Mercy and Justice," which are qualities so necessary in our relationship with one another and also in our conduct toward the worldly.

In the evening the talks by two brethren on "Meditation" and "Divine Guidance" served again to remind us of the importance of meditating upon the Word so that our thoughts may be kept in line with God's thoughts, and thus evil meditations will be avoided. "Divine Guidance" is something greatly to be desired, but it is only the Lord's people—the meek—who can experience this, as they cooperate with their heavenly Guide.

Saturday was spent profitably in the home of one of the brethren, where some of the friends discussed together the 46th Psalm and a portion of the "Divine Plan of the Ages."

Sunday was again a helpful time, spent in the study of Col. 3:12-17. This portion showed us the practical side of the Christian life, and the need of possessing in a greater measure the various fruits of the holy spirit was realised as necessary, especially the development of love, the bond of completeness.

The next discussion of the subject, "How can love cover a sin without endorsing it" also proved very helpful.

The remainder of the evening was taken up by a discourse on "Seeing Jesus." The thought of seeing Jesus and hearing His voice intelligently with our spiritual sense was stressed and the need of combining the two if the life of sanctification is to continue. In the Word, especially as it has been revealed to us in these last days, we see Jesus as the one altogether lovely, and also hear Him speak as never man spake.

The greetings and love sent out to the various brethren who were mindful of us is found in Num. 6:24-26 and 1 Pet. 4:7., 8.

Memorial Observances.

Melbourne

The brethren in Melbourne observed the Memorial of Christ's death with grateful and solemn hearts on the evening of Sunday, 18th April, esteeming it a privilege to thus remember our loving Saviour in the way He requested, and at the same time "show forth the Lord's death," as members of His Body, in likeness of His death, "till He come."

The subject of the Passover in type and antitype had been examined by the friends at previous meetings, and having their minds refreshed on these most important truths, the celebration of the Lord's Supper was all the more meaningful and impressive.

The appropriate hymns, Scripture readings, helpful thoughts in the address and the prayers of the brethren all assisted to impress the true significance of the emblems which were partaken of with deep realisation of the Lord's rich blessing and presence.

The dear members in Christ, in every place, were remembered before the throne of grace, especially those in the war areas who may be undergoing severe trials and difficulties as a result of loyalty to their Lord. It was realised that the members are gradually passing on, to be with our Lord and Head, and any experiences of hardness for His sake, is but the fulfilling of our vow of consecration, so beautifully pictured and solemnized in observing the Lord's Supper in spirit and in truth.

Birchip, Vic.

On Sunday evening, 18th April, about the hour of 7 p.m., three of us gathered around the supper table of the Lord and partook of the bread and wine in memory of Him whose body was broken and whose blood was shed for us.

A short discourse on Mark 8:27-38; Matt. 26:17-20, 26-29; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; 10:16, 17, preceded the passing around of the symbols and by the Lord's grace we seemed to be helped to understand and appreciate the double meaning of the Memorial, "discerning the Lord's body" in its two aspects; first, broken for us that we in the blessed state of being reckoned perfect (see Rom. 8:1) might present our little sacrifice, acceptable to God, as members of the Body of Christ.

We perceived, further, the privilege of being able to fill up a little measure of the afflictions of Christ in this life, that we might have the hope to reign with Him in the Kingdom and dispense blessings to all mankind. Truly the Lord blessed us for obedience to His injunction to proclaim His death in this way till He come, and we rejoiced in fellowship with all God's people doing likewise that night.

Sydney

The friends in Sydney observed the Memorial of our Lord's death on Sunday evening, 18th April, at the usual meeting place.

Although only twelve participated we received a blessing in accordance with the promise that "where two or three are met together." The service was very impressive; each seemed to feel the solemnity of the occasion.

We were reminded by the chairman that we had reached another mile-stone in our pilgrim journey and that our presence was because of our love for the Lord and our desire to comply with His wishes, "This do in remembrance of Me."

Mention was made of those of our members who had finished their course since our last observance, and our belief that they were now with our Lord, having been made like Him.

