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When the Son of Man Cometh.

“When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”—Luke 18:8.

(Convention Address)

IN taking up this subject, it is not our intention to present anything of a sensational nature with respect to Christ's second advent, and yet this subject of the return of Christ is undoubtedly of sensational nature or interest to those Christians who not only love their Lord as their Saviour and Redeemer, but have been called into the fellowship of His sufferings, and can realise their Lord and Head as the Chief Reaper in this harvest time of the Gospel Age.

The generally accepted idea of the return of Christ is that of a most sensational and awe-inspiring event, the like of which has never before been seen in the world. We would say the reason that nothing like the supposed astounding event has ever been recorded in the past is that God's plan, in its every feature, is carried out in a quiet, majestic manner, without outward demonstration of any kind. The great Lord of heaven and earth, who is from everlasting to everlasting, accomplishes all His purposes with complete peace of mind and tranquillity of soul, without resort to spectacular show, for the important reason that God always appeals to the hearts of His people, and never to their natural emotions. Take an illustration in Luke 17:20—“When He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.” We note the margin of that text, it says “or with outward show.”

Now think of how Christ came to Israel at His first advent. Today (Christmas Day) is the day which, to some extent anyway, is kept throughout the civilized world as being the anniversary of the birth of Christ. We can rejoice that there is some respect in this direction. In Luke 2:12, 16, we read “And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.” “And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.” Could there be anything more lowly and unspectacular in the coming of Jesus to the world of mankind? Then again, in noting the prophet Zachariah 9:9, we have a very beautiful example given of Christ presenting Himself to Jerusalem. This is what the prophet proclaimed of Him—“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” The meek Jesus of Nazareth, presenting himself to Israel, lowly and riding on an ass! Nothing of an outward show and splendour, surely!

Then we come to John the Baptist's words in John 1:26, and read (John was proclaiming this One who was greater than he, the One of whom he was not worthy to unlatch his shoes)—“John answered them, saying, I baptize with water; but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not.” John was here announcing the Messiah as standing among them, of whom they knew not. To think of it! The Lord of Glory present, the Saviour, Christ the Lord, in Israel, and yet “there standeth one among you whom ye know not!”

What of our Lord's second advent? Does God's method of revelation differ from that of the first advent?

In Matt. 24:37-39 Jesus gave His great prophecy in respect of the days of His presence. “But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” “The days of Noah” and “the days of the Son of man.” When we think of the “days of Noah,” we can see it is not the days of Noah's coming, can't we? “As it

was in the days of Noah,” such and such a thing took place. Noah was not referred to as coming from anywhere.

It undoubtedly refers to the days of the building of the Ark, the period of time during which Noah was preaching righteousness, while the world went on its own way, ignorant and undesirous of knowing what this great man of God was doing. So should it be in the days of the Son of Man, the period of the days of the Son of man. The comparison is not with the exact moment of Christ’s coming; that word “coming” should rightly be translated “presence.” “So should be the presence of the Son of man.” What a comparison it is, that period of time in Noah’s day and the period of time in the days of the Son of man, the closing period of this Gospel Age! It means the days, then, of Christ’s presence.

So we would say that our Lord undoubtedly has now, in the end of this Gospel Age, come to conduct the closing scenes. Mankind has gone on its own way all down the six thousand years of its history. Christ was sent nearly two thousand years ago; He has been calling out a people for His name during the Gospel Age, and now He comes to close this feature of His plan and take His people to His heavenly kingdom.

So we see, dear friends, Christ has come not only to Melbourne, to Sydney, Canberra, Perth, Geelong, Digby and Healesville, etc., but has come to every place wherever His people are found. But how few there are! “When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?” —faith of that quality that will be looking for Him? Or shall they be going on as in the days of Noah, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage—absorbed in the things that support the physical life, ignorant of the presence of this great One who has come now to take His people to Himself.

In the days of John the Baptist, “There standeth One among you whom ye know not.” Now again, the same is true “in the days of the presence of the Son of man.”

