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“Showing the Lord’s Death.”

AS we again approach another anniversary of the great sacrifice of Christ, and the holding of the precious Memorial of His death which our Lord instituted for His followers to keep year by year throughout this Gospel Age, our minds go back to God’s mighty deliverance of Israel from Egypt, as the basis: nor our service.

In Exod. 12:1-15 we have a wonderful account of the instructions given by God to Moses and Aaron to instruct the Israelites, the carrying out of which meant deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Verse 2 states — “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.” It seems as though the Lord wished to especially impress Israel with the importance of their first Passover, as it would mean for them a new life of liberty under the care of His loving providence as they obeyed the instructions and especially valued the protection afforded by the blood of the lamb. Likewise, there is a very important “beginning” for Christians who also acknowledge the blood of the Lamb of God as their only means of deliverance from sin and death.

In verse 3 we read—”In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lam) for a house.” This seemed to picture the time when Jesus, as the anti-typical Lamb, presented Himself to God at Jordan in full consecration. The instructions in verses 5 and 6 were —”Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats. And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening, (between the two evenings—margin).” These directions undoubtedly portrayed our Lord Jesus as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners” — giving Himself a ransom for all at Calvary, 35 years after His consecration. In the type the literal lamb was kept four days prior to sacrifice as the Passover lamb, so Jesus completed his sacrifice within four years (the antitype being larger than the type) from the time he presented His human life to minister to Israel and give Himself a ransom for all.

Following the instructions given in verses 7-11 of this 12th chapter of Exodus, where we see the importance of marking the doors of the houses of the Israelites with the blood of the Passover lamb, we read in verses 12-14—“For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods (princes) of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you a memorial, and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord through your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.” Verses 21-27 give further details as Moses communicated the Lord’s instructions to the elders of Israel. We read in verses 25-27—”And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.” It is very evident that the Lord intended Israel to keep the Passover service as a reminder of His great deliverance and care over them, but that nation as a whole did not adhere to God’s instructions and “keep the feast” in spirit and in truth.

We know of Israel’s failure to observe God’s requirements by the nature of John the Baptist’s ministry, it being noteworthy that John the Baptist commenced his ministry at the Passover season, and our Lord began His ministry six months later, at the time of Israel’s Day of Atonement. We read in Matthew 3,—”In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand ... I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear;

he shall baptize you with the holy spirit.” (Verses 1,2,11.)

Six months later, at the time of our Lord’s baptism, we read in John 1:29, 35-37—”The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.” How fitting it was for John, the Baptist to refer to Jesus in this way—”Behold the Lamb of God.”

Throughout our Lord’s earthly life He would keep three annual Jewish Passovers, and knowing that the fourth Passover after beginning His ministry would complete His sacrifice as “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world,” we can understand to some extent His words as recorded by Luke 22:14, 15—”And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.”

For 31 years Jesus had devoted His ministry to calling, teaching and sanctifying the dear followers who really felt that they wanted nothing else in life but to walk in the steps of their Master—this Messiah—this Jesus—whom God had sent, as His Lamb, to take away the sins of the whole world. We are well aware, also, dear friends, that ever since our Lord’s first advent He has been seeking only the same devoted followers who are willing; yes, really willing to go through the same experiences, the same contradictions of sinners, the same ignominy and shame, the same sacrificial death, that all these faithful ones may share in the same glorious inheritance, by the power and favor of God.

As the hour approached for the last Jewish Passover that God could accept, our Lord knew that He was to be the Lamb of God. The preparations were complete; Jesus and His twelve disciples went to the appointed place for the Passover service, and as we have noted, our Lord declared—”With desire, I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.” No doubt these words were intended to impress His little band of followers with the solemnity of this occasion, for He was about to institute the Memorial of His death, which was to serve as a sacred remembrance of His sacrifice to all true followers throughout the Gospel Age.

Upon arrival at the prearranged place for the Passover service, the disciples forgot the privilege of serving in the custom of the feet washing, and Jesus performed this lowly, but all important service, and used the occasion to impart a most effective impression and lesson upon all who would seek to be His disciples. From John 13:12-17 we read—”So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them.”