We were reminded in the address that the Apostle Paul showed clearly type and antitype when he wrote in Corinthians, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for use," also showing our privilege of being counted in with His sacrifice.

We were warned of the danger of falling away and exhorted to be loyal to the truth; to the doctrines which we had proved, and which had given us such comfort and joy, and had sustained us for so long.

Canberra

We have had the Memorial much before our minds as the season came nearer, because there does not seem to be any doubt that the time is fast approaching when we will be privileged to "drink it new" in the Kingdom. What a joyful consummation to look forward to! It makes our present journey appear short, and our afflictions but light.

A Brother acted as chairman and part of an article was read dealing with the subject. There were five of us who partook of the emblems.

We trust other brethren have also had rich blessings and have been drawn closer to the Lord as a result of remembering Him who has done so much for us all.

Adelaide

The Memorial service was held on the 18th April and we had a quiet little gathering, about fifteen taking part.

On the occasion and since we are thinking particularly of the Lord's experiences in connection with the completion of His sacrifice on our behalf. It is helpful and stimulating to meditate particularly on these at this time and of the Lord's great love for us, in so willingly giving up His life, and enduring the sufferings He did for our sakes, and then to realise that we have the blessed privilege of offering our justified lives as joint-sacrificers with Him and of eventually being associated with Him in His work on behalf of the world.

In view of the present condition of the world, it surely cannot be very long now before that wonderful work will begin.

Gawler, South Australia

Once again we have had the privilege of celebrating the Memorial of our Redeemer's death. Eight of us considered again the purpose of our Lord's humiliation, suffering and death, which had already been foretold in prophecy and typ^e.

We are greatly blessed in having revealed to us this great fundamental truth, namely, the ransom sacrifice which Jesus so freely and willingly gave, not only on behalf of the Church, but His death is also the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

As we partook of the emblems which symbolised His sacrificed human life, it reminded us again of His invitation to us, that we too are privileged to follow in His steps of self-sacrifice, devotion and obedience to the Father's will, and that we too can share with Him the same joy and kingdom honours if we are faithful unto death.

It is surely the desire of each one of the consecrated to renew and strengthen their love and patient endurance by this consideration of Him who endured so much, in order to give us eternal life and riches that will never fade.

Perth, West Australia

In the evening of Sunday, 18th April, twenty of us were privileged to assemble for the Memorial. It was with sadness of heart to think of all our beloved Saviour endured on our behalf, and yet we can rejoice in the fact that His sufferings were soon over, and we have been redeemed from the land of the enemy into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Our Scripture readings were taken from Isa. 53, Mark 19 and John 19.

The Brother officiating drew our attention once again to the Passover in Egypt and its wonderful antitype during this Gospel Age, in "Christ our passover sacrificed for us." Also the antitypical firstborns being passed over—"When I see the blood I will pass over you." When the church of the firstborns are completely passed over, then the Lord will deliver all Israel, all the people of God, thus bringing them over the Red Sea (death) into the land of promise.

The emblems were then passed round, each eating and drinking in remembrance of Him whom we all love so well.

It surely was a good time to express our desire to be faithful, even unto death, and seek the Lord's grace to help us to this end. We then sang a hymn and departed much impressed and edified.

Burnie, Tasmania

As usual, we had the great privilege of meeting on the 18th April, for the little service of the Memorial Supper in remembrance of our dear Lord who became the antitype of the Passover lamb.

All the dear fellow-members of the Body were remembered at the throne of grace, and especially those who were celebrating that evening. Attention was drawn to the fact of the Lord's finished work and that nothing we could do would add one tittle of worth to it, and that our blessed position of being members of His Body became possible only through His merit being applied to, or passed through us—to those who keep the doorpost and lintel of the heart sprinkled with the precious blood of our glorious Redeemer.

The smallness of the gathering reminded us of John's words, "He must increase but I decrease," and so it is, as each one is taken to complete the loaf for the nourishment of the world. The wondrous privilege of participation in the shed blood and broken body, the apparent nearness of the Kingdom, the necessity of being steadfast and immovable in this evil day, by loyalty to the truth at all costs, were dealt with, and we felt there was one more attending that little meeting—our elder Brother.

