



The Story of Jesus

THE story of the birth of Jesus is always refreshing and stimulating to the followers of the Master, no matter how often it is related, though of course this subject comes more particularly before the minds of God's people at this time of the year. Had our Heavenly Father so desired He could have sent our Lord to earth as a fully mature man to pay the sacrifice for the sins of mankind, but apparently God saw some good purpose in Jesus being born as a babe and spending thirty years in contact with fallen humanity as He grew up to manhood's estate.

When we read that Christ was "touched with the feeling of our (the Christians') infirmities"—Heb. 4:15—during the 3½ years of His ministry, following His consecration at thirty years of age, we can understand better how He is our sympathetic and faithful High Priest, able to succour with tenderness all His dear people who strive to walk in His steps of sacrifice. Likewise, the thirty years of knowledge of sinful humanity, which our Lord gained by close contact with the fallen race, no doubt confirmed His desire to endure all things necessary to redeem such a world of sinners lost and ruined by the fall, in addition to delighting to do His Father's will, and at the same time would more perfectly fit Him to become the Mediator between God and mankind when the great work of restitution commences in the age to come.

There can be no doubt that knowledge gained by experience is of the most value to all God's creatures, and the length of time during which this valuable knowledge is attained and acted upon is usually a test of fidelity as to the worthiness of the recipients. In our Lord's case we may reason that during the thirty years from His birth as the babe to the time of His consecration, He would have ample time to meditate upon His great mission to earth, and if there entered a thought in His mind to repudiate His contract with His Heavenly Father

to redeem mankind by His death, we know there was ample time for it to germinate in those thirty years of waiting. The fact that Jesus so fully delighted to do God's will and entered into complete consecration immediately He attained manhood's estate at thirty years of age proves at once that the waiting time on earth confirmed the devotion of our Redeemer to God's plan for Him.

Further, the fact that our Lord did not complete His sacrifice until after 3½ years of "bearing His cross" adds weight to the Apostle's declaration concerning Christ—"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience (proving His obedience) by the things which he suffered"—Heb. 5:8. During this period in which our Redeemer "poured out his soul unto death" there was ample time again for regret that such an undertaking had been entered upon, had there been the slightest inclination in that direction. The tempter was of course resisted so resolutely at the beginning of Christ's ministry that there was never an opportunity to return with his subtle deceptions, and God's will that our Lord spend a period of time "enduring the cross, despising the shame," revealed the knowledge and wisdom of God that true faithfulness is a quality of character which increases with the passing years, despite the experiences permitted by an all-loving Heavenly Father.

So it is with all God's true servants, even with those whom God used over the centuries prior to our Lord's first advent; they proved their obedience over lengthy periods of devoted service, yet there was freedom of choice, as the Apostle declares—"And truly, if they had been

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mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned"—Heb. 11:15. In other words, if Abraham had regretted answering God's call to—"Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee"—Gen. 12:1—he had full opportunity to return, for God does not coerce any of His servants.

Likewise, the followers of the Master during this Gospel Age, down to our own day, are necessarily tried and proved over quite lengthy periods of time in most cases, just as was our Lord and Forerunner, and God's ancient people. So as we approach another Christmas season and the opening of another year, we do not do so with any feeling that the Christian way is long and tiresome. Rather do we give thanks to our Heavenly Father for His blessings and privileges in the service of our Master, and take the opportunity of using another Christmas season for witnessing to the angel's message which was proclaimed at the birth of our Lord as the Babe of Bethlehem—"Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people"—Luke 2:10.

What scope of truth does this prophetic message open up for the Lord's people to proclaim to those who have ears to hear; what joy thrills our hearts as we think upon the lowly birth of Jesus, God's Messiah, coming to earth as the helpless babe, spending thirty years away from "the glory which he had with the Father before the world was," and then enduring the further 3½ years of "contradiction of sinners against himself," and being "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." because of His delight to co-operate in the Father's plan of "bringing many sons unto glory," and "that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

What joy also it is to realize and proclaim that following our Lord's great sacrifice "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name"—Phil. 2:9. "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them"—Heb. 7:25. And what a privilege to make known that following the raising up of this "people for God's name" to the heavenly inheritance, that the "good tidings of great joy," of salvation from sin and death, should indeed be to all people—all the families of the earth—during the "times of restitution of all things."

