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“The Word of God is not Bound.”

“Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel; wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.” (2 Tim. 2:8-10.) Verse 9 from the Amplified Version reads: “For that (Gospel) I am suffering affliction and even wearing chains, like a criminal. But the Word of God is not chained or imprisoned!”

It is generally acknowledged that when the Apostle Paul wrote the second epistle to Timothy, he was imprisoned in Rome; also this was the last of Paul’s epistles, either to individual brethren or churches. It is to be understood that Paul was therefore literally in bonds, or chains, as the Amplified Version states. Knowing also that his earthly ministry for Christ was nearing the end, some may have expected that this servant of Christ would have been sad and downcast as he faced death after so much suffering for the Gospel’s sake. But he was not sad and downcast, for he knew that while he was in bonds, the Word of God was not bound, for there was the whole Gospel Age ahead, when the members of Christ’s body, the Church of Christ would be found by the proclaiming of God’s Word and the influence of the holy spirit upon those who had ears to hear.

One of the most outstanding experiences of any of the apostles that was granted to Paul helped to impress upon him the assurance that the truths of God’s Word would never be allowed to be bound or hidden. We refer to the visions and revelations Paul received from the Lord, and described in 2 Cor. 12:1-4. As Paul was not with the Lord during His earthly ministry, it seemed Christ made up to him in revealing His truth in a very outstanding way, perhaps even more than to those who were with Him in person. “Such an one caught up to the third heaven . . . he was caught up into paradise.” These verses imply that Paul was carried forward by revelation on the stream of time to behold what had been accomplished throughout the Gospel Age, as though he was looking back upon those events from the third heaven—from the time of being caught up to paradise in the Kingdom of Christ.

This would mean that God’s Word of truth had been revealed to the hearts and minds of all the members of the body of Christ, so that the words of James 1:18 would have been fulfilled,—“Of his (God’s) own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.” God begat the firstfruits with or by the Word of truth. In other words, as the Lord’s people come to a knowledge of the Word of truth, it so acts upon their minds and hearts that they are led to respond to Him, and yielding

themselves fully to the Lord the result is the begetting of the holy spirit. But it is through the Word of truth that they are led to become followers of Christ.

The granting of those revelations to Paul means also that the apostle, perceiving in his day “the mystery of iniquity was already working”, could see beyond this partial hindrance to the work of the truth, and would know that Christ’s true church would be with Him in the “third heaven” in readiness for the Kingdom reign to follow. Being “caught up to paradise” would convey the same assurance to the apostle. He would see in vision the “heavenly paradise” as revealed in Rev. 2:7, with the overcomers of the Gospel Age given “to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” This would be the spiritual paradise, in contrast with the earthly paradise that will also be established throughout the length and breadth of the wide world.

Beholding this heavenly “paradise of God” was also equivalent to the amazing experience which Paul describes in 1 Cor. 15:8. In this chapter the Apostle explains the wonderful information which he received from the Lord directly, and not through association with fellow apostles. Prior to verse 8 he tells about the Lord having been seen after His resurrection by various of the brethren and by groups of the brethren, and then in the 8th verse he said,—”And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.” So wonderful—was this revelation in beholding the Lord after, His ascension to heaven, it was as though the apostle was born on the spirit plane. This apparently took place on the Damascus road when he was intercepted on a mission contrary to the Lord’s cause, and from which time onward, he declared in Acts 26:19,—I was not disobedient unto The heavenly vision.

Knowing all this wonderful outworking of God’s plan truly gave full assurance to the Apostle that the Word of God is not bound, because it is_ the message of God’s Word which accomplishes all that was revealed to Paul in the vision of the “third heaven”, in the spiritual kingdom. Further, not only did Paul perceive the heavenly phase of the kingdom, but he would also grasp the restoration of the earthly paradise being accomplished through the truths of God’s Word conveyed to all the families of the earth.

