



Volume XV. No. 12, MELBOURNE. 1st DECEMBER, 1932 Price —Twopence Halfpenny

## Our Gathering unto Him.

(Reprint from "Old Paths.")

"Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5.)

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming (parousia—presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him. that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled. neither by spirit. nor by word, nor by letter as from - that the day of Christ is at hand (2 Thess. 2:1

It would appear from the context of the Apostle's -, cowl epistle to the Thessalonians that the brethren at Thessalonica had 'become somewhat confused regarding the matter of the Lord's second coming. Certain teachers. in their midst. had misled them, apparently. into the idea that the second advent of the Lord had already taken place and they that were then living in the day of His presence.

This is not clear, however, from the Authorised Version the Bible. the reading .of which suggests. rather, that the Apostle was objecting to the' teaching that the second Advent of Christ was near. A comparison, nevertheless. with other versions of the Bible, together with the understanding that the word "coming" in verse is a mistranslation of the Greek word parousia—presence, makes clear what the Apostle had in mind. In this connection, lie undoubtedly takes strong exception to the new teaching which had come amongst them, claiming that they were already living in the Day of Christ. In confirmation of this view. we quote from the following translations :

Diaglott.—"That the day of Christ was present."

Moffat.—"That the day of the Lord is already here."

Conybeare and Howson.—"That the day of the Lord is come."

Their view, of course, was not that the Lord could be scot amongst them, as a man in the flesh. but 'that He was present as a spirit being, unseen and invisible to the- natural eye.

The Apostle, in taking exception to this teaching, did not characterise it as extremely foolish and ludicrous to believe that the Lord had returned and yet had not been seen by any of them ; nor did he suggest that, if He were present, as they were teaching, they would all be able to recognise Him in human form. such arguments were used by the Apostle, nor would they have been in accordance. with the

Scriptural teaching concerning the changed nature of our Lord and His ability. as a spirit being. to be present, yet invisible to human sight. ( John 3:6-8.)

So far as the manner of the Lord's appearing was concerned. therefore. the Apostle had no objection to find with their teaching ; but lie demonstrated their error as to the time of the appearing, for apparently they had either overlooked or forgotten certain features of prophetic truth, which- he had previously brought to their attention, and which unless already evident, entirely disproved this new teaching which they were setting forth as advanced light.

#### THE WICKED ONE REVEALED FIRST

In the first place, the Apostle reminds them that while he was present with them. he had made it clear that before the second Advent could take place, there would first coma a great falling away from the faith, and the of sin would be revealed. 'The Apostle understood doubtless. from Daniel's prophecy, in which is described the rising of the "little horn" and its plucking up of three other horns. (Dan. 7:8.)

'There was no evidence of such a falling away having taken place, however, in the Apostle's day, and consequently, lie points out to them that their claims regarding the Lord's presence were contrary to the prophetic word and therefore false and Misleading, in his estimation.

Another matter, which they had also overlooked, was the object of the Lord's return. Throughout the Scriptures. the thought of the Lord's return is always closely associated with that of its object—the gathering unto Himself of the bride class. The Lord said to the disciples before He left them: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself. ( John I 4:3.)

Similarly, in our text, these two thoughts are associated in the Apostle's exhortation, when he writes, "We beseech you, brethren, with the coming (parousia—presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ and by our gathering together unto Him"—as a consequence. (2 Thess. 2:1.)

If, then, their teaching was true and the Lord had indeed returned, surely there would be some evidence that their gathering unto Him had in some sense already begun. There was no evidence, however, of any gathering work in their midst. and the only reasonable conclusion to be drawn was that they had been deceived by their teachers, while that which they had accepted as new light was in reality only darkness. Briefly, then, the position was, that they had been misled regarding the matter of the time of the Lord's return, though their conception of the manner of His return was the correct and scriptural one.

Strange to say, many are making a similar mistake today, but in exactly the opposite direction—their mistake being in regard to the manner of the Lord's return. They recognise that the signs of the times, both in the world and amongst the Lord's people, indicate that we are living in the end of the Age, and that therefore the time for the Lord's return is clue, but they are looking for Him to appear in a human - body, and thus visible to the natural eye

Not understanding spiritual things, they think that the Lord is still a human being in heaven and thus are unprepared to appreciate the presence of the Lord as a spirit being—unseen by the natural eye. The position of such is that whilst appreciating that it is the due time for the Lord to appear, they are looking for the wrong thing at the right time.