It is well to be reminded of the words of our Lord—"He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved"—Matt. 24:13—and this enduring is not of a passive nature. No, the Lord requires His people to exercise zeal and activity in His service over any length of time it may be His good pleasure to grant. What

if the harvest of the Gospel Age has continued longer than some of God's people thought it would twenty, thirty, forty or more years ago? Has not the longer time than expected proved a great blessing in the Lord's vineyard? Truly it has for those rightly exercised by His spirit. Apparently the extra time has been very truly required to find the remaining grains of "wheat" for the heavenly garner, and the members enduring well on earth have had their lives sanctified, and their characters mellowed and enriched with the passing years.

May the coming Christmas season be a means of blessing to all whose hearts and minds are lifted up to God in praise and thanksgiving for the gift of our Redeemer, our Saviour, Christ the Lord, who came as the Babe of Bethlehem so long ago. Yes, "though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich"—2 Cor. 8:9. Some of our brethren will be assembling in Conventions over this Christmas period at hand, others will be gathering in their home Classes, others are isolated, but wherever God's people dwell, there also will His spirit dwell, as they seek to serve Him in spirit and in truth, by meditating upon His Word, for their own upbuilding, and encouraging fellow members, also proclaiming the glad tidings to others who have ears to hear, and generally "redeeming the time, because the days are evil"—Eph. 5:16.

I will pray this prayer today for you,
 May the love of God abide with you;
 Wherever you go, wherever you stay,
 May the peace of God bless you today;
 And throughout the year that lies ahead
 May beautiful flowers of joy be spread;
 Through your Christmas-tide and New Year too
 May the love of God abide with you.

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Supplies of the following booklets are available for distribution, where good may be done. These are provided through the General Tract Fund, which many of our brethren support in their desire to co-operate in serving the Lord's truth which has been such a blessing to themselves. All who can use these booklets to advantage should have a supply in hand for opportunities of serving others who are seeking the Lord and His truth. Please order freely.

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PEOPLES PAPER
AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

(Bi-Monthly) \$1.00 per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute,
19 Ermington Place, Kew, Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia, 3101.

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 Search for Atoning Blood

THE following will prove interesting to our readers. It is a report of remarks made by an old Hebrew at a "mission" meeting. We note that God has so overturned natural Israel that though they have possession of the holy places where sacrifices were appointed to be offered, they have no priest qualified to make the offerings. No Jew living in the world today could prove his right to the priest's office by showing his pedigree back to Aaron. Jews named Levy and Cohen are supposed to be of the Levitical tribe, but could not prove it so as to qualify for the office according to their law. With the true Priest and the offering of the "better sacrifices", the types were obliterated most effectually by the Lord. By and by fleshly Israel will realize the truth—they will "look upon him whom they pierced"—they will recognize Him as the great Priest who "offered up himself." Thank God for the assurances of His Word on this subject in Rom. 11:25-33.

The testimony follows:—

"This is Passover week among you, my Jewish brethren, and as I sat here I was thinking how you will be observing it. You will have put away all leaven from your houses; you will eat the motsah—unleavened wafers—and the roasted lamb. You will attend the synagogue services and carry out the ritual and directions of the Talmud; but you forget, my brethren, that you have everything but that which Jehovah required first of all. He did not say 'When I see you eat the motsah or the lamb, or go to the synagogue'; but His word was 'When I see the blood I will pass over you.' Ah, my brethren, you cannot substitute anything for this. You must have **blood, Blood, BLOOD!**"