Matt. 24:40-42 reads, “Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.” How often have we read this in the past! We have often thought that one was taken to heaven and the other left behind. But is that the answer? Let us turn to Luke 17:34-37—“I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto Him, Where, Lord? And He said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.” Here is an answer from the Lord which shows us distinctly that it is not a matter of one being taken up to heaven and the other left on the earth. He is explaining that there is a separating going on here on earth, because of a particular food that is observed and appreciated by a special class. He draws the illustration of the eagles. We know just what characteristics represent those birds, they have very sharp eyes and perception. So the Christians who are awake can perceive the precious things of God’s Word, and they are gathered together. Whithersoever the food is, there will the eagles be gathered together. So it is that in this time of the Lord’s presence there has been for some considerable time and still is, a gathering together of those who appreciate good things when they find them. They have “tasted that the Lord is gracious.” They must come together and feast on these things, and they have hope and confidence in respect of the glorious Kingdom of God and the work the Lord has promised they shall do in it, and to do now joyfully in His service.

All this is taking place during the “days of the Son of man,” not in a particular moment of a day or night, as we often hear it expressed, The Lord might come tonight and take this or that one away. No, these are the days of His presence, just as in the days of Noah he was present before the Flood. Reading again in Matt. 24:43, “But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.” There again we have the unexpected, unobserved presence of Christ depicted, as a thief; So Christ comes in the end of this Gospel Age unknown to any except the sharp-eyed Christians.

Matt. 24:31 reads, “And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Here again we have the Lord using an illustration of the gathering of His people. This is a description of what is taking place in the days of the Son of man. It means, not the heavens above, but the heavens in which His people have been associated together for some considerable time, the ecclesiastical heavens. One is taken and the other left. Gathering together His elect from one end of heaven to the other. Yes, the systems have existed all down the Gospel Age, but in the end of the age association with worldliness has become so pronounced that the Lord has to reject these systems, and calls His people out by the message of truth. From one end of heaven to the other the trumpet sound goes forth, and finds one here, one there.

What is it, then, that attracts? Where the body is, the food is, thither will the eagles be gathered together. When once we have a taste of this food we would not be interested in any way in what is being distributed in other spheres; it does not satisfy in the least. When we have the Truth, the Word of God in its purity, harmonious right throughout, it surely satisfies our longings as nothing else can do.

Passing now to Luke 12:35-38, we read “Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding; that when He cometh and knocketh, they may open unto Him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if He shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.” Yes, at whatever time the Lord’s parousia is discerned, is grasped and appreciated by any of His people, and He finds them so, blessed are those servants.

Let us note that those to whom the Lord refers are already His servants, and would know much of His plan, but now the time is shown as being ready for additional food, fitting for the end of the Age. The revealing of the Master’s presence, then, has been one of the most momentous events in all the history of the Church. We think, too, of the resurrection of the sleeping saints revealed at this time, and the clear understanding of the Covenants of God, in harmony with the various dispensations of the ages, also the revealing of the important doctrine of the Sin-offerings— that the consecrated saints are counted in with their Lord and Head to participate in the blood of the New Covenant. But why should this knowledge and heart appreciation of these truths be necessary? How often have we heard it said, It does not matter very much what we believe, the main thing is we love the Lord and gather together to praise and worship Him. Well, would we place ourselves in the hands of an ignorant man if we had a broken leg? Would an engineering firm engage a farmer to construct intricate machinery? Is the Lord less careful, then, in employing assistants for His Heavenly Kingdom?

Taking Rev. 7:2-4, we find an important message, “And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.”

Now it says, “Hold back the winds,” “till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads.” What can this mean? It certainly shows that there are some very important intellectual truths to be conveyed to God’s true people, and there will be great commotions on earth when these are sealed in their foreheads. This does not mean that God alters His plan because His people are not ready at a particular time, but it does mean that God has such an oversight in respect of His people that He arranges that the trouble shall not come too soon, until all have been intellectually made acquainted with all features of His plan necessary to fit them for the life beyond the veil. We might say then, Would the Lord select an assistant in His Kingdom not fully conversant with the operations of the New Covenant? Some of our friends who have been in the Truth believe the New Covenant is operating in this Gospel Age. Wouldn’t they be out of harmony with God’s plan on the other side to find that it was to operate with Israel in the next age?