#### THE MAN OF SIN HAS COME.

In our midst, to-day, there are some who are making the same claim as that made amongst the brethren at Thessalonica, namely, that the Day of Christ is here, and that the second Advent has already taken place;

furthermore, it is claimed by such, that the “gathering unto Him” of the Lord’s people is now in progress.

What have we to say to these claims? If they are true, then it is the most momentous thing that has happened since the beginning of the world, not only from the standpoint of the Lord’s people, but also so far as the world of mankind are concerned. If it is not true, our responsibility still remains, and it is our duty to expose it. If it is not true it is the greatest delusion that has come amongst the Lord’s people in these latter days, since it has resulted in influencing the faith and hope of thousands of the Lord’s sincerest followers. What would the Apostle say to such claims if he were in our midst to-day? Would he urge the same objections as recorded in our text and tell us

- (1) That the whole idea must be a snare, because the Man of Sin has not yet been revealed.
- (2) That since there is no evidence of any gathering work amongst the Lord’s people to-day, any such claims must be a delusion?

In regard to point one, we are quite certain that the Apostle would not urge any such objections to-day, because not only does history reveal that the Man of Sin has come and played his part, as outlined in the prophetic word, but to such an extent has he left his mark upon the records of history, that the period of his power and greatness is described as the Dark Ages.

As to the signs of His presence, all who are awake and watching to-day recognise that these signs are foretold by the Lord and the Apostles, are everywhere evident, not only in the world, but amongst the Lord’s people themselves.

#### GATHER MY SAINTS UNTO ME.

In reference to point two, most of us would agree that about 50 years ago a movement began amongst the Lord’s people, claiming for its very inception and inspiration

- (1) That the Lord had returned and that the day of His presence had arrived.
- (2) That the harvesting, or gathering home of the Lord’s people, had already begun.

No such movement had ever before taken place amongst the Lord’s people, unto that time. It is true that there had been, in other days, divisions and separations of a sectarian kind, sections following leaders, and divisions over doctrine, such as election and free grace but the movement to which we have just referred was of an entirely different character. The gathering of this day, which had its beginning a matter of 50 years ago, was not to any leader or sectarian cause, nor even around any particular doctrine. It was a call through the truth, to come out from every form of error and bondage and be gathered unto the Lord Himself, for, since the truth represents the unseen Lord, coming unto the truth implies, therefore, coming unto the Lord. Like all previous movements, the call of this day has not been an individual one and from every sect and denomination of Christendom. It was, in fact, the proclamation of a most momentous truth—“there standeth one among whom you know not,” or as expressed in the symbols of the Revelation, it was the sounding of the seventh trumpet. ( Rev. 11:15. )

#### FOR THE TRUMPET SHALL SOUND.

The key to the present outlook and harmony of the Divine Plan is, we believe, found in the seventh trumpet. If the seventh trumpet has not sounded, then the Lord has not returned, and all our talk about a harvest-work and the present truth is merely a delusion and a snare. Why do we say so? Because the Apostle, in the most precise and unmistakable language, tells us that the second Advent takes place at the

sounding of the seventh trumpet. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God. (1 Thess. 4:16.) The last, or seventh trumpet, is here designated the "trump of God": just as, in the same way, the last, or seventh seal, is called the "seal of the living God." (Rev. 7:2.)

If, on the other hand, as we shall hope to show, the seventh trumpet has sounded, it proves several things.

(1) That the day of Christ is here and that the second Advent has already taken place. This will be clearly seen when, later, we refer to various texts which describe the events said to transpire during the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

(2) That the dead in Christ are already gathered. It will be seen from the various references to the seventh trumpet

that the first thing which takes place when the Lord descends from heaven, is the raising of the sleep- in,, saints—"The dead in Christ shall rise first." (1 Thess. 4:16.)