Our Lord Jesus indicated this same working out of God’s plan in His words recorded in John 12:47, 48. These are very helpful verses when we consider the situation of those people who rejected our Lord at His first advent. These verses read,— “If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” These words reveal very helpfully what the Kingdom will mean to mankind: the very truths, the very principles, the very words that the Lord spoke at His first advent will be the same upon which mankind will be judged when they all know the Lord from the least to the greatest. This helps us to see, then, that the Word of God will be vital, it will be instructive, it will guide mankind to obey and know the Lord also on the earthly plane. Paul, then, knew, as our Lord did, what was going to be accomplished right down over two thousand years of the Gospel Age, and throughout the thousand years of the Kingdom Age. The apostle knew all that away back in his own day, when he said “the Word of God is not bound”, but would accomplish all its wonderful work in harmony with God’s will.

In addition to this long-range view of the Word of God not being bound, we know that the Apostle intended Timothy and all Christians in his day and since to know that the binding of himself with literal chains could not even then hinder the Gospel message progressing in harmony with God’s will in His plan from that time onward. That is why he wrote to Timothy in 2 Tim. 1:8,—”Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God”. “Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel”,—Paul is saying, Be not ashamed of me in my present situation; do not be offended; do not be intimidated and kept from being a servant of Christ because of the way I’m being treated. No, indeed, and this reminds us of the participation associated with the Memorial of our Lord’s death—participating with our Lord in His

experiences. So the Lord's people are to be partakers of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, even as Paul was setting that lovely example in his own faithfulness under all those trying conditions.

Possibly, Paul did not know that the very imprisonment which he suffered had such a far-reaching influence in promoting the cause of the Word of God, for he probably wrote more epistles than he would have, had he been unrestricted in his movements. Then the Lord preserved these epistles for the benefit of many more than the members

of the actual churches or individuals to whom they were sent in Paul's day, even down to us in this end of the

Gospel Age today. When we think of all the valuable epistles recorded by the apostle, we feel he would never have realised in his day the full extent and value of all these wonderful messages. Further, in Paul's case, his being in bonds sometimes resulted in promoting the cause of the gospel, as stated in Phil. 1:12-14,—"I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; and many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear." Here is an actual reaction favourable to the brethren because Paul was really in prison; this shows how the example of the faithful servant of God can react upon others, who, under other circumstances, may have felt intimidated because of the treatment which Paul received. So his words,—“What happened unto me has fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel”, shows how he gave courage, confidence and assurance to the brethren who went forward despite the threatenings possibly of receiving similar treatment to the apostle himself.

Not only was the Apostle Paul given revelations about the Plan of God being fulfilled right on into the Kingdom Age, but he informed the Thessalonian brethren of events to transpire during the early part of the Gospel Age in 2 Thes. 2:1-3,—“Now we beseech you, brethren, . . . that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled . . . as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.” Here we find Paul was given instruction regarding the great falling away in respect of the gospel truths. This means, that by prophetic vision he was able to detect and tell beforehand what was to come to pass. Following on this “falling away” from the truths of God's Word, how clearly it is shown by the Lord's messages to the Churches -in Revelation that the truths of God's Word were bound or restricted for a limited time only, When the Lord's due time came, the message to the church in Philadelphia showed how truly the Word of God was not bound, from the period of the Reformation onward in particular. A message of this kind gives courage, confidence and inspiration even to us today, when we see the time came for the opening up of the Word of God after the period of the Dark Ages, when there was almost a dead condition throughout some of the church periods. When this Philadelphian period came, Revelation 3:7, 8, reveal the Lord's will in respect of His Word at that time,—“To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.” The Word of God is not bound. It is obvious that, when that time came, God's Word was to be elucidated, to be revealed and expounded, gradually of course. “I know thy works; I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.” This was the time when the noble Reformers, by God's grace and with His spirit in their hearts, defied all opposition —because God was with them.

We see further that those noble Reformers were used of God to prepare for additional unfolding of truth throughout last century, leading up to the harvest truths which the Lord has blessed to His people now for nearly one hundred years. The clear understanding of the manner of Christ's return was of outstanding

importance, for to grasp that the “days of the Son of man”, the days of Christ’s second presence, were with the Church meant additional unfolding of truth for the benefit of God’s people.

