



Volume XV. No. 3 MELBOURNE, 1st MARCH, 1932 Price—Twopence Half penny

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD.

Psalm 23.

(Convention Address)

WE will notice in regard to our text that throughout the Old Testament the word rendered “Lord” is, in the Hebrew, “Jehovah,” and therefore applies to the Heavenly Father. The thought is that the great Over-Shepherd appointed His Son as the “Good Shepherd,” even as His Son also has appointed under-shepherds in the Church, subject to Him.

The work of shepherding is not exercised toward the world, as the Good Shepherd does not shepherd goats or wolves. The only ones who are shepherded are the „sheep, and special care is taken of these. If we would inquire, who are these sheep, we find that the Scriptures give us good evidence that originally the Jewish nation constituted the Lord’s flock and that King David recognised himself as one of the sheep. Israel was not chosen by the Lord because they were better than the rest of mankind, hut God made an exception of that people on account of Abraham, for whose sake lie became the Shepherd of Israel.

In this Psalm we have the picture of an “Eastern shepherd,” as they were termed in Palestine, tending his sheep, which differs from most of the present day styles of keeping sheep in this land. Here, we have our sheep enclosed by fences so that they cannot get away. and in some cases, where necessary, secure enough to prevent wild animals .getting in to molest them. The sheep of Palestine, grazing in a country where there were no boundaries, always

needed a shepherd to protect them from wolves and various wild beasts, to keep them guarded in general, and to lead them to good pastures.

The Eastern shepherd, with his love and care for the sheep, is given as an illustration of our Heavenly Father’s care over His “sheep.” Our Redeemer was sent forth as the Good Shepherd, who gave His life for the sheep, and by His death opened the door of the sheepfold of divine love, favour, rest and peace. This was a favourite picture which our Lord gave of Himself, “I know My sheep and am known of mine,” “My sheep hear My voice and they follow Me, a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of :Arangers.”

Our Shepherd speaks to His flock in a language which they understand and seek to Obey; it is a language which goats and wolves cannot comprehend. To His sheep, His written Word, treasured up in the heart,

marks the way of truth, His special providences further shape the peculiar course of each individual, and the abiding presence of His Holy Spirit makes manifest every intrusion of any other spirit, which seeks to beguile and lead astray. The true sheep will cultivate that communion and personal fellowship with the Lord which is their privilege.

While it is refreshing for us to take a comprehensive view of the divine favour and care manifested in provisions made for our welfare as His sheep, it is well that we should ever keep in mind that the Lord has appointed undershepherds; and that their value as overseers consists in their faithfulness in making known to the sheep the great Shepherd's message, and to the extent of their ability, communicating His tone and Spirit with His Word. The faithful of these, like the Apostle, may urge, And ye became followers of us and of the Lord."-1 '1'hess. 1:6.

On the other hand these sheep are called upon to mark the spirit of the under shepherds, whether or not it comports with that of the Chief Shepherd, so that they be not led astray. They are to try the spirits of those who pose as undershepherds, to note whether they be of God or whether they speak of themselves; whether their words or deeds are according to love or according to selfishness.

Our Lord Jesus declared, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, . . . and there shall be one fold and one shepherd"—ultimately. These other sheep we would understand to be the restitution flock, which, during the Millennial Age, the Lord will shepherd, gathering the willing to His right hand of favour, and who will ultimately be ushered into the blessings He has provided for them on the earth. The wayward goat class of that same age will be destroyed in the second death.

We may be glad indeed that the many heathen who have gone down into the great prison-house of death are to be awakened and granted full opportunity to come to a knowledge of the Good Shepherd, and to be guided by Him into the path of life, in the following of which, with His assistance, they may be fully recovered from all the imperfections entailed upon them by the fall. We rejoice, however, to know of the "little flock" which the Lord is now selecting for a place in His spiritual kingdom, and we may specially rejoice to be privileged to join its numbers now through our Redeemer and Shepherd, following whithersoever He may lead us in the narrow way.