What about the resurrection of the sleeping saints? If this is not known now, how could the saints co-operate on the other side with those already raised? So with all the truths, the Lord’s people must be intellectually acquainted, this side of the veil, if they are going to be proved worthy assistants on the other side. “Until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads.” Can’t we see that it matters very much what we believe and why we believe it? We must receive the truth into our minds that it might sink into our hearts and we make it our own.

So we see that in addition to the fundamentals that have been held by God’s people all down through the Age, such as the ransom, justification, consecration, sanctification, resurrection and times of restitution, there are these additional features that will prove whether one is worthy to be of this Bride class. It is not a matter of loving the Lord and taking an easy cross, asleep in Zion. That is the Lord’s condemnation of the aodicean period of the Churches, neither hot nor cold. “I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” (Rev. 3:14-16.)

That is the reason the Lord is sending forth His angels to gather His elect from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other, that He might find the true ones, those prepared and who delight to have the principles implanted in their hearts and minds, and thus become fitted for service beyond.

We see in v. 4 of Revelation 7, that 144,000 are sealed. We might ask then, What about those who passed on all through the age? Would it not be essential that these also be made acquainted and prepared to assist Christ in His Kingdom? There is a very helpful parable in Luke 19:11-16—“And as they heard these things, He added and spake a parable, because He was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to

whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities." Another was given authority over five cities, and so on.

What inference can we take from this parable? We see that at the time of his return the nobleman—who represented our Lord—deals with those to whom, figuratively speaking, he gave a pound to deal with, and inquires of them what use they made of it. Here we have the Lord's promise that they should be over five cities, or ten cities. Keeping in mind that at the resurrection the dead in Christ should be raised first, is it not reasonable to think that the risen saints are being installed in office, and made acquainted with those very truths of the Harvest which they had not had the privilege of knowing during their lifetime? There is a period, undoubtedly, in which the risen saints are being installed with authority over ten cities and over five cities, which is the Lord's way of explaining how they are to be associated with Him in the conduct of His heavenly kingdom. But "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment." The saints living during the harvest time having been made acquainted, on this side of the veil, with all the features of the plan, are ready to be associated with the risen saints and their Lord, and the Marriage of the Lamb taking place, all are ready to conduct the Kingdom work and bring blessings upon mankind in general, following the great time of trouble.

So, dear friends, it is our privilege to appreciate these things to the fullest extent, not to be content with the appreciation of certain truths only, but that we might make fullest use of these truths specially given to fit us now for the glorious inheritance of the saints in light.

In conclusion, Rev. 3:20, the message to Laodicea, is undoubtedly applicable to this closing period in which we are living. There we have the Lord's words to us, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. " Yes, the Lord is standing at the door and knocking on the hearts of His true people—"If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

To think that the Lord would give us this promise of rich blessings for those who appreciate the days in which we are living! We might say, then, that we should be on guard against even activity in the Lord's work, and allowing it to absorb all our time. We have a very precious privilege, yet we cannot witness to the world with the truths of the Harvest time. If it were that we should allow the Harvest truths to become dimmed or in any way not so much appreciated, we would be the loser. It would be possible for one to lose their crown on that account. So let us be on guard, every one of us, to appreciate first things first, and rejoice also in the privileges of communicating the Lord's words to others, the milk of the Word to babes and also strong meat to those able to digest it.

As we go on our Christian way, may we strive to appreciate the deep and precious truths of God's Word that pertain to the members of the Lord's Body, becoming sealed in our foreheads, and ready to be taken and associated in the Little Flock to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

Convention News.

THE Easter Convention at Adelaide has proved to be a very helpful season of spiritual blessing and refreshment.

Our hearts go out in thankfulness and praise to the "Giver of every good and perfect gift," for His blessings bestowed upon our gatherings during the four-day Convention. Each Convention as it passes is said to be the "best yet," and expressions to this effect were heard among the friends at the close of our gatherings.