Our Lord made special reference to the harvest period at the end of the Gospel Age, when the time of His second presence became due, when He said in Matt. 13:39,—”The harvest is the end of the age.” We call to mind the vision given in Rev. 14:14, where our Lord is pictured as the Son of man, sitting upon a cloud, with a sickle in His hand, and a crown on His head, depicting the time for the reaping of the harvest of the Gospel Age. This means, we feel, that the harvest of the Gospel Age will be completed before the Millennial Age, or Kingdom Age, begins. In other words, the first resurrection of the “dead in Christ”, and members of the church who do not sleep in death, but are changed to be with the Lord and the risen saints, would be completed before the new age, the Millennial Age, begins. This would seem necessary so that the value of Christ’s sacrifice, covering the church class throughout the Gospel Age, could be made available to bless Israel under the New Covenant, and then to all the families of the earth throughout the Kingdom Age. We understand, of course, that the church class are developed under the Abrahamic Covenant, and the New Covenant applies to the Millennial Age only.

The distinction between, the work of the Gospel Age and the Millennial Age is well revealed by the Apostle Peter in Acts 2:18, 17. These verses we know were quoted from the prophet Joel. Verse 18,—”On my servants and handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit”, undoubtedly refers to the Gospel Age only, the time when God is selecting His servants and handmaidens, calling out a people for His name, to be associated with Christ in the heavenly kingdom. Verse 17,—”I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh”, clearly refers to the Millennial Age. If the Millennial Age were present for the past nearly one hundred years, we would expect God’s spirit to be poured out on all flesh. Some of the Revivalist people are even claiming this with the speaking in tongues, etc., which is a great deception of Satan in these last days of the Gospel Age. It is obvious that God’s spirit is not now manifest upon all flesh. Evil men are waxing worse and worse (2 Tim. 3:13), but with the overthrow of the present order of things and the establishment of Christ’s Kingdom we rejoice that God’s spirit will ultimately be poured out upon all flesh in the new order of things.

The passing of the present order, “this present evil world”, and the outcome is well pictured in Psalm 46:9, 10.

Here we have a message of God speaking peace to humanity. The church class will then be with Christ, and the time of trouble will have humbled mankind sufficiently so that with the Kingdom operating the blessings will so much more than compensate the obedient for all the past six thousand years of man’s work week, so to speak. “Weeping endures for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” Joy comes in the Millennial morning. “Be still and know that I am God”, will be the message to subdued, humbled and hushed humanity, brought down, as it were, as a necessary preparation for the introduction of the Kingdom of Christ.

How thankful we are, then, that the Word of God is not bound to God’s people who are rejoicing in the liberty of the sons of God,—the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. The only people to whom the Word of God is bound are those who are still restricted by the creeds of the various denominations around the world. We hear some strange views and claims by religious leaders at times, showing that the Word of God is bound to such. Recently, in Melbourne, following the Billy Graham Crusade, one preacher compared over 3,000 decisions for Christ at one meeting to the 3,000 added to the Church on the Day of Pentecost. This comparison is a very false one, for while we are glad that people do show some appreciation of Christ’s sacrifice and make a decision as a company, this does not mean that they are devoted followers of Christ and members of His Church such as those mentioned on the Day of Pentecost. Out of

those 3,000 who made decisions for Christ recently, perhaps only a lipndful become real Christians, and these cannot rightly be compared to the fruitage of our Lord's ministry at Pentecost.

How favored we are then, in these days of the harvest of the Gospel Age, to realise the blessings of God's Word, in having personal experience that the Word of God is not bound, but is a living revelation to all who meditate upon its precepts, and are blessed thereby to God's praise. The Word of God is alive to the hearts of God's people; they prove it as a reality. The Plan of God is so satisfying, and is the only solution to all distress and perplexity throughout the world today. We are delighted that in this end of the age the truths of God's Word are assembled in such as the "Studies in the Scriptures", the vital keys to the Bible, the truths of which satisfy our longings as nothing else can do.