Our Lord says, "My sheep follow Me," and this relates not to the flock of the future but to the "little flock" of the present, which He is now gathering out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue during this Gospel Age. It is the Father's flock, and our Redeemer represents Him as He informs "As I hear, I speak," "I came to do the will of Father in heaven." Thus He fully represents the Great Shepherd, saying, "All mine are thine and thine are mine." In another place He says, "Thine they were and Thou gayest them Me." The value of our relationship to the Great Shepherd and His Son increases in our appreciation, in proportion as we grow in knowledge. As our Lord said, "This is life eternal that they might know Thee, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

Then what consolation is the declaration. "I shall not want." Our Lord assures us that the Heavenly Father will withhold from us nothing that will be for our good. It is not the merely justified believer that is a member of this "little flock" at the present time, but the sanctified believer, fully consecrated to walk in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd, to hear His voice and follow Him. Our Redeemer informed us at the start, that following Him as His disciples, as His sheep, must signify to us, as to Him, worldly disfavour and opposition, not only from the Adversary, but also from those deluded by him and under the sway of his spirit of evil. In addition, we are to contend with our own blemishes and weaknesses. Such a picture of the narrow way would no doubt have terrified us, had it not been for our Shepherd's comforting promise of succour in every time of need, and His assurance that these trials to the flesh, rightly received, would constitute a part of our development in the spirit and preparation for the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

“I shall not want” may be applied in general to the necessities of the present life, for He will grant us whatsoever would be good for us according to His will; but He also specially means that, in another sense, we shall not lack the disciplines, the trials, the instructions, the encouragements, the reproofs and the assistance necessary for our attainment to “the glorious things that God hath in reservation for those that love Him,” supremely. The only condition connected with this promise is that we shall abide in His love, abide in His flock, continue to hearken to His voice and to follow His directions. How dangerous, then, to all of the true sheep would be any measure of worldly ambition, pride or self-esteem. How necessary that the heart should be right, desirous of knowing and obeying the Shepherd’s voice. With what care should the sheep scrutinise the motives which actuate their daily conduct, their words and the thoughts of their hearts.

As new creatures we are learning to realise more and more the barrenness of worldly hopes, ambitions and knowledge. More and more we should be giving heed to the leadings of the Good Shepherd, who is guiding His flock of new creatures for their spiritual refreshment through the winding paths of the “present evil world.” Those sheep which keep nearest to the Shepherd secure the fattest and richest experiences and refreshments. On the contrary, those which stray, looking for pastures green on their own account, or following the voice of false shepherds, are the ones

that are likely to eat of the poisonous growths, and fall into the pitfalls of sin and thereby be devoured by the ravenous beasts of passion and worldliness. Happy are the sheep who learn to know the voice of the true Shepherd, and whose faith is such that they follow closely and not afar off.

“To lie down” means to be resting, to be contented. This is the privilege of all the true sheep. Outwardly they may be distressed and “on the run,” assailed by the world, the flesh, and the Adversary; but as new creatures they may be at rest, at peace, because of their nearness to the Lord, and because of their faith in His overruling providence, under which all things work together for their good. “Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall stumble them.” These let the peace of God rule in their hearts and are thankful. It is to these that our Lord’s words apply.

“My peace I give unto you, let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” This rest, this peace of heart, is absolutely essential to our development as new creatures, even as the crystals are deposited from the liquids when they are still and not when they are agitated. So the character which God is developing in us absolutely demands that a condition of rest, peace, quietness of heart shall be attained; and to the attainment of this condition, patience, faith and love, the chief graces of the spirit, are necessary.

A very important lesson for every sheep to learn is the need of the Shepherd’s care and guidance through all the intricate passages of life. The Apostle asks, “Who is sufficient for these things?” Then he declares, “Our sufficiency is of God,” in Christ. He who redeemed us has gone the way before and directed that we walk in His steps. Those who become so wise in their own conceits that they fancy there are nearer ways and shorter cuts and more flowery paths to paradise, are deceiving themselves. If those who recognise the message and necessity of walking circumspectly in the Master’s footsteps neglect these, and become overcharged with the world and earthly ambitions, joys and toys, they are surely unwisely selling the glorious heavenly birthright for a mess of earthly pottage.

He who carefully follows the Master experiences the truth of the declaration, “He restoreth my soul.” How many find their spiritual strength refreshed as they walk in the paths of righteousness, because He leads them “for His name’s sake.”

His shepherding care is further realised where it says, “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of

death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.” This valley was entered by our race at the beginning through disobedience.

We have been in this valley for a long period. The shadow of death has been over the human family, and its accompaniments of sickness and sorrow have extended to every creature, so that the Apostle rightly said, “The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God,” waiting for the uplifting power of the reign of Christ and His Church, the sons of glory, to bring the promised restitution and, help out of the “valley of the shadow of death” back to the heights of light and love and divine likeness.