Witness by Radio.

CONTINUED broadcasts of the Frank and Ernest dialogues have brought in further enquiries for the free literature, and appreciation of the talks over the air is evident also from the reports of numbers of regular listeners, from whom there is no direct response.

The main object of our sessions is, of course, to encourage listeners to read the literature and study the Bible for themselves, if haply they may receive the truth in all its fulness and beauty. Only the Lord is able to give the increase and there is no doubt that the message going forth in this way will not return void.

The co-operation of the brethren in various ways in addition to the financial support, is resulting in our broadcasts becoming more widely known, and together with the advertising in radio and other papers it would seem that our circle of listeners is increasing nicely. Space does not permit the inclusion of correspondence in this issue.

The dialogue which follows will be heard at 9 p.m. on Sunday, 2nd May, and further subjects for this month will be:-

9th May—"The Jew and the War."

16th May—"Armageddon"

23rd May—"God Has a Plan." 30th May—"God's Promises."

The Rich Man and Lazarus.

FRANK: Ernest, you look worried, what's on your mind?

ERNEST: It's the case of that rich man that Jesus tells about in the parable—the one, you remember, who went to hell, and there lifted up his eyes being in torments.

FRANK: That's in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Didn't that booklet "Some of the Parables," explain the parable for you?

ERNEST: Yes, very satisfactorily indeed, but the last time we discussed the subject you made a statement that has given me a great deal of concern. You said the rich man of the parable, who went to hell when he died, is now on his way back from hell. Now Frank, that's almost too much to believe, but at the same time I feel that you must have had some good reason for making such a statement. What is that reason?

FRANK: In order to understand, in what sense the rich man is now on his way back from hell, it is necessary to have the facts of the parable well in mind. The account is recorded in the 16th chapter of Luke.

ERNEST: That's right, Luke 16, verses 19 to 29. I have it already because I intended to ask you about it. In brief the parable tells of two men—one rich, the other poor. The rich man was dressed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day; while the poor man was full of sores, and was glad for the opportunity to eat the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. The dogs licked the poor man's sores.

FRANK: Both of these men died, didn't they?

ERNEST: That's right. And after they died the poor man was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom; but the rich man went to hell, and in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torments, and seeing the poor man, whose name was Lazarus, in Abraham's bosom, he asked him to send a drop of water to cool his tongue. The parable then shows that the drop of water could not be given, and that there was apparently nothing that could be done for the rich man.

FRANK: And your question right now is how that rich man could possibly be on his way back from hell?

ERNEST: Yes. And, that is a question. The parable appears to be a simple statement showing that good people go to heaven when they die, and that sinners go to hell. Doesn't it really seem that way to you?

FRANK: No! The parable says nothing about righteous people, nor about sinners. Nor does it say anything about heaven.

ERNEST: But wasn't the rich man wicked?

FRANK: Jesus doesn't say so, unless it was a sin for him to have plenty to eat and good clothes to wear. He had at least some virtues. It was rather nice of him to permit Lazarus to be near enough to eat the crumbs that fell from his table. Not all rich men would treat beggars that considerately.

ERNEST: Well, at least, Frank, you will have to agree that Lazarus, the poor man, was a very saintly man.

FRANK: No, Ernest, Jesus doesn't say anything about his virtues. All the account says is that he was poor and full of sores. If that's the condition upon which anyone can enter heaven there are very few of us who can qualify, I'm afraid.

ERNEST: But the beggar went to heaven, didn't he?

FRANK: No Ernest; he didn't. The parable says that He was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. Abraham's bosom isn't heaven.

ERNEST: But surely Abraham is in heaven.

FRANK: No Ernest, he isn't. The Old Testament record is that when Abraham died, he slept with his fathers; and besides Jesus tells us that "no man had ascended into heaven."—John 3:13.

ERNEST: Well, that's certainly strange. Why, Frank, when you examine the parable it doesn't seem to say anything that it's generally understood to say. I realise now that it couldn't possibly be a literal statement of fact. The beggar couldn't have been taken to Abraham's literal bosom because Abraham's bosom had returned to dust long centuries before. But what does it mean, and how could the rich man now be on his way back from hell? I'm not forgetting my original question.