“And as they were eating (the Jewish Passover feast), Jesus took bread (unleavened, picturing purity, free from sin), and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.” (Matt. 26:26.) Our Lord was here instituting the Memorial of His death; the unleavened bread representing His sinless flesh, and eating this bread would mean appropriating the value of Christ’s perfection by faith; hence, justification by faith in the sight of God. (See Rom. 5:1.) “And he took the cup (the fruit of the vine, the contents of the cup), and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” (Matt. 26:27, 28.) Drinking of the wine, which represented the blood of Jesus, pictured also appropriating the merit of Christ’s perfect humanity by faith, resulting in justification by faith for all who partake of His merit in full faith and trust.

In Luke 22:19 the words of Jesus are added—”This do in remembrance of me.” And how significant ! Jesus was instructing His disciples in this institution of the Memorial of His death to take the place of the annual Jewish Passover. So, He would imply—No longer keep the Jewish ceremony with the slaying of the literal lamb, but, “This do in remembrance of me.” Yes, indeed, this was to be an annual remembrance of Jesus’ sacrifice as the true Lamb of God by ail who could accept Him as such for their sins wid for the sins of the whole world.

It seems that Jesus did not impart the deeper significance of the Memorial to His little band of followers on the night of its institution, as apparently they could not have grasped it at that time. However, with the outpouring of Ole spirit at Pentecost the minds of the apostles and disciples generally were illuminated by the spirit on this important matter. How clearly and beautifully did the Apostle Paul reveal the secondary and deeper truth respecting our Lord’s Memorial, when, by inspiration, he related the exact procedure of Jesus’ institution of this remembrance, and then declared—”For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.” (1 Cor. 11:23-26.)

And how do the followers of Jesus “show the Lord’s death?” The same Apostle states—”The cup of blessing which we

bles, is it not the communion (common participation) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion (common participation) of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.” (1 Cor. 10:16,17.) These words reveal that true disciples of Christ participate in the sacrifice of the Christ, following their justification by faith, and thus “show the Lord’s death” as members of His body, “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ”; “for as the body is one, and hath many members, all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.” (Col. 1:24; 1 Cor. 12:12.) Thus we see that full consecration “to be dead with Christ” is clearly defined in partaking of the Memorial of our Lord’s death.

In referring to those who may participate in the Lord’s Supper the Apostle Paul declared—”Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.” (1 Cor. 11:28,29). These words from the Apostle are not intended to intimidate any of the Lord’s people who may keenly feel their shortcomings, and are seeking to overcome these, by the Lord’s grace, but rather are to guard against a careless observance. All who have accepted the Lord as their personal Saviour, and have yielded their lives in consecration to walk in the steps of Christ, even unto death, surely should rejoice to participate in the Memorial Supper, either with other brethren, or alone if needs be, that they may “show the Lord’s death till he come,” —till the last members of His body are taken to be with Him, and see Him as He is.

Following the institution of the Memorial of His death by Jesus, came quickly the Gethsemane experiences, the betrayal by Judas, the Judgment Hall treatment, the denial by Peter, the trial before Pilate, Herod, and Pilate again, and finally the cross, the most ignominious and painful experience to which our Lord was subjected. However, even under these most humiliating experiences Jesus did not forget His earthly mother, but commended her to the care of John, and this loving thoughtfulness, even when in extreme suffering, surely shines out as a lasting example of self-forgetfulness on the part of our dear Lord, as He was paying the penalty on behalf of the human race.

The Lord’s disciples shall have some of His experiences also, as they walk in His steps of sacrifice, and the example of Paul is always a great encouragement to us today, as we meditate upon his life of full devotion to the Lord and His cause—”Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” (2 Cor. 4:10,11.) May all the Lord’s dear people who gladly partake of His Memorial this year experience His blessing, and ever rejoice in being counted worthy of His calling, and seek His grace and strength daily to continue in the narrow way which leads to life.

Lord, I would follow Thee
In all the way
Thy weary feet have trod;
Yes, if I may.

Help me the cross to bear,
All Thy fair .graces wear.
Close watching unto prayer,
Following Thee.

Passover Memorial. 1957

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 14th April; after sundown on this daze will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord’s Supper by the true followers of the Master.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Sunday, 14th April at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.
Adelaide.—Sunday, 14th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Builders and Contractors’ Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.
Perth.—Sunday, 14th April, at 6 p.m., at No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House), Perth.
Sydney.—Sunday, 14th April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

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Review of New Covenant.