Our text represents the true sheep as saying, “I will fear no evil.” How appropriate! Weak and poor and insufficient of ourselves, and surrounded by foes, we nevertheless need not fear, for the developed sheep are not fearful of what the demons may seek to do, knowing that “all power in heaven and earth” is in the hands of our Shepherd King, and that He is directing our ways, and we can rest assured while He is at the helm that every experience shall work out a blessing, to the intent that, by the first resurrection change, He may take us to Himself and give us a share in His heavenly Kingdom. We have no need to fear, we have His promise, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

“Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me.” The shepherd’s rod or club was, according to record, one of hard wood, and with it the shepherd was prepared to defend the flock by combating every foe. The staff was lighter and longer; and more like a cane with a crook at the end. With it, it is stated, the point was used at times by the shepherd to prod the sheep that were careless, and with the hook he sometimes helped out any that had stumbled into rough places. Our Shepherd has a rod for enemies, and the staff for His sheep: the one for their protection, the other for their relief and assistance and correction. How comforting to know that all power is committed unto Him in heaven and in earth, and that under His protecting care nothing shall by any means harm us. No wonder that under such circumstances the sheep may enjoy “the peace of God which passeth all understanding,” having the assurance that all things shall be overruled for their eternal welfare.

We might take an instance when the Apostle Paul was brought before the governor Felix, and reasoned concerning a judgment to come which made the governor tremble. The Apostle did not attack the governor’s character, but he did better by lifting the mirror of the perfect law of love and liberty before the governor and let him see for himself how far short he came of the standard which alone God can approve. The courage of the Apostle in holding up the truth before one who so largely had to do with the decision of his own case is remarkable and commendable. Those who are on the Lord’s side and who, therefore have the Lord on their side in all of life’s affairs need fear no evil. The absence of fear, however, should not in us, any more than in the Apostle, lead to bravado or discourteous manner or language. The divine rule is, as expressed by the Apostle, that we should speak the truth in love.

“Thou preparest a table before me, in the presence of mine enemies.” The picture of the shepherd and the sheep has been gradually fading, and is now in the past. Instead of pastures and water brooks we now have the table and the cup. We hear the under shepherds say, “This is the bread which came down from heaven and this cup is the blood of the new covenant.” Our Lord sacrificed His earthly interests that we might partake of them through faith and be justified thereby and appropriate to ourselves more and more the benefits of His sacrifice. He passes to us the cup of His sufferings and death, saying, “Drink ye all of it.” By thus appropriating the merits of His sacrifice and participating with Him in His sufferings we are His sheep, we are the branches of the true Vine, we are members of His Body. This provision is made for us in the presence of our enemies. “Marvel not if the world hate you,” said our Master. Yet even in the presence of the opposition of the world, and with the Adversary using all manner of besetments, we are privileged to partake of these blessings; and we can feast with our Lord and none can make us afraid.

In harmony with this promise of the Scriptures to all who open their hearts to receive Him, He comes in and sympathises with them. He girds Himself as a servant and comes in and serves us, setting before us rich things from His store house, things new and old. Under this service all the old truths become fresh and appetising, refreshing and strengthening, and new truths are ours fitting to the peculiar time in which we are living.

“Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over.” Let us realise first that our Lord Jesus is the Anointed, and that His anointing was typified by the anointing of Aaron with precious oil (typifying the holy Spirit) which ran down unto the skirts of his garment. Let us think of this as the holy Spirit which, since Pentecost, has anointed all the sheep that have come into the fold, for the Body of Christ. Let us appreciate this anointing and abide under it, allowing it more and more to be what the Apostle terms an unction from the Holy One, affecting our every talent and power, bringing them all into subjection to the divine law of love.