FRANK: Ernest, we must remember that this is a parable. Jesus didn't explain what the parable meant, hence we can't be too dogmatic about our explanation of it. However, there are certain statements in the parable which give us a clue as to its meaning. In the parable, the rich man addresses Abraham as "Father" Abraham. The five brethren of the rich man are said to have "Moses and the prophets."

ERNEST: How does that give us any inkling of what the parable means?

FRANK: For the reason that at the time of the parable there was only one group of people who called Abraham their father, and who also had Moses and the prophets as their teachers. Both of these things were then true of the Jewish nation.

ERNEST: You think, then, that the rich man may represent the Jewish nation?

FRANK: Yes. I believe that's a very reasonable viewpoint. ERNEST: Can one man represent a nation, or people?

FRANK: How about John Bull? and how about Uncle Sam? These two symbolic men represent nations, don't they?

ERNEST: That's right; but after all, that's only one part of the parable. How about the rich man dying and going to hell, and how can he now be on the way back from hell? And how about the beggar? How did he get to Abraham's bosom, and what does that represent?

FRANK: If the rich man represented the Jewish nation who had Moses and the prophets, then the beggar would represent the Gentiles who did not previously enjoy God's favour in this way. The riches of the one and the poverty of the other evidently represent the fact that the one class did enjoy God's favour, while the other class did not. The Bible tells us that the blessing of the Lord maketh rich. Shortly after Jesus spoke this parable the position of both these groups changed; both died to the condition which previously had existed. The Jews as a nation rejected their Messiah, and because of this they were cast off from divine favour. Just before Jesus died He said to the Jewish nation, "Your house is left unto you

desolate.”

ERNEST: But what about the beggar?

FRANK: He also died; that is to say, the Gentiles died to that condition in which they were outcasts from the favour of God.

ERNEST: In what sense were the Gentiles taken to Abraham’s bosom?

FRANK: This symbolises the parenthood of Abraham. God has promised that the seed of Abraham should bless all the families of the earth. The natural seed of Abraham, the Jewish nation, failed to enter into the fulfilment of this promise, so Gentiles were given the opportunity to become the children of Abraham through faith. This is made very plain in a number of places in the New Testament. The 11th chapter of Romans sets the matter forth very clearly, as does also the 3rd chapter of Galatians.

ERNEST: But what about the rich man who went to hell, and whom you say is now on his way back?

FRANK: As already noted, the Jews died to the rich condition of God’s favour which had previously been theirs, and since then they have been a suffering people. Their wailing wall in Jerusalem is a fitting symbol of their torment, and of the fact that petitions for divine blessings have gone unheeded. In many instances they have actually sought relief from their persecutions by appealing to Gentile groups whom they felt were sympathetic toward them.

ERNEST: So far so good, but I still want to know why you say that that rich man is now on his way back from hell. And there are other details of the parable I would also like to have explained. What about the rich man’s five brethren? Who are they?

FRANK: Ernest, I haven’t attempted to explain all the details of the parable. The booklet, “Some of the Parables,” does, however, suggest what all the various details represent. Even the colour of the rich man’s clothing is very significant, when understood. I suggest that you make a careful study of that booklet, together with your Bible. You’ll remember it better that way.

ERNEST: I intend to do that Frank, but meantime I want you to do some more explaining. You have said that the rich man is now on his way back from hell, yet in the parable Abraham wouldn’t even give him a drop of water to cool his tongue.

FRANK: Ernest, I want you to notice that nothing in the parable suggests that the conditions represented by it were to continue forever. So far as the Jewish nation is concerned—as represented by the experiences of the rich man—it has doubtless appeared to them that God’s favour has been lost forever. In Ezekiel 39:23, God speaks of having hidden His face from Israel, and of giving them over into the hands of their enemies. Thus have they been tormented throughout the entire age; and are still being tormented.

ERNEST: In what sense, then, is the rich man now on his way back from hell?