SOME expressions have been made respecting the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31), to the effect that it is "the only covenant under which provision is made for the forgiveness of sins." There is, however, no such statement in the Scriptures, but there appears much to the contrary. In fact, it seems only when speaking or writing to the Jews, that there is any mention of the "New Covenant." It is only to those who had been under the old "Law Covenant" that the New Covenant is promised. In Romans, chapters 3 and 4, Paul speaks of a righteousness attained by faith—"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set to be a propitiation through faith in his blood," etc. —then goes on to show how Abraham was accounted righteous because of faith and also that David speaks of the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered," etc.

While Jesus said, "This is my blood of the New Testament," He was speaking to Israelites, who, being in bondage of the Law Covenant, needed to be redeemed so that in due time the New Covenant may be established, and it will be through the operation of the New Covenant that salvation will come first to restore Israel and then through them to the whole world.

During the Gospel Age, however, God is taking out the full number for the Church from Gentiles, and these are not dealt with in the way of a collective covenant, but each needs to enter into a personal consecration—a covenant by sacrifice—and so they become members in Christ. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:16,29.) They thus come into the "blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness," under the original Abrahamic Promise (to which the Law was added but did not disannul). See Heb. 6:13-19; Gal. 3:3-8, 17, 18; Acts 3:25; Gal. 4.

It would seem strange if the New Covenant had been established and by it only could sins be forgiven, that the Apostles should have so omitted mention of it in their preaching either to Jews or Gentiles. Note Paul's noble address before Agrippa, yet no mention is made of any New Covenant, Acts 26 (note verse 18). Jer. 31:31,32 distinctly states that it is to the house of Israel and the house of Judah, who were under the old Law Covenant, that the New Covenant is promised. How foolish, then, is the statement that is made, "If it (the New Covenant) did not go into operation at Calvary, then no one's sins have been forgiven."

Another expression is that Paul tells us that "Jesus set aside the first old Law Covenant that He might establish the second," inferring, here, that the New Covenant must be at once in operation. What the Apostle appears to have in mind in this verse is, that Jesus was the great antitype of the Aaronic priest, and that the typical arrangement had now passed away and the antitype was being established. The antitypical sacrifices had begun. Christ, as typified by the bullock, was slain, and the Church, as typified by the Lord's goat, was following "in His steps." See Heb. 13:12,13, which sacrifice must be offered in the spirit of praise as indicated in the sweet incense that burned on the typical altar. So says the Apostle, Rom. 8:36, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long" (all down the Gospel Day). "This is the day of salvation, this is the acceptable time" (for such offerings). So the Body of Christ must be complete and each member be conformed to the great Head, "filling up that which is behind of the affliction of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake." (Col. 1:24.)

We are referred to 2 Cor. 3:6, "Who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament," and it is suggested that this means that the New Covenant is being operated by these able ministers. The failure to understand this expression seems to be in regard to the largeness of the antitype in comparison with the type. The type is spoken of as a shadow compared to the reality. The selecting and anointing of the Aaronic priesthood occupied a very brief time, but it shadowed or typified the Gospel Age of about 2000 years. The ministers of the New Covenant are being chosen;

Paul was one, and others have been selected all down the age, but not until all are ready will the New Covenant be established with Israel and the blessing of all the families of the earth begin.

It would be indeed a sad thing to think of the New Covenant as having been in operation all down the age, for under it everyone is to be personally responsible, and if he dies, he will die for his own sin (not Adam's), and there would be no resurrection for any who had died apart from Christ during the past 1900 years.

When the “prophet like unto Moses” (Acts 3:22) begins His work, He will rewrite God’s Law in the inward parts and write it in their hearts. That is, all mankind will be led up the highway, and taught not only to do, but to love righteousness, so that it will become their nature to do right, and to abhor that which is evil.

With the Church it is different; while we learn to love righteousness and to hate iniquity, yet our human nature is not led up to perfection. It still remains, as says the Apostle, “in my flesh dwelleth no good thing.” We are granted the holy spirit to help our infirmities and have to continually keep our bodies under restraint. We do not have God’s law written in these fleshly hearts, but we receive a new mind—the mind of Christ—and have to conquer all the tendencies of the human nature that would hinder our progress as new creatures.

There will not be that continual, personal fight under the New Covenant, when all difficulties will be removed.