The theme that seemed to dominate our studies and talks was that of the preparation of ourselves for the entering in to the "marriage of the Lamb." The development in our own hearts of the fruits and graces of the Lord's spirit, we realize to be the chief concern of the children of God. We trust that the many helpful thoughts and Scriptures upon which we were permitted to dwell, may have the effect of deepening the work of grace in our hearts in the days before us, as we seek with humbled and chastened spirits to yield ourselves to the great Divine Fashioner who is working in us more and more the good pleasure of His will. Events around all speak to us of the very near approach of the Kingdom, and the inspired Apostle asks "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and godliness?" How carefully we must hearken to the Word of God, and with what diligence must we seek to apply it to our hearts and lives if we would be "more than conquerors" in the Christian fight. Every one who has the hope of being "like Christ" and of seeing Him "as He is," will surely purify himself "even as He is pure." Our earnest prayer on behalf of His consecrated people everywhere, is that God may "strengthen us with all strength according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness."

We were glad to welcome to our gatherings some brethren from Melbourne, as well as some from country parts of S.A. The Bible studies chosen for our meditation were Col. 1:10-19; Psa. 37:7-16; 2 Peter 3:11-18, and 1 John 3:1-9. The topics of the addresses by various brethren were: "Keep yourselves in the love of God"; "Ready Made Things, or Things Made Ready"; "Possibilities"; "Rebuilding"; "The Inconsistencies of Life"; "The Hope of Immortality"; and "Love's Victory over Fear." The Praise and Testimony meeting, and Fellowship meeting "A Hymn I like and why?" added to the general helpfulness of the occasion. Also provision was made for a Question meeting and Discussion on "What Spiritual things do you consider should occupy most of our attention?"

We were glad to receive greetings and messages of Scripture from various brethren and Classes. To these our appreciation and warmest Christian love is extended with the Scriptural greeting found in the words of John 17:21-24.

The Convention closed with the usual Love Feast and singing of "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love" and "God be with you till we meet again."

Memorial Observances.

Melbourne

THE brethren in Melbourne gladly assembled on the evening of April 14th to observe the Memorial of Christ's death, esteeming it a great privilege to thus remember their Lord and Saviour in the particular manner He requested.

The studies held previous to the occasion assisted to centre the minds of all upon "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Apart from two or three members observing the Memorial with other gatherings of the Lord's people, the full number of our dear friends was present.

The beautiful hymns appropriate to the occasion, the Scripture readings pertaining to Christ's last hours on earth, the helpful address revealing both type and antitype of the Passover and the prayers of thankfulness for God's great mercy and favour to us and His dear people everywhere, together with the realisation of God's blessing upon, the service, made it a most solemn yet uplifting celebration in memory of our dear Redeemer, and again showing confirmation of the vows of consecration to be dead with Christ on the part of all the dear members participating..

Partaking of the emblems of unleavened bread (picturing our Lord's perfect body, broken for us) and wine' (representing Christ's blood shed on our behalf), both the: primary and deeper meanings were thankfully realised, to the Lord's praise, and the sentiments of our hearts are: beautifully expressed in the words "I'm not my own, dear Lord—to Thee My every power, by right, belongs: My privilege to serve I see,

Thy praise to raise in tuneful songs.
And so, beside Thy sacrifice,
I would lay down my little all.
'Tis lean and poor, I must confess;
I would that it were not so small."

Geelong, Vic.

A little band of members of the newly formed Bible Class in Geelong met together in sincerity and truth to observe the Memorial of the death of Christ our Passover Lamb.

While only about half the number which attended the institution of this Memorial on the night prior to our Lord's crucifixion, it was realised that all told the Lord's faithful people will be but "a little flock" in comparison with the multitudes of mankind, and the Lord esteems as very precious every member, who, being justified by faith in His shed blood delights to take up his or her cross in the footsteps of Christ — "to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." (Rev. 14:4.)

With these sentiments in heart, expressed in the prayers, hymns and Scripture readings, and realising what a great privilege it is to be called into the fellowship of God's dear Son, both as respects the sacrifice of this present life and the glory to follow, the emblems were partaken of with deep gratitude of heart to the Giver of every good thing. The response of heart on the part of each member seems so fittingly expressed in the lines "Lord, I would follow Thee in all the way Thy weary feet have trod; yes, if I may.