(3) That the living in Christ, at the present time, are being gathered. This 'becomes very evident also from the Apostle's statement, when he declares that "after" the dead are raised "first," then we, the living, who remain, are to be caught up together with them, to "meet the Lord in the air." (1 Thess. 4:17, Diaglott.) . (4) That the Kingdom, in some sense, is now being set up. This is in harmony with the prophet Daniel's testimony, when he declares, "in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed . . . it shall break in pieces and consume all those kingdoms and it shall stand for ever." (Dan. 2:44.)

(5) That the sowing time of this Age is already in the past and that the reaping and gathering work is now in progress.

#### THE SEVENTH ANGEL SOUNDED.

We would now call attention to the following texts, each one of which, we believe, refers to the sounding of the seventh trumpet. It will be noted that in each instance, although the events transpiring are described from different angles, yet the general harmony and similarity of these events prove conclusively that they all occur during the same period of time, namely, the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

1 Cor. 15:52—"The trumpet shall sound and the .dead (in Christ) shall 'be raised incorruptible and we (the living in Christ) shall be changed."

Rev. 10:7—"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished"—the "mystery of God" to which reference is here made, is the call and development of the church, during the present Age. This mystery class will be 'finished and completed, when, during the Lord's second presence, the sleeping saints have been raised and the living ones changed and taken to be with Him beyond the veil.

Rev. 11:15—"The seventh angel sounded ; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the .kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ." This, in effect, expresses the object of the Lord's second Advent.

1Thess. 4:16—"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then, we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together (hama--during the same time) with them in the clouds, to meet the

Lord in the air.”

Matt. 24:31--He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” The reference here is clearly to the harvest work and the gathering of the living saints, through the proclamation of the present truth, by the Lord’s followers—his angels, or messengers.

Summarising the above texts, and comparing the events described in each, we can come to no other conclusion but that the trumpets spoken of in all of them refer to one and the same, namely, the seventh trumpet.

#### IN THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

We have already noted that abundant signs of the Lord’s presence have been clearly recognised by His . followers during the past 50 years; and since, as we have already seen, it is the seventh trumpet that announces His presence, it clearly follows, then, that if we accept the Lord’s presence as an established truth, we must at the same time be prepared to agree that the sounding of the seventh trumpet commenced a considerable number of years in the past. (1 .Cor. 15:51, 52.)

It will be noted, too, that in all the texts quoted above, having reference to the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the second presence of the Lord and the raising of the sleeping saints are inseparably intertwined. All three events are related and either stand, or fall, together. Consequently, if the sleeping saints have not been raised, then the Lord has not yet returned, and if the Lord has not returned, it follows that the seventh trumpet has not yet sounded. In the light of the Apostle’s statements, however, and the signs of the times, we can come to no other conclusion than that all three events must be regarded as accomplished facts.

The fact that none of the resurrected saints can be seen by the natural eye should be no obstacle to faith, and all who are spiritually minded can readily appreciate that spirit beings, in their normal state, are invisible to human sight. (John 3:8.) Only such as recognise the Lord’s presence and that already the saints have been raised and are with Him, can fully appreciate the cause of the present trouble upon the world. It is clearly the fulfilment of Daniel’s prophecy, which foretold that- a “stone cut out without hands” would smite the image of Gentile power and break it to pieces. (Dan. 2:34.)

#### WE SHALL BE CHANGED.

Not only do the Scriptures indicate that the gathering of the sleeping saints from death would be the first event resulting from the presence of the Lord, as heralded by the sounding of the seventh trumpet, but they also tell us that the gathering of the living saints would immediately follow—”for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.” (1 Cor. 15:52.)

While the gathering of the sleeping saints is but a momentary matter, we learn from the Scriptures that the gathering of the living would occupy a period of years, which our Lord terms the harvest time. (Matt. 13:30.) The harvest work implies not only their call out of Babylon and out of every form of bondage and error, in which they are found, through the message of present truth, but also their change from human to spiritual conditions, beyond the veil. This change takes place at the moment of death, and thus, from the time of the Lord’s second presence, the saints who die, no longer sleep in death, but are changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. (1 Cor. 15:51, 52.) Speaking of this class at the Lord’s return, the Revelator was instructed to write, “Blessed are the dead (the consecrated to death) who die in the Lord from henceforth.” (Rev. 14:13.)