It was lovely of the Apostle Paul to request the co-operation of the Thessalonian brethren in his ministry, even as he felt God had blessed them, as he declared in 2 Thes. 3:1,—"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you." May the Word of God have free course, and be glorified in each of God's people today, to His praise for all time.

The Institute's Work

AT the close of April another year for the work of the Berean Bible Institute has been completed. It is with gratitude and thanksgiving to the Lord for the privileges of serving His cause of truth that this brief outline of the efforts undertaken is presented. Most of our friends are acquainted with the work carried on from our centre here in Melbourne; however, as new readers are added to our mailing list from time to time, these may like to know something concerning the work in hand which is performed as unto the Lord.

Once again sincere thanks are expressed for the willing co-operation of our Australian brethren, and some in other lands, which has enabled the scope of work to continue steadily as in past years. The publication of our bi-monthly "Peoples Paper" provides a helpful contact with brethren and friends throughout this country and overseas. It has been encouraging to hear that the contents of our journal has been appreciated generally, and thanks is expressed to all who have contributed to the pages of the "Peoples Paper."

Subscriptions to the "Paper" do not cover the cost of publication and postage, so the deficiency is provided from the General Tract Fund, but this expense is considered well used, as numbers of the "Peoples Paper" are supplied free to new friends who show interest in the message of truth. Sincere thanks is expressed to our Melbourne friends who give regular and helpful assistance with the proof reading and other work connected with the "Paper". Extra copies of our journal are gladly supplied to all readers for passing out where good may be done, and friends. who provide additional subscriptions to the "Peoples Paper" are assisting very well in the work.

For the witness work, free tracts are gladly supplied from the General Tract Fund to all who desire to have a share in witnessing to the message of the kingdom. At present the following subjects are available and may be requested for distribution—"The Prince of Peace Brings Peace Through His Kingdom"; "Israel and the Holy Land in God's Plan"; "Can the Living Talk with the Dead?"; "When Christ is King"; "Behold, the Bridegroom"; and the small leaflets, "Do You Know?" Booklets on a variety of subjects have also been provided free to new cases of interest throughout the year.

The witness to the message of the kingdom through the radio on 3GL Geelong has continued throughout the year with some encouraging responses from week to week. This is a fruitful means of contacting those

who are feeling after a satisfactory message from God's Word to all life's problems, past, present and future. Interested listeners to the Frank and Ernest Dialogues are supplied with printed copies of the discussions, also suitable booklets, and the "Peoples Paper" is provided free to all interested enquirers for some months, after which some desire to subscribe to the "Paper" for themselves. In co-operation with the Melbourne Class, and in connection with the radio witness a number of public lectures have been given throughout the year. The attendance at some of these lectures on topical subjects has been very good and encouraging. We are glad to know that the Lord adds the increase to the appreciation of His truth, as He sees good.

The balance sheets for the General Tract Fund and Radio Fund reveal the financial side of our work. The voluntary contributions of our friends interested in the truths of God's Word have provided the means, in the Lord's providence, whereby the work is enabled to continue as in years past. To our brethren and friends generally who have so well supported the efforts with their sacrifices of earthly things, sincere thanks are expressed, realising that all is gladly undertaken as unto the Lord. It is requested that the prayers of our dear friends may continue to be offered for the Lord's blessing and guidance that all efforts in the work may continue in humility and faithfulness, in accord with His good will at all times.

World conditions continue to indicate the "day of preparation" for the kingdom is well advanced. The distress and perplexity of mankind in all countries impresses the great necessity for Christ's rule of righteousness and peace, a peace which none of mankind are able to gain by their own efforts. How favored we are to be living at this end of the reign of sin and death, and know that Christ's kingdom will prove to be "the desire of all nations." In the meantime the Lord's people may well rejoice in prospect of the heavenly inheritance promised to all the faithful overcomers who, by the Lord's grace, endure to the end of the pilgrim way in devotion of heart to the Lord, and service in His vineyard wherever located in His harvest-field. "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." (John 4:36.)