As he reiterated this word with ever increasing emphasis, his black eyes flashed warningly, and his Jewish hearers quailed before him. "Blood!" It is an awful word, that, for one who reveres the ancient oracles and yet has no sacrifice. Turn where he will in the Book, the blood meets him, but let him seek as he may, he cannot find it in the Judaism of the present. After a few minutes' pause the patriarchal old man went on somewhat as follows:

"I was born in Palestine nearly seventy years ago. As a child I was taught to read the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets. I early attended

the synagogue and learned Hebrew from the rabbis. At first I believed what I was told, that ours was the true and only religion, but as I grew older and studied the Law more intently I was struck with the place the blood had in all the ceremonies outlined there, and equally struck by its utter absence in the ritual to which I was brought up. Again and again I read Exodus 12 and Leviticus 16 and 17, and the latter chapters especially made me tremble, as I thought of the great Day of Atonement and the place the blood had there. Day and night one verse would ring in my ears—"It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." I knew I had broken the law. I needed atonement. Year after year, on that day, I beat my breast as I confessed my need of it; but it was to be made by blood, and there was **no blood!**

"In my distress I at last opened my heart to a learned and venerable rabbi. He told me that God was angry with His people. Jerusalem was in the hands of the Gentiles, the temple was destroyed, and a Mohammedan mosque was reared up in its place. The only spot on earth where we dare shed the blood of sacrifice, in accordance with Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17, was desecrated and the nation scattered. That was why there was no blood. God had Himself closed the way to carry out the solemn service of the great Day of Atonement. Now we must turn to the Talmud, and the rest of its instructions, and trust in the mercy of God and the merits of the fathers.

"I tried to be satisfied, but could not. Something seemed to say that the Law was unaltered, even though our temple was destroyed. Nothing else but blood could atone for the soul. We dared not shed blood for atonement elsewhere than in the place the Lord has chosen. Then we were left without atonement at all. This thought filled me with horror. In my distress I consulted many other rabbis. I had but one great question—"Where can I find the blood of atonement?"

"I was over thirty years of age when I left Palestine and came to Constantinople, with my still unanswered question ever before my mind, and my soul exceedingly troubled about my sins. One night I was walking down one of the narrow streets of that city, when I saw a sign telling of a meeting for Jews. Curiosity led me to open the door and go in. Just as I took a seat I heard a man say: 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' It was my first introduction to Christianity, but I listened breathlessly as the speaker told how God had declared that 'Without shedding of blood is no remission', but that He had given His only begotten Son, the Lamb of God, to die, and all who trusted in His blood were forgiven all their iniquities. This was the Messiah of the 53rd of Isaiah; this was the suffering of Psalm 22. Ah, my brethren, I had found the blood of atonement at last! I trusted it, and now I love to read the New Testament and see how all the

shadows of the Law are fulfilled in Jesus. His blood has been shed for sinners. It has satisfied Justice, and is the only means of salvation for either Jew or Gentile." (From "Reprints.")

The Presence of Christ

THE subject of Christ's return is surely of paramount importance to all His disciples, and it is of special interest to all sincere students to know that eminent scholars of the Bible are agreed that the English word "presence" is the equivalent of the Greek word "parousia."

When we may look forward to having an absent friend with us for a season, we know that there must be a moment of arrival, also a time when he will be journeying, and thus "drawing near," but it is his presence to which we look forward. Though in speaking of the matter, we may say we shall do this or that when he comes, we do not mean, when he is drawing near or at the moment of arrival, but while he is present with us and we are enjoying the renewed fellowship.

The word "parousia" occurs 24 times in the Greek Testament, and there would seem to be no other word than "presence" that can so well be used to translate it in every instance.

In the Epistles we have:—

(1) 1 Cor. 15:23. Speaking of the resurrection of Christ (head and body), as the first-fruits, afterwards, they that are Christ's during His "presence." James also speaks of the church—the body of Christ—as being a first-fruits unto God. Christ died, rose and revived, that He might be Lord of the dead and the living, thus all belong to Him by right of purchase. All are Christ's—the just and unjust—and are to be raised during His 1000 years' reign. "As all in Adam die, so all in Christ shall be made alive"—1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 14:9; Acts 24:15; John 5:28, 29.