“My cup runneth over.” Our Master’s cup was one of suffering and ignominy. It ‘becomes our cup also; hut He promises us a new cup of joy and rejoicing which He will share with us fully in the Kingdom. By faith we can enjoy it now and realise that it is full to overflowing. “Surely goodness and mercy shall pursue me all the days of my life.” Surely this is so ; looking back we can praise the way in which goodness and mercy have pursued us, and the conclusion of the whole matter, the end of the journey, is to occupy a place in the heavenly mansion, our Father’s house. . What a glorious consummation to all our hopes. Why should we murmur or complain at the roughness of the journey which will bring us to such a glorious goal. “Therefore let us dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

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

Birth of a New Era

The Marquess of Lothian, discussing the question whether our civilisation is declining, expresses the opinion that we are witnessing the birth of a new era, and that “the ultimate result of the doubts and dilemmas which so distract and disturb the human mind to-day will be the gradual birth of a type of human society in which -international unity and economic brotherhood will be added to the political and religious freedom we now enjoy”

It is over fifty years ago since Mr. C. T. Russell pointed out that the “present evil world” had reached its closing years and would soon pass away as predicted by the prophets, the apostles and our Lord Jesus Christ. Not that the literal “earth” or literal “heavens” were to be destroyed as so many have erroneously taught, but that the controlling powers in both social and religious spheres would be displaced by a “new heavens” spiritual arrangements and a “new earth” social arrangements. Mr. Russell’s works were not received by the clergy generally; indeed, he was very bitterly persecuted by ministers of various denominations and his works were denounced. That, however, has ever been the lot of the reformer, or one who lived ahead of the times. Now, the teachings which he proclaimed and made so plain that the “wayfaring man” could read and understand, are being declared by others. The influence of his works has told upon the public thought, and developments in the breaking up of the present systems, social and religious, clearly vindicate his forecasts. His work, “The Divine Plan of the Ages,” though published so long ago, is still the best exposition of the Bible. In fact, we know of no other publication that can harmonise the Scriptures and reveal so wonderful a Divine purpose regarding the human race. The closing chapters, such as the “Day of Jehovah,” so accurately depict the present day worldwide conditions, and while indicating the great trouble which is developing, also show the silver lining and that the outcome will be that the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdom of Christ. Satan has been the ruler of the present evil world, but Christ will be King over all the earth in that “world to come wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2 Pet. 3:3-13.) We recommend to all the reading of the “Divine Plan .of the Ages,” and if any have difficulty in obtaining a copy we shall be glad to hear from them. The Marquess appears to expect the better day to be gradually established by a sort of evolutionary process under human leadership and the present day systems. The Scriptures, however, clearly state that-the present systems will break down altogether in “a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.” The new age will be established in righteousness—a “new heavens”, i.e., instead of Satan being the prince of the world, Christ will be King, and instead of wicked spirits (fallen angels) co-operating with Satan and operating in spiritualism and all the false religions and superstitions which to-day delude so many in heathen and also in so-called Christian lands, the Church glorified (the sons of God) will co-operate with Christ in guiding the poor groaning creation into ways of righteousness %and peace —thus making a new earth. (Romans 8:22, 19.)

EASTER CONVENTION AT ADELAIDE

The Adelaide Class have pleasure in announcing that arrangements are well in hand for their Annual Convention, to be held at Stott’s Rooms, Flinders Street, from Good Friday to Easter Monday inclusive.

An early notification from those anticipating being present—who have not already been in touch with the Secretary—will be appreciated.

Easter Monday is to be spent at Gauger in the local class’s usual meeting place.

The Memorial of our Lord’s Death will be celebrated on Thursday evening, March 2-1111, at 8 1).111., in Levitt Hall, Wakefield Street. Correspondence received by the Secretary, Miss Copping, 70 Fairford

Street, Unley, South Australia.

Life power! That is what we all need, is it not?— power to rise “far above all” the earthly things that seek to drag us down. “It must needs be that offences come,” said the Master; but there is no “needs be” that we should be crushed and conquered by them. And is it not blessed to know that the Lord’s restraining hand is over all, that nothing can touch us but His will?—that He knows our circumstances, disposition, weakness, and surrounds and rules over all?—L. A. Barter Snow.

AIDS TO BIBLE STUDY.

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Constancy of Hope,

(Convention Address).

CONSTANCY signifies being constant or steadfast —fixedness or firmness of mind. Hope signifies a desire for some good, accompanied by expectation of obtaining that which gives hope, or furnishes ground for hope.

On the surface of the Scriptures there would seem to be many different hopes mentioned, or different things to be hoped for. There is the hope for those who are running in the race for the high calling of God. There is the hope of the resurrection of the dead (Acts 23:6). The Scriptures tell us that we are saved by hope (Rom. 8:24). They refer to the hope of righteousness (Gal. 5:5), the hope of His (Christ's) calling (Eph. 1:18), the hope of glory (Col. 1:27), the hope of salvation (1 Thes. 5:8), the hope of eternal life (Tit. 3:7). The hope of the world and the hope of the Church are shown in the Scriptures, but all these hopes are centred in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (1 John 2:2), who gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time (1 Tim, 2:4-6).