All that I am and have—Thy gifts so free
All of my ransomed life, Dear Lord, for Thee!"

Digby and Merino, Vic.

We carried out the Memorial Service in honour and reverence to our Master. Together with our elderly members we devotedly, thankfully and prayerfully honoured our Master's great sacrifice. The 14th chapter of Mark was the Scripture mainly used, also John 14:23-27. Hymns sung were 224, 225, 190 and 208 from the old book. Others who also would be honouring our Lord and Master were remembered in prayer. It was a very nice and edifying little service.

Adelaide

Once again we were privileged to meet on Sunday evening, 14th of April, to keep the Memorial of our Lord's death. Twenty-three members participated. We feel that we are richly blessed in being favoured with the light of truth concerning the significance of the ransom-sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the further privilege of being

associated with our Lord and Head in being “broken” with Him, and with each other, as fellow-members of His “body.”

We thank God for the privilege that is ours, “not only to believe in Jesus but also to suffer for His sake.” We pray that in the coming days we may be faithful to the Lord, continuing to “keep the feast,”—feeding upon the Lamb, and the unleavened bread—the pure teachings of the Word of God. “Thanks be unto God, for His unspeakable Gift.” We remembered in prayer His dear people everywhere.

Sydney

The Sydney friends assembled at 7 p.m. on April 14th. There were fourteen present, but we believe some were prevented from coming by the heavy rain, especially those that live at a greater distance.

The spirit of the Lord was manifested amongst us, and we all resolved to be more worthy of our high calling, to strive still more earnestly to make our calling and election sure.

The chairman opened the celebration with a short speech of introduction and then we had a hymn (No. 325) and prayer was offered by a Brother present. After that there was a short address by another Brother. Attention was drawn to the type of the Passover during the night of the Exodus; then the antitypical significances were explained, supporting all this by a reading of Exodus 12:1-14 and Matthew 26:17-30. Then the significance of this to us at this present time was pointed to, closing with praise to God for His stupendous love and mercy.

The closing part of the address consisted of an exhortation to the brethren to drive out all leaven of malice and worldliness, to remember that they must love the brethren if they would be worthy to partake of the Lord’s Supper, The address ended with an allusion to the great climax of the ages and the Hallelujah Chorus which would then be ringing throughout the universe.

After that the elements were prayed for by two other Brothers and dispensed to the friends. Then, after a hymn (No. 15) the brethren dispersed. It was cheering to see many old faces, who, though rarely attending studies, never miss appearing at this celebration.

Burnie, Tasmania

We gathered on Nisan 14th to gladly comply with our Redeemer’s request to “do this in remembrance of me.” The afternoon was taken up with thoughts given on the type found in Exod. 12:5-14.

In verse 5 we endeavoured to draw attention to the outstanding types only, as true antitypes, easily recognised. Our dear Redeemer’s sinless and absolute purity is shown, and its necessity for a corresponding price for Adam lightly touched on.

Verse 6 suggests our Saviour’s offering himself to the Laodicean church in the well known words, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock.” (Rev. 3:20.) The killing of the lamb was an absolute necessity, but in His case was done by those who rejected Him, and as Pharaoh relied on his wise men and idols, so the professing Laodicean Church prefer theirs, and thus “kill Him” so far as they are concerned, preferring their Barabas.

Verse 7 shows the importance and meaning to us of the blood of Jesus. Our necessity to see that we are depending on that alone also suggests that before we can “eat the flesh” understandingly we must have the blood on the door posts and lintels of our hearts.

Verse 8. The night time of sin and death has been and is the time when His followers must “eat His flesh and drink His blood” else there will be no life in them, in a sinless state and with bitter experiences.

The further verses revealed many beautiful thoughts. In verse 22 it is interesting and solemn to note that the Israelites were not to leave their houses until the morning.

.In the account in John 20:7 we read, “And the napkin that was about His head was not lying with the linen clothes but wrapped together in a place by itself.” Would not this account have a meaning? Is it not a blessed thought that it pictures our dear Redeemer (Head), no longer requiring the grave clothes (napkin), and the remainder left for the privilege of His body members to use, until the last one has finished his course; we must all antitypically wear them.