(2) 1 Cor. 16:17. Here Paul is expressing his gladness at the presence of three brethren. "For they have refreshed my spirit." That was not by their journeying or "drawing near," nor by the act of "arrival," but by their "presence" and fellowship.

(3) 2 Cor. 7:6; (4) 2 Cor. 7:7. Here the Apostle speaks of the comfort he had by Titus having come to him. It was not that Titus was coming, but that he was comforted by his presence and fellowship, and the good news he had brought.

(5) 2 Cor. 10:10. Here the word "parousia" is correctly translated presence, and it should be clear to all that that is what is meant. One could not reasonably say that his bodily "drawing near" was weak, or that his bodily "arrival" was weak.

(6) Phil. 1:26. Certainly Paul did not mean

that the act of his arrival would do the Philip-pians good; it was his presence and fellowship, his instructions and counsel that would increase their joy.

(7) Phil. 2:12. The word is again correctly translated "presence," and is placed as the alternative to absence. No other word could so well convey the meaning of the passage.

(8) 1 Thes. 2:19. Again the meaning is not the "arrival," or "drawing near," but the "presence" of the Lord, for the Apostle speaks of the church as being in the presence of the Lord all that time.

(9) 1 Thes. 3:13. The word rendered "coming" should be "presence" here also. The Apostle is referring to the same event as in the previous passage, namely, the church being present with the Lord at His second presence with all His saints.

(10) 1 Thes. 4:15. Here again the word rendered "coming" should be "presence." If the Lord was to come like a flash of lightning, as some so misunderstand Matt. 24:27, then no one could await with joy, nor could there be any time when "The dead in Christ, having risen first," some could be left over or remain. With the true rendering of "parousia," i.e., presence, all is harmonious and reasonable. When the Lord should be present, He would first raise those who had fallen asleep in Christ, and then those who were still alive in the flesh would be caught away just as they finished their course to be together with the Lord, with those who had preceded them. These do not sleep as others who died before the presence of Christ, but at the moment of death are "Changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," and so they together with all the body of Christ shall be "forever with the Lord."

(11) 1 Thes. 5:23. Again read presence instead of coming. It is not the act of His "arrival" to which we look forward, but His presence.

(12) 2 Thes. 2:1; (13) 2 Thes. 2:8; (14) 2 Thes. 2:9. The word should undoubtedly be rendered presence in each of these texts.

(15) James 5:7; (16) James 5:8. It should be evident to all that the "presence" is the thing which James referred to and not the act of "arrival," or "drawing near."

(17) 2 Pet. 1:16. That Peter had in mind the "presence" of Christ in Kingdom glory, is evident from the fact that he refers to the "Transfiguration" which was a picture of the Kingdom.

(18) 2 Pet. 3:4. Should read "Where is the promise of His presence?" This verse is having fulfilment in this our day.

(19) 2 Pet. 3:12. This has reference to the time called, "The day of God," "The day of the Lord's wrath." It will not be a flash of light-

ning in length of time, but a period, "A time of trouble," even greater than that in Noah's day, or at the destruction of Jerusalem.

(20) 1 John 2:28. If the coming of the Lord was like a flash of lightning, there would be no time for anyone to feel ashamed "before" Him, but John had no such thought. He, along with all those who love His appearing, looked forward to being like the Lord and with Him, and to "see him as he is." Such have confidence that they shall not be ashamed before Him at His presence.

Thus we have gone over all the instances of the word "parousia" in the Epistles, and see that no other word than "presence" can so well convey in English the meaning of the inspired writers. Now we turn to Matt. 24, where the remaining four translations of the word occur, and find that the same word "presence" is clearly the Lord's meaning in each case.