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| General Tract Fund | |
| To Credit Balance, 1-5-68 | \$125.50 |
| „ Donations . | 1,733.90 |
| | \$1,859.40 |
| N,,free Tracts and Deficiency "Peoples Paper" | \$242.80 |
| „ Extra Printing Paper | 139.22 |
| „ Hall Rents, Circulars, etc. | 75.60 |
| „ General Expenses (Office, etc.) | 257.68 |
| „ Towards Personal and House Expenses • | 700.00 |
| „ Postage . • | 218.00 |
| „ Travel and Sundries | 90.70 |
| „ Credit Balance, 1-5-69 1 | 35.40 |
| | \$1,859.40 |
| | Radio Fund |
| To Credit Balance, 1-5-68 | \$88.75 |
| „ Donations | 652.05 |
| | \$740.80 |
| By Radio Station 3GL | \$541.60 |
| | 83.70 |
| | 15.00 |
| „ Bank Charges | 5.00 |
| „ Credit Balance, 1-5-69 | 95.50 |
| | \$740.80 |

Convention News

ONCE again the Easter Convention at Adelaide, South Australia, has proved to be a time of rich spiritual fellowship and blessing. Our hearts are filled with praise and thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, as we call to mind the many blessings bestowed upon us so graciously.

It was a great pleasure to welcome a number of brethren from Melbourne and Geelong, Victoria, also a sister from Perth, W.A., and a brother from the country.

The addresses by various brethren were as follows:—"Consider"; "Truth Versus Tradition"; "For Me to Live is Christ"; "The Hope of His Calling"; "The Prophet Habakkuk"; "How Can We Walk with God?" "The Word of God is Not Bound"; "Christ in You, the Hope of Glory"; "The Great Tribulation"; "As I Have Loved You" and "Full of Grace and Truth."

Our Lord's high priestly prayer in John 17th chapter was taken as a Bible Study (in three parts), and proved to be very helpful to all on each of the days it was studied.

Many messages and greetings were received from various brethren and Classes, also from a brother and sister in America. These messages were much appreciated by those present.

The Praise and Testimony Meetings gave opportunity for recounting the Lord's goodness and overruling providences in our lives. The Hymns we Love and Why Session was, as usual, fully appreciated. How blessed are the Lord's people in the enjoyment of the rich heritage of song which has come down to us from past generations.

On Easter Saturday morning a Baptism Service was held at which one brother symbolized his consecration to follow in the footsteps of Christ in the narrow way of self-denial and sacrifice. We rejoice with our dear brother in the step that he has taken—giving his heart and life completely to the Lord—and observing the symbol of water baptism as the outward witness of the inward heart condition. We know that the Lord is pleased with those who comply fully with the heavenly call to present themselves—their justified humanity—to God in this "acceptable day"; and we are assured also that a real blessing comes to those who, in a thankful and humble spirit, observe the outward symbol of immersion in water as our Lord so graciously set us the example.

The Convention closed with the usual Love Feast and singing, "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love", and "God be with you till we meet again." The message sent from the Convention to those who sent us greetings, and also to the brethren everywhere is found in 1 John 4:7-11. The closing prayer of thanks to God for all His blessings, and asking His continued mercy and blessing for the Israel of God in every place, brought a very helpful time of fellowship to a happy ending. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

Memorial Observances

Melbourne

THE Memorial of our Lord's death was observed by a good company of the brethren at the appropriate season again this year. We are thankful for the privilege of remembering our Lord's great sacrifice in accord with His request when instituting this service on the night just prior to the completion of His earthly life,—”This do in remembrance of me.”

Previous studies from the chapter on the Passover in “The New Creation” proved very helpful in refreshing our minds on the importance of this annual observance which our Lord desired should take the place of the annual Jewish Passover by His true followers.

Our service consisted of the appropriate hymns, —42, 180, 437, 2 and 414—from “Bible Students’ Hymnal”, with prayers of thanksgiving to God for His great love in providing our dear Saviour to give His life a ransom for all mankind, the value of His merit being especially applied now to His devoted followers of the Gospel Age. All our dear brethren in every place were also remembered in prayers for God's blessing.