At the little ceremony all partaking everywhere were remembered at the throne of grace. We had a very solemn but

happy time.

(No further Reports on the Memorial are to hand as this Issue goes to press.)

The Bible Viewed in the Light of Reason.

THE Bible is the torch of civilization and liberty. Its influence for good in society has been recognized by the greatest statesmen, even though they for the most part have looked at it through the various glasses of conflicting creeds, which, while upholding the Bible, grievously misrepresent its teachings. The grand old book is unintentionally but woefully misrepresented by its friends, many of whom would lay down life on its behalf; and yet they do it more vital injury than its foes, by claiming its support to their long-revered misconceptions of its truth, received through the traditions of their fathers. Would that such would awake, re-examine their oracle, and put to confusion its enemies by disarming them of their weapons!

The Bible is the oldest book in existence; it has outlived the storms of thirty centuries. Men have endeavoured by every means possible to banish it from the face of the earth: they have hidden it, buried it, made it a crime punishable with death to have it in possession, and the most bitter and relentless persecutions have been waged against those who had faith in it; but still the book lives.

The fact that it has survived so many centuries, notwithstanding such unparalleled efforts to banish and destroy it, is at least strong circumstantial evidence that the great Being whom it claims as its Author has also been its Preserver.

This book throughout constantly points and refers to one prominent character, Jesus of Nazareth, who it claims, was the Son of God. From beginning to end His name, and office, and work, are made prominent. That a man called Jesus of Nazareth lived, and was somewhat noted, about the time indicated by the writers of the Bible, is a fact of history outside the Bible, and it is variously and fully corroborated. That this Jesus was crucified because He had rendered Himself offensive to the Jews and their priesthood is a further fact established by history outside the evidence furnished by the New Testament writers. The writers of the New Testament (except Paul and Luke) were the personal acquaintances and disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, whose doctrines their writings set forth.

One plan, spirit, aim and purpose pervades the entire book. Its opening pages record the creation and fall of man; its closing pages tell of man's recovery from that fall; and its intervening pages show the successive steps of the plan of God for the accomplishment of this purpose. The harmony, yet contrast, of the first three and the last three chapters of the Bible is striking. The one describes the first creation, the other the renewed or restored creation, with sin and its penal-curse removed; the one shows Satan and evil entering into the world to deceive and destroy, the other shows his work undone, the destroyed ones restored, evil extinguished and Satan destroyed; the one shows the dominion lost by Adam, the other shows it restored and forever established by Christ, and God's will done in earth as in heaven; the one shows sin the producing cause of degradation, shame and death, the other shows the reward of righteousness to be glory, honour and life.

Though written by many pens, at various times, under different circumstances, the Bible is not merely a collection of moral precepts, wise maxims and words of comfort. It is more: it is a reasonable, philosophical and harmonious statement of the causes of present evil in the world, its only remedy and the final results as seen by divine wisdom, which saw the end of the plan from before its beginning, marking as well the pathway of God's people, and upholding and strengthening them with exceeding great and precious promises to be realized in due time.

The teaching of Genesis, that man was tried in a state of original perfection in one representative, that he failed, and that the present imperfection, sickness and death are the results, but that God has not forsaken him, and will ultimately recover him through a redeemer, born of a woman (Gen. 3:15), is kept up and elaborated all the way through. The

necessity of the death of a redeemer as a sacrifice for sins, and of his righteousness as a covering for our sin, is pointed out in the clothing of skins for Adam and Eve; in the acceptance of Abel's offerings; in Isaac on the altar; in the death of the various sacrifices by which the patriarchs had access to God, and of those instituted under the law and perpetuated throughout the Jewish age. The prophets, though credited with understanding but slightly the significance of some of their utterances (1 Pet. 1:12), mention the laying of the sins upon a person instead of a dumb animal, and in prophetic vision they see Him who is to redeem and to deliver the race led "as a lamb to the slaughter," that "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him," and that "by His stripes we are healed." They pictured Him as "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," and declared that "The Lord hath laid on

Him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. 53:3-6.) They told where the deliverer would be born (Micah 5:2), and when He

should die, assuring us that it would be “not for Himself.” (Dan. 9:26.) They mention various peculiarities concerning Him—that He would be “righteous,” and free from “deceit,” “violence,” or any just cause of death (Isa. 53:8, 9, 1) ; that He would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (Zech. 11 :

12) ; that He would be numbered among transgressors in His death (Isa. 53:12) ; that not a bone of Him should be broken (Psa. 34:20; John 19:36) ; and that though He should die and be buried, His flesh would not corrupt, neither would He remain in the grave.—Psa. 16:10; Acts 2:31.