(21) Matt. 24:3. Here is the inspired question which was asked of the Lord, in order that the inspired answer could be provided for our edification, and it is only when we allow the proper meaning of the Greek word "parousia" four times used in this connection that we can comprehend the "meat in due season"—V. 45.

"When shall all these things be and what shall be the sign of thy presence (parousia) and of the end of the age?" So that the answer given is not indicating signs that the Lord was soon to be near, or to arrive, but rather that He would be present when the signs should be seen.

Had the Lord intended returning in a way visible to all human eyes, there could be no value in providing any sign of His presence, but as He had said that it would not be with observation, the signs are given, and the signs are all now to be seen.

(22) Matt. 24:27. It would be indeed a sorry thing if the Lord was to come and go just like the lightning flash, but when we see that the Greek word rendered "lightning" is elsewhere used for the shining of a candle, we readily perceive that it is the glorious sunshine, rising in the east and shining all day, setting at evening in the west, that is here used to show the glorious reign of the "Sun of righteousness, which shall arise with healing in his wings." Also, that it is not just the "arrival," "coming," or "drawing near" that is referred to, but the "presence" of the Son of man, which will continue for a 1000 year day. The word rendered "lightning" simply means "brightness," or "shining," and could be used for sunshine, or shining of a candle, or brightness of lightning, and is dependent upon connections respecting translation.

(23) Matt. 24:37; (24) Matt. 24:39. "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the presence of the Son of man be."

The word in the Authorized Bible is mistakenly rendered "coming." As Noah was present in the "Days of Noah," so, of course, our Lord must be present in the days of the Son of man. See corresponding passage in Luke 17:24, 26.

The Mind—Man's Automatic Steering Mechanism

(Contributed Address)

THERE is much we do not know about the functions of the human mind. However, much has been discovered in this day of increased enlightenment, and since we are living in a very eventful period of the history of the human race, when so many minds are being subjected to so much propaganda or brain washing, so often of a subtle nature, which has such far-reaching effects in its influence on the minds of men, women and children of all ages, I thought it may be helpful to take a brief look at some important things which are known about the human mind. Then we can consider a few texts of Scripture which will help us to nurture and to cultivate our renewed minds, "the mind of Christ" which is in all those who have fully consecrated their lives to the service of God, and who have been begotten by the holy spirit to the new nature, the spiritual nature.

Our dictionary defines "mind" as "the seat of consciousness, thought, volition and emotional, intellectual powers; memory; opinion." Take one of the many texts in the New Testament in which reference is made to the mind. Rom. 12:2—"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Greek "nous." Dr. Strong gives the meaning as "the intellect, i.e. mind (divine or human; in thought, feeling, or will). Considering another helpful text, Phil. 2:5, Paul says—"Let this **mind** be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Dr. Strong defines the word here as from the Greek "phroneo" meaning "to exercise the mind, i.e. entertain or have a sentiment or opinion; by implication to be (mentally) disposed (more or less earnestly in a certain direction); intensively to interest oneself in (with concern or obedience)."

Having in our thoughts, then, these definitions of the word "mind", which must be renewed by the mind of Christ, which all of His followers must seek to have, it may be of some profit to analyze, by question and answer, some further details in this connection; namely, Why must this human mind be renewed? First of all let us think of the mind as that **something** which man has above all others of the animal creation—the capacity to think, to reason, to plan. The power to translate thoughts into actions. The scope for reaching out after new horizons, and the power to visualize the thinking and planning of today, put into actual effect tomorrow. That something, if in tune with the

Master Mind of the universe, can be capable of the greatest good, and rise to the greatest heights, even on the human plane of being. After all do we not understand that man was created in the image of God—Gen. 1:26, 27—in His moral likeness, a reasoning sentient being? Even today when so much evil is in the world, there are many noble examples which show up the finer qualities in man's make-up as being of divine origin.