Scripture readings from Mark 14:12-72; 15:1-39, revealed the loving manner in which our Lord allowed Himself to be “made of no reputation”, and to be led as God's Lamb to the slaughter. An

address based on the readings from Mark's Gospel covered the subject in some detail, showing how Christ's followers are privileged to follow their Lord in sacrifice, being associated in using up their lives in His service now, if so be that they may also reign with Him in the heavenly kingdom.

After asking the Lord's blessing upon the emblems of unleavened bread and wine, each was partaken of in remembrance of our Saviour's broken body and shed blood, and indicating our desire to be associated with Him in similar sacrifice, that we may be faithful unto death, by His grace and strength.

Geelong

A very small company met together for the Memorial observance again recently. The portion chosen for pre-study on two Sundays previously was Heb. 4:14-16; 5:1-9, which assisted greatly our meditations at the Memorial. It was impressed upon us at the service what it cost our great High Priest to be fitted for His work, and the great sacrifice He made on our behalf. We can certainly rejoice in the benefits accruing to us as a result, and we are glad to remember Him and be reassured of His sympathetic intercession on our behalf at our call.

Adelaide

We are very thankful that our Lord left us the simple Memorial of His death, to be kept at the appropriate time each year. Our hearts are filled with gratitude and thankful love to our Heavenly Father, and to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for the “unspeakable Gift” of the Son of His love to be our Redeemer from the curse of sin and death.

How glad we are that Christ's death is “the satisfaction for our (the Church's) sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sin of the whole world.” What a privilege is ours to be living in this “acceptable day”; and to have heard, by God's grace, the heavenly invitation to the justified believers in Christ, to “present your

bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.” Gladly we comply with our Saviour’s request,—”Do this in remembrance of me”,—realising that all our hopes of future life and blessing are dependent upon our acceptance of the perfect sacrifice of our Lord Jesus; and we praise and thank the Lord that “it is given to us not only to believe in Jesus (as our Saviour) but also to suffer for his sake” (Phil. 1:29).

May the Lord grant His blessing and impart His grace to enable us each one to be faithful to our consecration vows to “die daily” to self-will, and to the world, and to be “more than conquerors” by His grace, so that we may receive at the end of the way the reward of the faithful. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10).

Perth

The Memorial of our Lord’s death was celebrated again, reminding us of the great sacrifice for ourselves and the sins of the whole world. The great truths associated with the Memorial allowed us to thoroughly search our own hearts and rededicate our lives in accord with Christ our Saviour and Deliverer.

Gladly we accept Christ’s blood to cleanse us from all sin. Gladly we respond to follow our Master into sacrificial death, and share with Him the ignominy of being a sin offering, as willing followers of our Lord “who for the joy set before him, endured the cross and despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” The brethren gladly partook of the emblems, confirming their desire to be “dead with Christ.”

Sydney

In a rapidly changing world, a small group of Bible Students gladly met at Leichhardt to celebrate the Memorial of Christ’s death. The presiding elder gave an edifying address both upon the type and antitype of this sacred subject. As a result our earnest desire is faithfulness to await the “drinking anew” of the cup of future joy,—Mark 14:25.

From the country of N.S. Wales a Sister sends this report of the Memorial observed with another Sister in her area

We celebrated the Memorial quietly together as has been our custom for years past; we celebrated at Sister’s home, and she provided wine and wafer this time. We opened with a prayer of thanksgiving and supplication for all the dear pilgrims everywhere,—the dear friends in Sydney and Melbourne, and for those alone with the Lord, known and unknown to us. We realised our inadequacy at all times and our Lord’s amazing benevolence to allow us into His confidence and service.

We read the whole account from Matthew, then three timely articles from “Peoples Paper”,—”Showing the Lord’s Death”; “The Church of the First-Borns” and “The Intentions of the Heart.” We then asked a blessing on wafer and wine with appropriate quotations from Matthew, and partook of same in reverent silence. We look forward now with renewed faith and energy, looking for the blessed reign soon to begin. May God bless all His children everywhere.