The New Testament writers clearly and forcibly, yet simply, record the fulfilment of all these predictions in Jesus of Nazareth, and by logical reasonings show that such a ransom price as He gave was needful, as already predicted in the Law and the Prophets, before the sins of the world could be blotted out. (Isa. 1:18.) They trace the entire plan in a most logical and forcible manner, appealing neither to the prejudices nor to the passions of their hearers, but to their enlightened reason alone, furnishing some of the most remarkably close and cogent reasoning to be found anywhere on any subject. See Rom. 5:17-19, and onward to the 12th chapter.

Moses, in the Law, pointed not alone to a sacrifice, but also a blotting out of sin and a blessing of the people under this great deliverer, whose power and authority he declares shall vastly exceed his own, though it should be “like unto” it. (Deut. 18:15, 19.) The promised deliverer is to bless not only Israel, but through Israel “all the families of the earth.” (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4.)

These writers point out the harmony of this view with what is written in the Law and the Prophets; and the grandeur and breadth of the plan they present more than meets the most exalted conception of what it purports to be—“Good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people.”

The thought of Messiah as a ruler of not only Israel, but also of the world, suggested in the books of Moses, is the theme of all the prophets. The thought of the kingdom was uppermost also in the teaching of the apostles; and Jesus taught that we should pray, “Thy Kingdom come,” and promised those a share in it who would first suffer for the truth, and thus prove themselves worthy.

This hope of the coming glorious kingdom gave all the faithful ones courage to endure persecution and to suffer reproach, deprivation and loss, even unto death. And in the grand allegorical prophecy which closes the New Testament, the worthy “Lamb that was slain” (Rev. 5:12), the worthy “overcomers” whom He will make kings and priests in His Kingdom, and the trials and obstacles which they must overcome to be worthy to share that kingdom, are all faithfully portrayed. Then are introduced symbolic representations of the blessings to accrue to the world under that Millennial reign, when Satan shall be bound and Adamic death and sorrow wiped out, and when all the nations of earth shall walk in the light of the heavenly kingdom — the new Jerusalem.

The Bible, from first to last, holds out a doctrine found nowhere else, and in opposition to the theories of all the heathen religions—that a future life for the dead will come through a RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

Correspondence.

Scotland.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Friends.—Sister , of

has just written to remind me that the time has once again come along for forwarding the subscriptions for the - Peoples Paper." 20/- will therefore be placed to your credit in the Melbourne Post Office, and as usual 10/- of this will be on behalf of Sister There has been no change in the affairs of the Class here since we wrote last, and at the time of writing the studies are in 1st Peter, and there is one study only on Sundays.

Might the suggestion be offered that at some convenient time the "Peoples Paper" draw attention to the benefits to be derived from the use of the Revised Version in preference to the so-called Authorised Version in Bible study. Some, of course, have surrounded the Authorised Version with a halo of pious veneration and sacred associations, assuming that the actual English words were "verbally inspired."

Agrippa's words

How many addresses have been based on Agrippa's words in Acts 26:28, "almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian?" Sankey even based a hymn on the phrase. The Revised and other translations make it plain that Agrippa neither thought nor said these words, and there is no reason to suppose he was influenced by what Paul had said. As Moffat's translation so tersely puts it, "At this rate it won't be long before you believe you have made a Christian of me."

How many have puzzled over the words in John 13:10, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet." Two different words as well as different tenses are used in the original. "He that hath been bathed needeth not save to wash his feet."