Yet, if the mind of man is given over to the influences of the Adversary, the Satanic forces of evil, spiritual wickedness in high places, this same mind can be capable of the most diabolical evil and cruelty, and the greatest power for the destruction of things good and pure, almost beyond words to describe. So, then, as human beings, we all have this "something" called the mind. Before we come to Christ it is the natural mind, and before going on to answer our question, Why must this mind be renewed in the followers of Christ? let us pursue this analysis of the "automatic steering mechanism" a little further.

This **thing** called the mind is that which directs man's every-day thoughts and actions and has some influence for good, bad, or indifference upon not only himself, but also upon all those with whom he associates each day. Should not we then, as Christians, seek to know something of not only what man has learned, but more importantly what God's Word has to say in respect of such an important part of every one of God's creatures, and more especially in respect of those who are His New Creation, His peculiar people—1 Pet. 2:9—those whom He has drawn by the holy spirit to Jesus Christ—John 6:44.

Volumes have been written by men who have studied the human mind and its behaviour. A knowledge of some of the basic findings in this connection is helpful in enabling us to appreciate what a remarkable piece of electronic mechanism is the human mind. It has been called "man's automatic steering mechanism" and when we expand this thought a little further and then relate it to what God's Word has to say on the same subject, we begin to see how very important it is that our minds are stayed upon our Heavenly Father and His righteousness—Isa. 26:3.

It is said that **one tenth part** of every human mind is conscious and nine tenths sub-conscious; that is, outside the range of attention. It is through this very remarkable arrangement that our Creator has built into the human brain what can be called a **subconscious homing device**, and which is in its effect really a sub-conscious feed back cycle. It works on this principle. We all know that man is endowed with five senses—sight, hearing, feeling or touch, smell and taste. So each day humanity judges its affairs by the exercise of these five senses. Every day, every hour, every minute, every second of our wakeful or conscious time,

through these senses, mental impressions of situations that continually develop and pass around us in the daily course of our lives are **fed back** through the one tenth or conscious part of our mind to the larger or sub-conscious part, the nine tenths. Examples are the constant barrages of advertising, radio, TV., hoarding or by whatever means. Thus any repeated impression or thought fed back in this manner builds up a tremendous bank of sub-conscious energy.

These thoughts and impressions are received by the sub-conscious as the operational "data" on "the way things are", just in the same manner in which a programme is fed into a computer. The sub-conscious then goes to work to suppress or expand our performance to conform exactly to this set pattern. Can we see then why Solomon said—"As a man thinketh in his heart, or mind, so is he"?—Prov. 23:7. This, then, is how man's daily performance is controlled.

If a man takes a daily "failure" or "life is difficult" or "no progress" attitude; in other words, a constant negative thinking programme, and builds up thereby a self image of this kind he can be sure that his sub-conscious will use all the forces or resources of the human body to limit his energy—his creative ability, analytical skill and perception, so that he conforms exactly to the "operating formula" of this image. He literally **cannot do better** than his self image, which has come from his thoughts and mental perception. Observations of results of his performance must not lead to negative "can't do any better" frame of mind. Reactions of others to thing he has done must not lead to constant thoughts of "I cannot seem to please anyone" attitude. His visualization of things he fears might happen or hopes will happen must not make him give up trying to think and act and hope positively.

Let us see, then, how some of these thoughts can be applied to our Christian lives and also how they apply in answer to our question as to why the human mind needs to be changed and renewed by the transforming power of Christ in us, and working through us by the power of the holy spirit. Rom. 12:2, which has been quoted, goes on to give a reason why the human mind needs renewing—"so that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Yes, indeed, how very true. The veil of **human mindedness** in the natural man hangs between him and the sacred spiritual truths of God. The only way to set it aside is to make a full consecration to do God's will which is to sacrifice the flesh and its interests. It is in the glorious and privileged condition typified by the Holy of the Tabernacle that the consecrated children of God enjoy their inner life and walk with God. Yes, this is quite beyond the sight of the world and the worldly. What a precious thought!