THE CHURCH'S HOPE.

A clearer knowledge of the world's hope should, and does, increase the Church's appreciation of God's loving arrangement for His creatures. And it adds new lustre to the Church's hope when we realise that the glorious object of the call and discipline of the Church in this_ Gospel Age is for the development of characters which, being proved loyal to God and to righteousness and truth, will be associated with Christ in the Millennial Age in the great and grand work of uplifting whosoever will of men from ignorance and sin and degradation, to God's likeness and favor and love. The Apostle declares, "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself" (1 John 3:3) ; it is a hope that helps onward to God and holiness.

We who are running in the race for the " high calling of God" are constantly looking forward to the Church's hope that is invested in our Saviour, when we shall see Him as He is, and know as we are known. He gave His life for the Church on the cross, and also for the world (1 John 2:2). He endured the cross, the shame and suffering for the joy that was set before Him in bringing many sons to glory. (See Heb. 12:2.)

So our hope is in Him who is our joy, our crown, and if we are in Him and He in us, we see "the mystery which has been hid from ages and generations but now is made manifest to His saints: To whom: God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:26, 27).

This is the great mystery of God which has been hidden from all previous ages, and is still hidden from all except a special class—the saints, or consecrated believers. But what is meant by "Christ in you"? We have learned that Jesus was anointed with the holy Spirit (Acts 10:38). Thus we recognise Him to be the Christ — the Anointed — for the word Christ signifies anointed. And the Apostle John says that the anointing which we (consecrated believers) have received abideth in us (.1 John 2:27). Thus the saints of this Gospel Age are an anointed company, anointed to be kings and priests unto God (2 Cor..1:21; 1 Pet. 2:9), and together with Jesus, their Chief and Lord, they constitute Jehovah's Anointed—the Christ ; what a hope! We realise then that the reward promised to those who walk the narrow way is the divine nature, life in the superlative degree, which only those with the divine nature can possess— immortality. Dare we aspire to such a height of glory? Surely not, without positive and explicit invitation.

We do not realise the consummation of our hopes now while we are on this side of the veil, but it will be something we are constantly hoping for, or looking forward to ; something we through patience might

have by looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. “We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith” (Gal. 5:5) ; “that we may know what is the hope of His calling” (Eph. 4:4).. And “we know whom we have believed, and are persuaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed- unto Him against that day.” Every man that has this hope in him endeavors to purify himself, even as He is pure; he endeavors to shun all sin and to be perfecting holiness with the assistance of God’s holy Spirit.

Christ is called our hope; that is, He is the only foundation we have to build our hopes upon (I Tim. 1:1), and hope is taken for the eternal salvation which is the object and end of our hopes. Yes, our Lord is called the hope of His people (Jer. 14:8). He is the one in whom they hope for help, and their hopes shall not be in vain. On the contrary, the hope of the ungodly shall perish (Prov. 10:28).

Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, but when the desire cometh it is a tree of life (Prov.13:12). Abraham against hope believed in hope, when being advanced in years God promised him a son (Rom. 4:18). He confidently believed God’s promise that he should have a son against all grounds of hope, when it was unlikely in a way of nature and human reason, and God rewarded him because he believed Him. So may we receive the things we ask for if we ask in faith, not wavering, and ask those things that are according to His will.

Constancy of hope will also mean to keep on hoping until our Lord makes- up His jewels, to receive His Church; hoping on until the end of our sojourn here, building our hopes on Christ, who is our firm foundation.

Again, hope is a kind of faith we have; in exhortations and promises it is a sister to faith and charity, the three being the chief graces of the spirit. In 2 Thes. 2:16, it is said to be a gift of God.

Hope inspires clean living.

It is a helmet for the Christian (Rom. 5:2), that is. a defensive armour for the head, mentally.

An anchor for the soul (Heb. 6:19).

Gives assurance of immortality (Acts 24:15).

Anticipates Christ’s coming (Tit. 2:13).