Many of the Lord's people, not fully enlightened regarding spiritual things and the Apostle's teaching on this subject, have concluded that, at the Lord's return, 'they would not need to die at all, but that they would all be caught away bodily, at the same moment. This crude conception of the matter is partly due to the poor translation of the Apostle's words, which read: "Then we which are alive and remain (after the dead are taken) shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." (Thess. 4:17.)

The Greek word here translated together with, as shown in the Emphatic Diaglott, literally means at, or during the same time. The time under discussion, in the context, is the seventh trumpet, or parousia time, and the true meaning which the Apostle's language would convey is that, while the dead saints are raised at the beginning of the trumpet sound, the living ones who are left over would be changed and caught away at the moment of death, during the same trumpet period.

#### THE DAY OF CHRIST IS HERE.

Many who profess to believe that the Lord has returned the second time, give little evidence of having any clear conception of its object, and with not a few, this belief is of a very superficial kind. A true faith in the Lord's presence is much more than merely a belief in something we have heard. It must rest upon some reasonable grounds, which would thus become a basis for our belief. The Scriptural grounds for our faith in the Lord's presence embrace not only the chronological aspects of the present truth, but also the prophetic signs, which our Lord indicated would be recognised by the watchers as taking place, both in the world and amongst the Lord's people. (Matt. 24:30, 31.)

The attitude of many brethren towards this very important doctrine is more or less of a negative character. They "would not deny" it and would ever be "prepared to admit" its possibility. A true faith in the Lord's presence, however, is not merely an admission of its possibility, or a hesitation of denial. Such an attitude is not faith at all and counts for nothing in the Lord's sight. True faith arises from a positive conviction, based upon a reasonable foundation—the illumination of the mind by the spirit of truth. A true faith, moreover, is always followed by works or activities on the part of the believer, along the lines of his faith, for "faith without works is dead." (James 2:20.)

An intelligent faith in the Lord's presence would lead the consecrated and enquiring mind very quickly into further aspects of the harvest truth. A mind illuminated by the spirit of truth would naturally be prompted to enquire regarding the objects of His coming, and this, in turn, would lead not only to an understanding of the harvest work generally, but additionally, to an appreciation of the work of God amongst His people to-day. In this connection, the promise is that the spirit of truth would guide the child of God into all truth, as well as show him things to come. (John 16:13.)

HOW, then, shall we regard an attitude which professes faith in the Lord's presence and yet fails to appreciate either the general character or work of the harvest time? Surely such can be regarded only as a "faith without works," and which the Apostle James indicates is not a living faith at all.

Judging from the conditions prevailing generally amongst the brethren to-day, one might be inclined to think that the harvest work had completely failed and ended in confusion. This apparent failure, however, is not real, nor can it be so, since we are assured by the Scriptures that all God's purposes shall be accomplished His Word shall not fail. (Isa. 55:11.)

Carrying our minds back to the first Advent, in the end of the Jewish Age, we find that similarly the Lord permitted the Shepherd to be smitten and the sheep of the flock to be scattered. So literally was this fulfilled in the closing experiences of our Lord, that the record tells us His followers "all forsook Him and fled." (Mark 14:50.)

To the Scribes and Pharisees of that day it doubtless seemed that the Lord had made a failure of things and that all His teaching and propaganda had ended in a fiasco. This was but one side of the picture, however—the one as viewed by the natural mind. The other side, as viewed by the Heavenly Father, was indicated by the Master Himself when, before His death, He was enabled to say, “I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do.” (John 17:4.)

All that could be said in regard to the apparent failure of the Lord’s work, at the close of the Jewish harvest, might be repeated with tenfold emphasis to-day, at the close of the present harvest ; and yet, who that is spiritually minded and understands the work of God to-day would doubt that when the last member of the body has been gathered, it will be proclaimed by the victorious Christ complete, not only regarding the work of this day, but of the entire Age,—I have finished the work which the Heavenly Father gave me to do. That work was to call and prepare and gather home into the Kingdom the loyal and faithful Bride. Let all the Lord’s true followers clearly recognize that appearances count for little, so far ‘as the Divine will is concerned, and that out of all the apparent failures of the Lord’s work and despite the many delusions of this day, He will surely bring forth in due time the instrument of His will, for the blessing of all the human race.