In the "Holy" we are experiencing the transforming and it is during this process that we

are learning more and more, that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth"—1 Thes. 5:23; 4:3; John 17:17. What a privilege is this proving experience. The Greek word here translated "prove" was used in olden times in connection with testing or proving of metals and means to investigate, examine and discern. By careful tests under close examination and observation the metal was proved. So it is we prove the will of God.

How do we do this? One way is surely through the study of God's Word individually and with others, and by prayer and faith. We all know the joyful experiences of gathering around God's Holy Word collectively. On such occasions we meditate upon the Scriptures, we endeavour to rightly divide the word of truth—2 Tim. 2:15. With sentiments of praise and worship in our hearts we wait upon the Lord and He speaks to us through His Word. How important this is—assembling ourselves together in the right attitude of heart and mind.

So, then, as we come to see less and less of ourselves, and more and more of Christ and His spirit of love in our hearts, cannot we see how the subconscious feed back cycle works out in our Christian lives? As an instance, if we come to the meeting for the Bible Study and we feed into our one tenth conscious mind critical thoughts that are not positive or constructive, or not in harmony with God's love of what this Brother or that Sister has to say, instead of endeavouring to see Christ and His words, these negative impressions feed into the nine tenths or subconscious part, and build up to become the force which directs our daily living. If we continually dwell on the weaknesses, real or imagined, of our Brothers and Sisters, see always their faults instead of their Christlike qualities, then just as surely as we are feeding these impressions into the subconscious mind, to that extent then we will be the poorer in our own spiritual lives.

Oh, if we would only follow our Lord's example of positive action when tempted to criticise, condemn or judge our brethren. When tempted to listen to something which is in the nature of gossip or evil speaking, and instead, resolve to think and speak as would our Lord and Master were He in our position, how greatly we would enrich our Christian living. How much more influence for good would our daily lives become if we see to it that each day and hour and minute, through our conscious mind we are feeding into our computer (as it were) the right programme for daily Christian living. Is this, then, how the mind is renewed?

This may mean a complete change of ideals and a new attitude toward our whole way of living—"Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full

in His wonderful face." Our Heavenly Father asks from us a full surrender, full consecration, nonconformity to this world and a transforming to the kingdom requirements. Then, and only then, can God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness fully shine into our hearts and minds by the gospel to give us the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. This knowledge cannot be comprehended by the natural mind—1 Cor. 2:14.

What is the result of this transforming work? Development of the character-likeness of Christ. Growth in the fruits of the spirit—Gal. 5:22, 23. Daily development? Yes! A desire to please Him in all things and a love in our hearts which comes from God the Father. How do we continue in this way against the powers of Satan aligned with all the forces of evil to thwart God's plan? We can gird up the loins of our mind—1 Pet. 1:13. We can think on all those virtues of Phil. 4:8 (please read).

Can we develop or cultivate our five earthly senses to a greater appreciation of our daily needs as New Creatures in Christ Jesus? Or would we say, we also have what can be called five spiritual senses corresponding to the five natural senses? Can these be cultivated? Yes, indeed, as we come more and more into Christ, the "eyes" of our understanding open wider and wider to things not seen by the natural eye. By degrees, the "hearing" of faith increases until every good promise of the divine Word is forceful and meaningful. In time we come into closer "touch" with the Lord and His invisible powers (the power of prayer and praise). After a time and little by little we "taste" that the Lord is gracious and precious. As we progress, we come to appreciate those sacrifices and incense prayers which are of a sweet odour to the Lord.

Can the Christian, then, be described as having a sixth or spiritual sense which enables him even though still in the earthly body to understand things quite beyond the perception of those around him, who are not begotten of the holy spirit? Yes, indeed—1 Cor. 2:9, 10, 14 (please read). How grand, how glorious, how rich is the daily experience of all those, who, by the grace of God, are finding that the things of this earth are growing dim, as the "deep things of God" revealed to us by His spirit, come more and more into focus, as the "mind of Christ" which is in us—1 Cor. 2:16—enables us to appreciate the transforming work which has given us this renewal of mind.