No lion will be in the path, the stones (of temptation) will be taken out of the way, and everything made easy. All environments will encourage righteousness, which will have its happy rewards of health and prosperity. Evil and its consequences will gradually be blotted out and human hearts of the obedient will be brought into happy accord with likeness to God. Then the law of God will have been rewritten in the hearts of the human family.

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A gossip is like a blotter—soaks up everything, and gets it all backwards.

Unto a Perfect Man.

(Eph. 4:13)

(Convention Address)

OFTEN in the apostles' writings we find the use of the analogy of the natural growth of a child up to manhood to illustrate the desired spiritual growth of the "new creature." Children are endeared to their elders by their guilelessness; they live, speak and act "just as they are." Unfortunately, in these days of child delinquency, many do not retain this lovely characteristic as long as in former times.

However, despite all the endearing qualities of young children, they all have traits that need correction. At tender ages they need training and attention, and if left without a parent or guardian they can quickly bring injury to themselves and cause damage to property. Many a parent doubtless heaves a sigh of relief in the contemplation that some day their children will grow up and require less continual oversight. Yet, as parents have confessed, when the children grow up it does not always mean that they prove to be of less concern; though they progress in certain respects to be less bother, youth is still quite often very self-willed, and enters other fields of temptation and foolishness. Therefore, it is very understandable that parents should be very pleased to see their children grow up to manhood and womanhood with really good qualities and characters, and that they should feel pained if that is not the case. To quote from Proverbs — "A wise son maketh a glad father . . . but a foolish son is a grief to his father . . . and the sorrow of his mother." (Prov.10:1 ;17:25.)

Now it is just as essential and pleasing to the Heavenly Father above that His spiritual children or "sons" of this Gospel Age should progress well too, and blossom forth unto a "perfect man."

The thought of the word "perfect," as used in our text and other places in the Scriptures, is not that of sinless perfection in the same sense as that in which our Lord was born unto this world — "harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners"—but the thought is rather of spiritual adulthood, a fully developed Christian.

In 1 Pet.1:14 we have a verse that helps us to discern how to make this desirable progress. One hardly knows which end of the verse to take first; the latter portion refers to ignorance as playing a large part in the fashioning of our former life. Young children are apt to play with fire, and things of like danger are detrimental to their well being and safety, because of their ignorance, lack of knowledge. The same applies to spiritual "children." Because of lack of knowledge of God's requirements for us, we sometimes "burn our fingers."

The child that touches the hot stove has its ignorance removed, but the better and less painful way is to listen to the parents' instruction. Addressing the Christians to whom he wrote (and this includes all Christians), the apostle says, "as obedient children."

We note that he refers to all Christians as "children." We must all grow from spiritual childhood to that which is referred to "as the stature of a perfect (or fully developed) Christian." There is no short cut.

Next, we would stress "obedient." By obedient children only will the required progress be made. The very best instruction that can be given will not profit the child who refuses to obey it. A magistrate recently commented—"I do not like to hear this term 'child delinquency' • it appears to me rather a lack of parental ability to control." It is not our desire to enter into debate on this question of prominence in our day, but in fairness to a parent it is right to recognise that if a child or youth refuses to profit from instruction properly given, then it is the child that errs and must receive the blame. As spiritual children also, we may hear the voice of the Lord and thus to a good degree have our ignorance removed, but it is only if we are obedient children that we will fashion (form or model) our lives aright.

This lesson is taught again in our Lord's words in Matt. 7:24,26—the one who heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them is a wise man; the one who hears only and doeth not is a foolish man,—he will never progress to a perfect man in the sense of our text. (Read also James 1:22,25.) If we are dutiful, obedient children we have nothing to fear from any consciousness of lack of knowledge or understanding, for the Lord will see to it that we receive the needed instruction and revelation in good time. What we should fear is that ignorance of our own making referred to in Eph.4:17,18. (Note margin, "hardness of their heart.")