Books Available

“God’s Promises Come True”—\$2.20. “The Divine Plan of the Ages,” Cloth bound-80c; paper covers-55c. “Emphatic Diaglott,” New Testament—\$2.20. “Daily Heavenly Manna,” birthday pages—\$1.10. “Tabernacle Shadows”—68c. “The Book of Books,” Reviewing the Bible as a whole—\$1.10. —”Our Lord’s Great Prophecy”—15c. “Manner of Christ’s Return”—15c. “Christ’s Return”—15c. “Some of the Parables”—15c.

Character-Likeness to the Lord

“I pray for them . that they may be_ one . . . that they may be made perfect in one . . . that the world may know that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me.” John 17:’9, 20-23.

THESE words, we remember, were uttered by our Lord on the night of His betrayal, sup Posedly while on the way from the “upper room” where the Memorial was observed to the Garden of Gethsemane. The ones He evidently prayed for were the twelve apostles, or rather the eleven, by this time; for our Lord said, “I have lost none of them, save the son of perdition.” But the context shows that His prayer includes His faithful followers all the way down the age. He says, “Neither pray for these alone, but for all those who shall believe’ on me through their word.” He prayed that His followers might be one, even as He and His Father were one—the same kind of oneness, a Oneness of mind.

This text is one of the best proofs that the Lord Jesus and the Father are not one in person. He could not have prayed for all of the church to be one in person. It is a oneness of will, a full harmony of will, a oneness of purpose. The Lord said, “Not my will, but thine be done.” He thus came into full oneness, harmony with the Father—with the Father’s will, the Father’s plan. It is not a mutual concession, where each gives up some of his rights in -order to become- one: -His first work for dealing with the world of mankind—before He would become the world’s Saviour and the Mediator of the New Covenant—was the election of the church. This was the work which He had now begun, and He was committing to them the testimony. He desires that all the church have a oneness of purpose, a oneness of will with His will. And we can see that this could be obtained only in the one way—by fully surrendering our will. And this, the Scriptures declare, is done by becoming dead.

A man or woman is merely what his will is and what that will can make out of the body and its circumstances. And so at the very beginning of our discipleship, the first thing is to see that we are dead as respects our will, and alive toward the Lord Jesus Christ. All who do this He calls new creatures. He grants them the holy spirit, that the new mind, the new will, may be theirs. In proportion as they obtain the new mind, the new will, in that same proportion will the oneness with the other exist.

That which causes dissension amongst the Lord’s people is either a lack of loyalty or a lack of knowledge. If it is a lack of loyalty, they will gradually drift away. The Lord does not choose to force any of His family. He is choosing such as worship Him in spirit and in truth, such as are in every respect loyal. He has set aside for the purpose of selecting this class the entire Gospel Age. This work of selecting has been, in progress for over nineteen centuries. And this company will be a little flock. They will, evidently, be a very select class. They are required to walk by faith, not by, sight.

Not many have the loyalty to God and to righteousness to walk that way and to count the world” as loss and dross—as nothing, with all its projects. As the disloyal ones leave the ranks, more and’ more the loyal ones will find themselves drawn together, and more and more of oneness will be found among those who are faithful. This would necessarily be true in every.. time and in every country. All who are thoroughly faithful would desire to do the Father’s will; desire to lay down their lives in the Father’s service. And this desire would make them one.

The Lord speaks of their being perfected in one. As each individual member makes progress, he becomes more worthy to fill the place or use the opportunity provided for him. And thus the body, becomes more efficacious. But the thought that our Lord here expresses is rather that of completeness. He is referring to the end’ ,of the, age, when the work will be completed, perfected, when they will all be one. But the grand consummation will be effected by something which the Lord will Himself do. We find that, necessarily,

because of the differences of our flesh, we cannot in everything see exactly alike. Now we can only see more or less obscurely.

At present we cannot see fully and completely. Consequently there will always be more or less friction, even amongst those who are fully consecrated to do the Father's will. This friction should become minimised, as we become mature. But we cannot see eye to eye until the glorious consummation, when we shall have experienced the resurrection change, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." We are to have our trial in these imperfect bodies. And those who show their loyalty in fighting against the world, the flesh and the adversary, to the end, will be joint-heirs with Christ, sharers in His kingdom, executors of the divine programme for the blessing of the world of mankind.