FRANK: In the sense that God’s favour is now returning to Israel, in fulfilment of the prophecies that such would be the case at the end of the age.

ERNEST: I get your point all right, but I’m not sure that I agree with it. It seems to me that there is very little evidence now of God’s favour returning to the Jews. You said yourself, a moment ago, that they are still being tormented.

FRANK: It does seem like a paradox, I'll admit, but it's not actually so when we take into consideration the entire prophetic testimony concerning the experiences through which the Jews were to pass at the end of the age.

ERNEST: I guess all students of the Bible know that God has promised to restore the Jewish nation to their own land. Is it reasonable to suppose that the return of five hundred thousand of them in recent years, and the wonderful things which have been accomplished in Palestine, are in fulfilment of the prophecies?

FRANK: Ernest, there is no doubt about that; and that's why I say that the rich man of the parable is now on his way back from hell.

ERNEST: But the Jews are having more trouble than ever. How do you account for that?

FRANK: The prophecies foretold that such would be the case. One of God's promises to them is recorded in Jeremiah 30:3, where we are told that they were to be restored to their own land; but in the 5th verse of the same prophecy the Jews are represented as saying, "We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace." In the 11th verse of this prophecy God explains that He permits this final great trouble to come upon Israel for their correction. Many of the prophecies which tell of the restoration of Israel to their own land and of God returning favour to them, show that it would be accompanied by much trouble. We should expect, then, to see the Jew today, especially in Europe, passing through severe trials.

ERNEST: Frank, doesn't the Bible say something about the nations attacking the land of Palestine?

FRANK: Yes. That is referred to in Ezekiel 38, and in Zechariah 14, as well as in other prophecies. That will be in the final phase of Armageddon. It will be during this attack that God will miraculously intervene on behalf of His people, and they will then realise that while God had hidden His face from them for more than nineteen centuries, His favour has at last returned.

ERNEST: And then the rich man of the parable will be all the way from hell; is that it?

FRANK: Yes, in the sense that they will no longer be persecuted by Gentile nations. The prophecies show that they will then accept the Messiah, and be the first among the nations to co-operate in and receive the blessings of the Messianic Kingdom. The work of restoration will continue until even those in their graves will be brought back to life. This is clearly shown in Ezekiel 37:12-14.

ERNEST: What about the rest of the world?

FRANK: They will also receive God's blessings of peace and happiness. The Bible indicates that while the Jewish nation will be the first to receive the blessings of Christ's Kingdom, yet the blessings will quickly spread to other nations, and they will say, "Come let us go up to the Kingdom of the Lord." And when they do, they will be taught to beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks, and there'll be universal peace and happiness forever. The only ones who will not be blessed under Messiah's Kingdom will be those who wilfully oppose its laws. The Bible says that all such will be destroyed from among the people.—Acts 3:23.

ERNEST: What happens to the beggar in the parable who went to Abraham's bosom?

FRANK: The class represented by the beggar shares with Christ in bestowing Kingdom blessings upon the world. This is explained in the booklet, "Some of the Parables;" it contains so much valuable information that all Christians should know at the present time.

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SUNDAY NIGHTS 9 p.m. — 9.15 p.m.

8.30 p.m. — 8.45 p.m., S. Aus.

Has Noah's Ark Been Found.

OUR supply of January "Peoples Paper" is about exhausted, and having received further requests for that number containing the reference to Noah's Ark, it is thought well to reprint the short article below.

The following account was read recently in a reprint from the U.S.A. periodical "Prophecy Monthly," and in view of the fact that many discoveries by excavations, over recent years, have proved the correctness of the Bible in other ways, this story does not seem unreasonable, and is certainly interesting.

The story itself is told by Vladimar Roskovitsky, a White Russian who was serving as an aviator in the Czar's armies just before the Revolution. He was not a Christian at the time of the discovery, but was led by the proof of the truth of the Bible account of the Flood to become a Christian, and is now engaged selling Bibles.