Shall we not even more earnestly long for the time of Christ’s second advent than the less-informed Jew looked and longed for His first advent? Seeing that the time of evil and injustice and death is to be brought to an end ‘by the dominion of power which He will then exercise, and righteousness, truth and grace will be universal, who should not rejoice to see His day? And who that is now suffering with Christ, inspired by the precious promises that if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him, will not lift up his head and rejoice at any evidence of the Master, knowing thereby that our deliverance and glorification with Him draweth nigh? Surely all in sympathy with His mission of blessing, and His spirit of love will hail every evidence of His presence as the approach of the great joy that shall be to all people.

So, dear brethren, let us continue to hope on until the end of our sojourn here, which we believe is not far distant; looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. Let us seek with prayer and supplication to walk closely in His footsteps, and from our hearts endeavour to do the will of our Father which is in heaven.

Correspondence,

Western Australia,

4th February, 1932 Dear Brother,

Greeting in the name of our dear Redeemer!

I am again writing to you, trusting you are well, feeling that you would like to hear our little class is progressing along the narrow way. Well, our meetings continue to be a source of comfort and strength, and different brethren come along from time to time, all of them very earnest. Fifteen have come out from bondage, and while all are not able to attend all meetings together, yet they are rejoicing to be back in the "old paths," As the different brethren come along they have many experiences to relate. We can hardly imagine it possible that any who have once had a knowledge of the truth, could fall away from it to such an extent. How good to know that the dear Lord has promised to guide the feet of His saints, those who worship Him in spirit and in truth. Pride goeth before a fall—we pray earnestly to be kept humble. We have a usual attendance of 14 or 15. On Wednesday evening we study Vol. 5, "The Atonement," and though we have studied it before we still find it intensely new and interesting.

On Sunday evening, we have a sermon by Brother Russell; and appropriate hymns. The meetings are very impressive, and the Brethren go away, feeling greatly strengthened by the fellowship.

It is our', conviction more and more, as we see different events transpiring all over the world, that we surely are very near the end of this order, and hence our change. The Lord gave us certain signs, and told us to watch, and we are striving to be watchers.

I have just read an article by Brother Russell in 1910, page 392, called "Perilous Times Shall Come." It is wonderful really; it seems that the Lord used Brother Russell to write admonition, that would be of more importance after his death; nothing could be more apt for to-day than that article. It says:—"We cannot espouse the cause of truth, and the cause of error as well, nor can we retain the friendship of God and of the advocate of error also. Who is on the Lord's side? Let us rally around His standard. All told there will be only a little flock, like Gideon's band, the company now gathered by the harvest message of truth, must be tested and sifted until the loyal, faithful, true-hearted, soldiers of the Cross remain, and to these, though their number be small, will the laurels of victory belong, when truth and righteousness finally prevail. Let none boast of numbers now, when the highest interests of the elect of God are all bound up with the faithful few, to whom it will be the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom."

As we look back over the years, and think of the earnest, zealous service of many, even in our midst, in teaching the present truth, and now see them just as zealously tearing down what they had so earnestly built up in years past, we wonder how can it be possible; how can they cast aside the message that they so sincerely loved? Well, the Lord knows all about it. He alone is able to read the heart, and He is too wise to err, too loving to be unkind, so we leave it all to Him.

We are all pleased with the "P.P's.," and they are passed all round to brethren even yet in bondage. It is pleasing to get the exhortations, at different times, in them, to hold fast to present truths, and showing what present truth is, a development of knowledge over, or added to, the Ransom, which is the first principle, or milk of the word. We are told not to remain "babes," requiring or desiring the milk only of the word, but to grow in grace and knowledge to a full man in Christ Jesus.

Now I will close, sending to you from each of our class warmest Christian love,

Your sister in the one glorious hope, I.M.

N.S.W.,

16th January, 1932. Berean Biblical Institute,

Dear Friends,

I wish to thank you very much for sendings me those books and pamphlets. I received them all and they are very interesting and are a great help to me, as everything is so easy to understand. I have not finished them yet, as I am studying them very carefully. As I finish them I am loaning them to a friend, and have given her your address, so she may be writing to you herself.

Again thanking you, I am,

Yours very sincerely, H.H.

South Australia, 18th January, 1932. Dear Sirs and Brothers,

I received your papers, and many thanks for same. I thoroughly enjoyed them. I think that it is a pity that there were not more of them read. Please send me prices of Bibles, cards, etc. I will also take the "Peoples Paper" later on by subscription. I would like if you could give me a description of the Bereans, as this is the first knowledge I have had of them. Thanking you once again. I wish you success in the work of the Lord. I must now conclude with best regards.