At the epiphania, or bright shining, of the Lord's manifestation, God will have completed His present work of selecting the church, and the world will be informed that they are under a different dispensation. When the world shall have come to understand the matter fully, they will know the truth of our Lord's words, in His last prayer with His disciples, that the Father loves the church as He loves the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a very astonishing statement. It shows that there is nothing unselfish in our Lord. He did not say, "They will always be inferior to me. They will never have the glory that I shall have."

On the contrary, the Lord Jesus knows that the heavenly father will exercise His love along the lines of principle, character. And all who will be members of the same glorious company must have

the same glorious character that our Lord had; that is to say, they must be loyal to the core. They must have demonstrated that they loved righteousness and hated iniquity. We read, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Heb. 1:9.)

So He was anointed to be the Head of the church class. But the church class are declared in this Scripture to be His associates—not of inferiority, but of common fellowship, being on one plane. And the world will then know that the Father loved the church as He loved Jesus. We understand that the church will be on the same plane with her Lord Jesus. Nevertheless, we are to keep in mind that God "made Him to be Head over all—God blessed for ever." The church will never be on an equality of position with Christ.

This is very wonderful to us, that our heavenly Father should love us as He loved Christ, that the Lord would love the jewel, in the mire or wherever it might be found! The Lord Jesus has been selecting these characters out of the mire of human sin. And those who prove to be of the "more than conqueror" class—loyal as the Lord Jesus was loyal—the Father will love as He loved the Lord Jesus, and will glorify them with His Son.

"When thou passest through the waters,
I will be with thee!
Sure and sweet and all-sufficient
Shall His presence be.
All God's billows overflowed Him
In the great Atoning Day;
Now He only leads thee through them—
With thee all the way."

Pilgrim Way Ended

Word is to hand that our elderly Sister Middleton, of Queensland, finished the earthly way on the 13th May. Brother and Sister Middleton had been interested in the truth for over forty years, and since Brother Middleton ended his pilgrimage in recent years, Sister Middleton had no doubt felt lonely, being isolated in Maryborough, Queensland.

With the broadcasts of Frank and Ernest from Brisbane years ago they took an increased interest in the truth and witnessing to the message of the kingdom. These broadcasts were also arranged for Maryborough station at their request and expense, and after it was felt sufficient witness had been given in that country area, Sister Middleton thought otherwise, and arranged for the messages to continue from the "Dawn" brethren. We trust some real good has been done, and that our Sister has been faithful in her service for the truth in which she persevered right up to her death. The Lord knows those who are truly His, and grants the rewards accordingly.

SIR WINSTON ENJOYED HIS FUNERAL

UNDER the above heading, the following appeared in the press recently, from London,—”Sir Winston Churchill ‘thoroughly enjoyed’ his funeral, the clairvoyant wife of a Labor Member of Parliament said today.

“Mrs. Mary Rogers said in a radio interview that Sir Winston also approved of Harold Wilson as Prime Minister.

“Sir Winston is not the only British leader that Mrs. Rogers has communicated with. Others include Walpole, Disraeli and Gladstone.”

Students of God’s Word who understand the Bible teachings on the condition of the departed are not surprised at reports such as this. As all in the death condition are unconscious until the resurrection day, the Scriptures clearly state that deceptions of the kind above mentioned are carried on by wicked spirits, impersonating the departed and deceiving mediums who think they are in contact with deceased persons. Any of our friends who know people being deceived in this way are advised to procure the article—”Can the Living Talk with the Dead?”—mentioned in the report on the work of the Institute in this issue of “Peoples Paper.” Also the booklet “Spiritualism” is helpful and supplied at 10c, post paid.

The remark of one of the Apollo 10 astronauts, viewing the earth from 20,000 miles in space was, —”It’s just sitting out there in the middle of nowhere.” His words agree with Job 26:7—”He it is who spreads out the northern skies over emptiness and hangs the earth upon or over nothing.” (Amplified Version.)

Oxford Teachers’ Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, with Oxford Helps, Subject Index and Concordance, \$11.50.