What exaltation, what thanks are due to our Heavenly Father as we experience with Paul the joy of understanding even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from 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. May God bless to our hearts and minds the few thoughts presented

here, that we may see the daily need, the constant need of feeding through our one tenth conscious part of our mind the thoughts and impressions which are godly and pure, so that the force which is built up in the subconscious will direct our daily performance in ways which will be well pleasing to our Heavenly Father, and edifying to all those with whom we daily associate.

The Mount of Olives the Kingdom of Blessing

"And his (Jehovah's) feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south"—Zechariah 14:4.

THE text refers to the closing of the Day of Trouble and the manifestation of God's Power in connection with that trouble. The literal mount of Olives may have, and probably will have, somewhat to do with the matter. It is referred to here as experiencing a great earthquake. No doubt the Israelites will be gathered at Jerusalem at this time, and no doubt the Lord's favour will be manifested to them there. This will be at the close of "Jacob's trouble," from which the Lord will be present to deliver them. Our thought is that this will be after the Church shall have passed into glory. The execution of what is here described seems to be a part of the work of the glorified Church.

We understand that the Ancient Worthies will then appear, and that God's favour will have returned to the Jews, and that Israel's temporal blessings will there begin. This would imply that the Jews will then be under the New Covenant arrangement, and hence that the Church must have been completed.

Symbolically, a mountain represents a kingdom. The Scriptures elsewhere declare that Jehovah will make the place of His feet glorious. The word "olive" always associates itself in the minds of the people of the Orient with the thought of light and nourishment. The olive oil they use regularly instead of butter. As the olive furnishes both light and food, the Mount of Olives would represent the Kingdom of God. Olive oil was poured upon the head of the Jewish kings and priests, and symbolised thus the holy spirit. God's Kingdom will be for the blessing of mankind. It will be of two phases—the heavenly and the earthly—and all people may eventually come under its blessed condition.

See "Studies in the Scriptures," Vol. 4, pp. 649-656, for further elucidation of this passage.

"God Promises Wars Will Cease"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

Listening!

Listening attentively can be a valuable form of service. Many people desperately need someone short on talking and long on listening, with whom they may discuss some problem that is bugging them. They are not necessarily seeking advice: simply a sympathetic listening ear. The act of expressing themselves to a patient and understanding listener often gives them emotional relief, and enables them to see the answer to their own problem.

Michel Quoist made this confession:

I have just hung up; why did he telephone?
I don't know. . . . Oh! I get it. . . .
I talked a lot and listened very little.
Forgive me, Lord, it was a monologue and not a dialogue.
I explained my idea and did not get his;
Since I didn't listen, I learned nothing;
Since I didn't listen, I didn't help;
Since I didn't listen, we didn't communicate.
Forgive me, Lord, for we were connected and now we are cut off.

It is a prayer that many of us need to pray.

—Selected.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th, in the Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew. Further information from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

Books Available

- "God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (Postage from \$1.65 according to distance).
- "The Divine Plan of the Ages"—\$1.00 (Postage \$1.00 in Victoria; \$1.20 Interstate).
- "The Creator's Grand Design"—\$1.00 (Postage 60c and 70c).
- "The Book of Books"—\$1.00 (Postage \$1.00 and \$1.20).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna"—\$1.00 (Postage \$1.00 and \$1.20).
- "Songs in the Night"—\$1.00 (Postage 60c and 70c).
- "Emphatic Diaglott", New Testament—\$3.00 (Postage \$1.00 and \$1.20).
- "Poems of Dawn"—\$2.75 (Postage \$1.00 and \$1.20).
- "Tabernacle Shadows"—\$1.00 (Postage 60c and 70c).
- "God and Reason"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "God's Plan"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Hope Beyond the Grave"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Israel in History and Prophecy"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Manner of Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).
- "Some of the Parables"—10c (Postage 35c and 40c).

Numerous other smaller booklets.

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