In Heb. , 5:14 we find this word "perfect" rendered "full age." (Read first portion of verse). A moment's reflection makes it clear that the Apostle Paul is alluding there to those more advanced and mature who have reached spiritual adulthood, the very ones whom our text refers to as "unto a perfect man, unto the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Referring to the concordance it is interesting and helpful to note some meanings of the word “full” as it is used in the Scripture, and which meaning seems embodied in the word “perfect” in the text. The meaning is “replete, or stored full.” It seems another way of saying, We are what we are. We think of the Psalmist,—”As a man is in heart so is he.” Whatever we are “replete” in, or “stored full of” makes the person or being. Quoting a Scripture or two where this exact word “full” is used will help us to grasp the point. See Matt.23:28. You see, they were replete, “stored full” of hypocrisy and iniquity so that there was no room for any good thing to enter. In Rom. 1:29, we find the word again; note verses 28,29. They were full to overflowing with evil propensities. We find the word again in the Apostle Peter’s description of the class that once knew the truth, but wilfully turned from it. (Read 2 Pet.2:14.) Alternately, we look at Rom.15:14, and here we see the apostle’s hope expressed that these Christians were replete, “stored full” of the good things. In James 3:17 we have it again. How good, indeed, to be “stored full” of this wisdom that comes down from above.

This repleteness or storing is not to be in the selfish sense, merely to retain or hold, but means that every man is stored full of something. James gives us the thought in Chapter 3:11, which please note. The fountain will pour forth only what it is “stored full of” and men will do the same. If it is evil that is stored within, it will manifest itself in word and act; if it is good it will overflow in gracious words and deeds. In James’ discourse the tongue comes into the discussion, and in chapter 3:8 he admits that the tongue is an unruly evil, and reminds us that so often out of the same mouth proceeds words that bless God and at other times words that curse or slander our fellows. Seeing that the tongue is such an unruly member “which no man can tame,” does the apostle allow this as any excuse for a professing Christian? Certainly not! The apostle says in verse 10, “My brethren, these things ought not so to be.” No man, of himself, can control the tongue, but with God all things are possible, and the more replete, or stored full, or filled with the holy spirit we become, the more the tongue will be controlled. In verse 2 the apostle says—’If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man,’ a developed or mature Christian, a child no longer, but one who is approaching close to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

It is recorded of Jesus that He was full of the holy spirit, and that being so, it was only natural that men should note and wonder at “the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth.” Here we have the perfect Exemplar, the One who will teach us daily how to progress “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,” but it is essential that we continue as obedient children and grow thereby. Our Lord left nothing to be desired so far as proper provision was concerned for our spiritual welfare. Notable such provision was the giving of the apostles and their wonderful messages preserved down the age to this day, as well as all the helping pastors and teachers of which the church of God has had need.

Read a verse or two prior to our text—See Eph.4:11,12. “For the perfecting of the saints” this provision was made, not to found large sectarian organisations now commonly referred to as the churches; for the perfecting of the saints it was all given, not to convert the world in this age. And those whom God gave or provided have been faithful in their mission; it has been emissaries from another source who have sought to convert the world before the time, who have played flatterer to the world and begotten multitudes of “tares” whose claim to Christian discipleship lies in name only, who know little of, and are concerned less with, growing in the knowledge of God and in the grace and favor of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us, then, to whom, by the grace of God, the torch of truth has been preserved to this day, continue ourselves to grow (for it is fatal for any to conclude that they have fully attained the measure of perfection called for; note Phil. 3:12), and labor and preach faithfully as did the apostles of old; to proclaim “Christ in you, the hope of glory . . . warning and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man ‘perfect’ in Christ Jesus,” (Co1.1:27,28); as also did Epaphras mentioned in Col. 4:12 — “always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete (stored full to overflowing) in all the will of God.”

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The Adelaide brethren wish to announce that their Easter Convention is to be held this year, D.V., over the Easter period, in the Builders and Contractors' Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and they extend a hearty invitation to all friends able to attend these gatherings. Further information is obtainable from the secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Ave., Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

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The Power of God

“Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high,” —Luke 24:49.

POWER is one of the attributes of the Heavenly Father, all of which are equally essential in the carrying out of His great plan of redemption. Without power to act, wisdom would fail to accomplish its designs, justice could not be enforced, and love would be helpless.

There appears to be two words in the New Testament both of which are rendered by our word “power.” The one refers to power in the sense of rule or authority; the other speaks of ability, strength of will, power of character. It is the latter of these two words which is used in this passage,—“Ye shall receive power, the holy spirit coming upon you.” Thus we see the connection between the baptism of the holy spirit and the promised power.

The Apostles had been with Christ, had seen His work, His miracles, and had been taught by Him. They had seen Him in His passion, His death, and resurrection, and were yet to witness His ascension. Yet with all this experience the Master said, “Wait until ye be endued with power.” Our Lord has said, “It is expedient that I go away, for if I go not away the holy spirit will not come.”