His story is that he was stationed with a group of aviators at a lonely outpost about 25 miles north-west of Mt. Ararat. The day was blistering hot, as August days are apt to be in the semi-desert regions, and the men looked longingly at the snow-cap on Mt. Ararat. The Captain of the post appeared, and said that a super-charger had been installed in No. 7 plane, and Roskovitsky and his friend were ordered to take it up for a test at high altitude.

All the preparations were quickly made, and with an engine already hot from the sun, the aviators were soon in the air and circling the camp for altitude. At 14,000 feet they levelled off to become accustomed to the altitude.

An Amazing Sight.

Suddenly Roskovitsky was taken with an impulse to head for the snow-capped peak. He circled it a couple of times, and then took a long glide down the south side of the mountain, when suddenly he came upon a perfect jewel of a lake, blue as turquoise, and partly frozen over at the shaded end. As the men circled to get clearer views, the second man began to shout wildly and to point to the lower end of the lake. The pilot looked and nearly fainted.

To use his own words: "A submarine! No, it wasn't, for it had stubby masts, but the top was rounded over with only a flat cat-walk about five feet across down the length of it. What a strange craft, built as though the designer had expected the waves to roll over the top most of the time, and had engineered it to wallow in the sea like a log, with those stubby masts carrying enough sail to keep it facing the waves.

"We flew down as close as safety permitted and took several circles around it. We were surprised, when we got close to it, at the immense size of the thing, for it was as long as a city block, and would compare very favourably in size with the modern battleships of to-day. It was grounded on the shore of the lake with about one-fourth under water. It had been partly dismantled on one side near the front, and on the other side there was a great doorway nearly twenty feet square. This seemed quite out of proportion, as even to-day ships seldom have doors half that large.

“After seeing all we could from the air, we broke all speed records back down to the airport. When we related our find the laughter was loud and long. Some accused us of getting drunk on too much oxygen, and there were many other remarks too numerous to relate.

Captain’s Interest.

“The Captain, however, was serious. He asked several questions, and ended by saying, ‘Take me up there; I want to look at it.’

“We made the trip without incident and returned to the airport.

“ ‘What do you make of it?’ I asked, as we climbed out of the plane.

“ ‘Astounding,’ he replied. Do you know what ship that is?’ ‘Of course not, sir.’

“ ‘Ever hear of Noah’s Ark?’

“ ‘Yes, sir. But I don’t understand what a legend of Noah’s Ark has to do with our finding this strange thing fourteen thousand feet up on a mountain top.’

“ ‘This strange craft,’ explained the Captain, ‘is Noah’s Ark. It has been sitting up there for nearly five thousand years. Being frozen up for nine or ten months of the year, it couldn’t rot, and has been in cold storage, as it were, all this time. You have made the most amazing discovery of the age.’

Russian Government’s Expedition.

“When the Captain sent this report to the Russian Government, it aroused considerable interest, and the Czar sent two special companies of soldiers to climb the mountain. One group of fifty men attacked one side, and the other group of one hundred men attacked the big mountain the other side.

“Two weeks of hard work were required to chop out a trail along the cliffs of the lower part of the mountain, and it was nearly a month before the ark was reached. Complete measurements were taken and plans drawn of it, as well as many photographs, all of which were sent to the Czar of Russia.

“A few days after this expedition sent its report to the Czar, the Government was overthrown, and godless Bolshevism took over, so that the records were never made public, and probably were destroyed in the zeal of the Bolsheviks to discredit all religion and belief: in the truth of the Bible.

“We White Russians of the air fleet escaped through Armenia, and four of us came to America, where we could be free to live according to the ‘Good Old Book,’ which we had seen for ourselves to be absolutely true, even to as fantastic-sounding a thing as a world flood.”

While the Lord’s people do not need any outward evidence to convince them of the authenticity of the Flood in Noah’s day, so much has been taught which contradicts the Bible account of this and other important happenings that, if the discovery of Noah’s Ark is to be added, in the years ahead, to other actual proofs of Old Testament records, it will be a further means of opening the eyes of all people to the surety of the Word of God, and assist them to come into line with the requirements of the Kingdom, when “the desire of all nations shall come.”

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