Yours in His name. C.H.D.

We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.—Rom. 5:11.

There is nothing in common between the life of Heaven and that of the world. It is not a question of prohibitions as to, using this or that, but of having altogether other tastes, desires, joys; and it is on that account people imagine Christians are sad, as if they were absorbed by only one thought. It is that our joys are altogether different from those of the world; the world knows not our joys. No unrenewed person can comprehend what renders the Christian happy.—J. N. Darby.

ER. March 1st, 1932

Patient Endurance.

(Convention Address)

THERE are two words in the Greek, which are translated by our English word “patience,” in the New Testament. Makrothuma is one, which, in a general way, corresponds to the common thought of patience as we use it in the affairs of our life. It means long • suffering, and is so used in the New Testament in Rom. 2:4, 2 Pet. 3:15.

The other word we are to consider, and which has also been translated “patience” in the New Testament, is Hupomonee. This word has a much deeper and fuller significance than has our English word patience. It signifies rather, constancy, the thought being an endurance of evil in a cheerful, willing, patient manner, and thus represents an element of character and not merely a temporary condition or restraint of feeling or action. It signifies such a condition of heart and character as manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full submission to the divine wisdom and love, which, while permitting present evils, has promised to overthrow them in due time.

Let us look to God’s Word to examine this element of Christian character. In Rev. 3:10 it reads, “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth.” In Luke 8: 15, in the parable of the sower, we read, “That (sown) on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience” (with cheerful endurance, constancy). There we have the thought that to be of the fruit-bearing class it is necessary to do more than receive the word of His testimony, even though we receive it with joy, for those who do not continue in His Word are represented in the parable by the stony ground which at first gave promise of much fruit, but when the sun of persecution arose, and the hard winds, bitter experiences, came, the grain withered because of lack of depth of soil. Our Lord explains that the stony shallow soil represents a class of hearers who rejoice greatly in the truth but do not endure, cannot withstand opposition, but wither under it and become discouraged.

This parable goes to show that patient endurance, or constancy, is the final test following after the seed has been received and has sprouted, and love and hope and joy and faith have caused it to spring forth and give fruitage. Patient endurance, then, is necessary in order that the grain may be developed and thoroughly ripened and made fit for the garner. Our Lord- Jesus made no mistake when He used the growing wheat to symbolise or picture the pathway of the Christian. During the growing stage wheat often needs checking, to sweeten and harden the plant and grain, and if the natural elements, such as hard winds and heavy frost, are absent the husbandman resorts to rolling or feeding down to check the rank growth, but develop and bring the fruit, “the golden grain,” to maturity—that for which the husbandman has long waited.

The other instance in which our Lord used the word is recorded in Luke 21:19. He had just been telling His followers what they must expect as the result of being His disciples during the present time, when sin abounds with Satan “the prince of this world.” They must expect tribulation, opposition from various quarters, but He assures them that they would nevertheless be fully and completely under divine care and protection, even though the persecutions would be permitted to reach them. Then follow the words, “In your patience (patient endurance, cheerful constancy) possess ye your souls.”

The Apostle Paul in .Heb. 12:1 exhorts, “Let us run with patience (cheerful constancy, patient endurance) the race set before us,” in the Gospel. The race must be run with consistency if we would reach the mark,

and after reaching the mark, the position can only be maintained by the grace of constancy, patient endurance, that having done all we may stand.

Why is it necessary that the Christian should possess this quality of character? The answer is: It is one of the conditions which God has attached to the call to joint-heirship in the kingdom. The wisdom of this is manifest when we consider the work to which we are called—the work of blessing all the families of the earth. The importance of patient endurance in the Christian character is also borne out by the Apostle Paul's use of the word, for on more than one occasion he places this characteristic above and beyond love (the mark for which we are to run). In Titus 2:

2, enumerating the characteristics of the advanced Christian, the Apostle uses the following order, “vigilant, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, (love) in patience (patient, cheerful endurance).” Though we have all the other qualities, the final test of patient, cheerful endurance must be passed before we could be accepted of the Lord as members of the very elect.