Thus they were to tarry for the promise of the Father; they did not wait in vain. They were gathered together, a body of men, like ourselves, no doubt, in great expectation, wondering what was going to happen. There was the sound of a rushing, mighty wind (Acts 2:1-3), and these fishermen and others had received the holy spirit—the power of God. They went forth endued with power, as the Apostles of Christ, and faced the world with courage. How useless it would be to start out in Christian work, or as a follower of Christ without the baptism of the holy spirit. Jesus Himself did not begin His ministry until He had received this promise of the Father.

“I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.”—Phil. 4:13.

“I cannot do it alone;
I change with the changing sky;
To-day, so glad and bright,
To-morrow, too weak to try;
But He never gives in,
So we two shall win,
Jesus and I.”

This gift of the holy spirit of power (2 Tim. 1:7), is a constant one (John 14:16,17). Like the disciples we shall find that by tarrying together and waiting on God and in study of His word we shall be renewed in spirit and in power, and enabled to keep clear of the world and its snares.

Having received this power, Acts 1:8 informs us as to the use to be made of it—“Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.” So each one who comes under the same anointing, through our Lord Jesus Christ, has a responsibility to witness to the truth according to opportunity.

Matthew 5:41,42.

THESE injunctions are not generally understood: it does not mean that we should be turned aside from the duties and affairs of life at anybody's bidding. In olden times certain magistrates, governors, etc., had the authority of law to press the service of the people for governmental work. For instance, note how Simon the Cyrenian was compelled to bear the cross for Jesus a certain distance. The word "compel" in our lesson is from the same Greek word, and refers to a legal compulsion; "commandeered" would be the modern way of referring to such matter. Our Lord's injunction is that His followers should be so broadminded, so liberal, so generous, that they would not only obey the legal commands but be ready to go further—to do more than had been required.

In thus doing heartily, joyfully, and agreeably all and more than would be commanded they would be exemplifying the generous spirit which represents our Lord and His teachings. By such breadth of sentiment they would be known as Jesus' disciples, who had learned of Him. Indeed, we may say that the whole trend of the teachings of the Lord and the Apostles is in line with this, and opposed to stinginess and narrowness and selfishness—in accord with generosity, full measure, pressed down, heaped up and running over. The Christian measure would be nothing short, though it might be a little more. A Christian measure of anything must be full, never skimp. This is an element of the higher law, the law of love, and its spirit of generosity in our hearts.

In similar strain the great Teacher enjoins that we should give and lend to those requesting. We cannot suppose that He meant that a parent should give anything harmful to a child which cries for it; we cannot suppose that the Lord meant that our loans or gifts would be such as would be injurious to the recipients. Love must be the basis of our conduct, as it is the very essence of the Master's law. We cannot think either that He meant that we should neglect the interests of our own homes and families in giving to others or loaning to them.

We are bound to suppose that our Lord in this, as in all things, wished His followers to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. What He wished to enjoin evidently was the spirit or disposition which would have pleasure in loaning or giving to the needy, and which is so circumstanced as to be able to comply with such requests and would be glad to do so. using the proper discretion and judgment, as to time, place, and persons. In other words, the spirit of Christ is a benevolent spirit and not a mean or stingy one, and all the Lord's people, more or less selfish, need to learn this. There are few perhaps who would be in any danger of injuring themselves or others immediately dependent upon them by any acts of benevolence.

Be Like the Spring.

Up in the mountains there is a spring. Day and night, year in and year out, for years this spring has been running continuously. Long before there were homes about it, people came from afar to quench their thirst with its cool flow. The spring's waters are pure and health-giving, for nothing is allowed to accumulate in the waters. Sieved through rocks and gravel for miles, all impurities are washed away before its sparkling waters are offered to whomsoever may take and drink.

About a mile from this spring is a pond.
It is still and stagnant.
If you were to drink from it you might die from its accumulated poison.
It gives nothing.

But the little spring is always giving.
Always it is made and kept clean by moving.

Let us keep our hearts like the little spring.
Keep the kind and thoughtful deeds flowing all the time.

The only satisfactory life is the one that is continually giving away and renewing itself by acts of service and devotion for others.

Be true to God, and to the thought of His presence all day long; let self occupy as little as possible of our thoughts; care much for His approval, and comparatively little for the impression we are making on others; feed the inward light with oil, and then freely allow it to shine.

—Goulburn.