The Authorised Version has no right to state in 1 Tim. 6:10 that "the love of money is the root of all evil." The R.V. gives the proper aspect: "it is a root of all kinds of evil." How much clearer is the R.V. rendering of verse 5, "supposing that godliness is a way of gain," instead of "supposing that gain is godliness."

Strain at a gnat

Some people imagine, when they read Matt. 23:24, "Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel," someone choking from a fly in the throat. The reference is to filtering small foreign particles out of wine before it is drunk.

In Matt. 2:16, the A.V., states that Herod killed all the children in Bethlehem, where the R.V., correctly states that only the male children were killed. Even the careless use of the articles "a" and "the" in the A.V. alters the sense of many passages. We know how important the proper use of the article is in John 1:1, and this is equally true in many other instances. Matt. 4:5, "on a pinnacle of the temple," as if there were many pinnacles; the pinnacle is correct.

Matt. 5:1, "He went up into a mountain," instead of the mountain. John 3:10, "Art thou the teacher in Israel," not a teacher. Acts 17:23, "the unknown God" is a logical contradiction; an unknown God is the correct translation. There are many other examples where the superior translation of the Revised Version is of great importance.

The friends here unite in sending their Christian love; sincerely.

(The above is gladly submitted for the benefit of our readers as a whole; while the Authorised Version is beautiful as respects the language, for general reading, yet it is well known by Bible students that other versions, such as the Revised Version, Emphatic Diaglott, etc., are absolutely essential as helps to the correct understanding of the Scriptures. It is the hope that it may be possible to publish in the "Peoples Paper" shortly the differences in translation of the three most reliable manuscripts of the New Testament, as compared with the Authorised Version.—B.B. Institute.)

Victoria.

Dear Sirs,—I have been listening to your broadcast dialogues, and I find them generally very interesting and

instructive. I was particularly glad to hear your exposition of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. If only people who believe that this portion of Christ's words supports their belief in "immortal souls" going to heaven and hell could be induced to face the passage honestly and analyse it as you have done, they would perhaps be able to appreciate the Truth about immortality and death.

If you can spare them I would like several copies of the Dialogue on "The Rich Man and Lazarus," and one of the other booklets you recommend, "Some of the Parables," I think. Thanking you, I am, Yours sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs,—I would be very glad if you would forward your broadcast Dialogues. I would be prepared to send you postage ; you could send them monthly or weekly as you would find it most convenient. I am not asking this favour for myself ; we are able to hear each broadcast, but my parents live at and so are unable to hear.

I will enclose 1/6 in stamps, and if any more is needed please send me word and I will forward it to you. Thanking you in anticipation ; Yours sincerely.

Dear Friends,—I just want to acknowledge receipt of the booklet "Hope Beyond the Grave," which I received about three weeks ago, and I thank you for it, also the papers and other booklets, etc., which you have forwarded as well.

I have read them and found them most interesting; I do hope that in time I shall be able to derive some comfort and assurance from them and their interpretation of the Bible, which I do think is very difficult for the average person to understand and reconcile the many seeming contradictions it contains.

I am enclosing a postal note for 3/- as a very small contribution towards the work you are doing. Once again thanking you for all the trouble and interest you have shown. I remain; Sincerely.

Frank and Ernest, Dear Sirs.—I have been a listener for some time to your Talks and I like them very much and I am trying to get others to listen-in. Would you please send me a copy of your booklet "Hope Beyond the Grave." I may get others to read it, too. I remain, Yours sincerely.

New South Wales.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs,—Having been introduced to the book "The Divine Plan of the Ages," by Mr.

I would like to have a copy of my own, also some to pass to others. As I do not know the price I am enclosing a 1 note for books and postage. I would like at least three copies. If amount enclosed is not sufficient I will forward the balance to you. Yours fraternally.

Tracts Available.

Two newly printed tracts are available for all our friends who can use them to advantage. The one "Refrain Thy Voice from Weeping, and Thine Eyes from Tears," contains a helpful message of comfort to all the bereaved, as well as being suitable for general use. The smaller tract, "The High Calling of God," is also a very good message for

general use. It is not intended that these tracts be placed indiscriminately, but rather delivered where there is desire for help in understanding the Bible. These tracts are free, being supplied from the General Tract Fund.

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