Again, in 2 Tim. 3:10, respecting himself, the Apostle again puts this quality of character in place beyond love. “Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patient endurance.” If love is the fulfilling of the Law and the mark of the prize of our “high calling,” how can this quality of patient endurance rank higher than love? The answer would be that patient endurance does not merely come in at the close of the race, but is required all along the way. The spirit of cheerful endurance should be growing, and to maintain that spirit of love and devotion and growth in grace and knowledge means that we must place our all entirely in the keeping of our Lord.

The Scriptures tell us that God's ways are not our ways, “For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth. and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” Thus the trials and experiences we meet along the way are not joyous but grievous. They were grievous to our Lord, in His Gethsemane experiences. The truth has a refining effect for the followers of Jesus and they are therefore more sensitive to pain and ignominy than the worldly, who delight in witnessing contests of physical torture and endurance, and are quite willing to idolise and honour those who achieve success by showing a Stoic-like indifference to pain. Therefore the Apostle has pointed out that we need the whole armour of God that we may grow in faith and love and patient endurance, strengthened by the lessons of experience which He has allowed incidental to the passing away of the old order of things and the introduction of the new. The Apostle Peter has written to encourage and help us, “Think it not strange concerning the fiery trials which are to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy..-1 Pet. 4:12, 13.

Blessed Assurances.

Do you need a counsellor to direct your paths ? “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.” (Psa. 73:24.)

Do you want a friend ? “There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” (Prov. 18:24.)

Are you discouraged ? “Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.” (Psa. 31:24.)

Have you been wronged ? “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.” (Matt. 5:44.)

Do you suffer for well doing ? “But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.” (1 Pet. 2:20.)

Are you heavy laden ? “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. 11:28.)

Are you ignorant ? “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” (James 1:5.)

Are you tempted to do wrong ? “If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.” (Prov. 1:10.)

Do you hunger after righteousness ? “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” (Matt. 5:6.)

Are you fearful ? “O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: He is their help and their shield.” (Psa. 115:9.)

Do you want sympathy ? “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that reverence Him.” (Thu, 103:13.)

THE FIND.

“Mother, I’ve found an old dusty thing
High on the shelf—just look!”
“Why, that’s a Bible, Tommy dear,
Be careful, that’s God’s book.”

“God’s book,” the child exclaimed,
“Then, mother, before we lose it,
We’d better send it back to God,
For you know we never use it.”

—The “Churchman.”

Memorial Service.

In announcing the 19th April as the date, according to Jewish reckoning, upon which the Melbourne Ecclesia hope to celebrate the memorial of our Lord's Death, as the "Antitypical Passover Lamb," it is with due solemnity and yet with joyous heartfelt appreciation that we view ahead this precious privilege of assembling in order that we might partake of the Emblems, so deeply significant, and which symbolise our Lord's broken body and shed blood.

At this season of the year we are forcibly reminded again of our standing in Christ, our participation in His sufferings, and our constant desire to be broken with Him. We have brought to our attention, also, the fuller meaning of our Vow of Consecration and Covenant of Sacrifice, as we note the sacrificial life of Him who learned obedience by the things which He suffered, yea, a willing, voluntary yielding of His all to Jehovah, in order to fulfil the antitype and become the greater Passover Lamb, by and through Whom we might, as members of His Body, be spared during the present dark night and only acceptable time, this Gospel Age or Dispensation.

Realising then our privilege and, additionally, our responsibility, we would urge among our brethren a more earnest and fervent desire to gather where they can, in joyful realisation of their wondrous standing and favour through Christ, and in fond anticipation of the consummation of their hope of joint heirship in the Kingdom, if so be they delight in their trial road, and faithfully seek by God's grace to "enter in," notwithstanding the hardships which must be experienced ere that Kingdom hope can be realised.

Let us ever remember that we are enjoined to "show forth the Lord's death till He come," and not until the last members of His Body, the Church, have finished this course, obediently unto death, will the Kingdom be established, and each then glorified member of the Body be accounted worthy to drink of the cup of joy and blessing anew with their Lord in that Kingdom.

The Melbourne friends extend a hearty invitation to all fellow members in Christ, and beseech that as many as possible endeavour to assemble as a manifestation of their hearty appreciation of this, another opportunity ere the Gospel Age closes, of demonstrating that oneness of purpose and aim to be participants to the full of our Lord's broken Body and sharers also in the cup of suffering. whereby we may eventually reign at His appearing and Kingdom.

The Service will take place (D.V.) in Molesworth Chambers (3rd floor), 450 little Collins Street, Melbourne, on the Tuesday evening, April 19th, at 7.30.

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