#### PEOPLES PAPER.

Published by the Berean Biblical Institute, at National Bank Chambers, 226 Glenferrie Hawthorn, Melbourne 2.

(Monthly) 2,6 per annum, post paid,

While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression ‘seen, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

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# THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

Luke 2:8-20.

“Behold, I bring you good tidings of great (Luke 2:10.)

THE story of our Lord’s birth is one so familiar :IS to require no special comment, and yet in its simple details lies the hope of the whole world. Four thousand years previous the birth of this child was promised, and all the way along during those forty centuries sonic faithful souls continued to trust in the promises and to look for the salvation to be brought about through Him. We may surely take for granted that the humble shepherds to whom the message of the Lord’s advent first came were men who thus hoped in the promise of God; for to such, and to such only, the Lord disclosed His purposes.

These men were quietly tending their flocks by night when suddenly the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around about them ; and they were sore afraid (verse 9). But their fear was soon overcome by the message. of the angel, contained in our text, but which, strange to say, so many only partially quote, leaving out one of the grandest features of the message—viz., that it was to be to all people.

The message reads, “Fear not; for, behold I bring you good tidings of GREAT JOY which shall be to ALL PEOPLE.” It will be observed that the blessedness of these tidings is cumulative; first, it is “good tidings.” then it is “great joy,” and then the crowning feature of it is that it is “to all people”—not only to those shepherds who were that night looking for the hope of Israel, but for all their friends and relations and all mankind far and near, both to those who now live and to those who shall live, as well as to those now in death.

Blessed tidings! Hearken to the gladsome sound : “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour. which is Christ the Lord.” (Verse 11.) Then He was to be a saviour to all people : so the Scriptures clearly affirm, saying that, by the grace of God, He tasted death for every man, and that He gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time—to all. (Titus 2:9: I Tim. 2:6.) The testimony, however, is quite as necessary to the salvation of the sinner as the fact that Christ gave Himself a ransom for all. The favour of salvation will not be forced upon any; but the testimony that it has been provided for every man, on condition of his acceptance of the favour upon God’s terms, is to be given to every man, for his acceptance or rejection. And though millions of the race for whom, Christ died have gone down to the grave without such testimony, still the fact remains that the testimony shall be given in due time—which due time, to all such, must be after their awakening from death.

And to this agree the words of Lord: “The hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth; they that have done good (who during the present life have gone into judgment and who have passed their trial successfully, unto the resurrection of life, the full reward of the faithful; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment.” (John 5:25-29.) That is, the latter class will come forth from the grave to have the truth testified to them then, for their acceptance or rejection; and their final judgment of worthiness or unworthiness of life will be based upon their course under trial after the truth has been testified to them—in the Millennium’ Thus the angel of the Lord preached the good tidings of the restitution of all things to the shepherds on the plain of Bethlehem.

Verse 12. Then they were told where and how they should find this bud of promise, so that when they would see Him they might feel doubly assured that this was He.

Verses 13. 14. “Then suddenly there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly host praising God.

saying, Glory to God in the highest. and on earth peace: good will toward men.” This shows how the angels of God are interested in the affairs of men. and how they sympathise with us and rejoice over our prosperity. And this reminds us of other statements, to the effect that there is joy in heaven among the angels over one sinner that repenteth (Luke 15:7) : and again, that they are earnest students of the plan for human salvation: and that they are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. (1 Peter I:12; 110). 1:14). Thus we see them to be creatures of God full of loving benevolence even toward a fallen race, and esteeming it a privilege to serve the heirs of this salvation, although they know, as they studiously look into God’s plan. that some of this fallen race are by and by to be highly exalted, even above the angels who never sinned.

Thus we see their humble recognition of the right of the Creator to do what He will with His own, and their cheerful and joyful acquiescence in His perfect will. which they know to be determined by His unerring wisdom and His fathomless love. ‘Oh, what universal joy will prevail when the whole family of God in heaven and in earth is brought into fullest harmony under Jehovah’s Anointed!

Verses 15, 18 show the teachable attitude of the shepherds : they recognised the angels and their message as from the Lord. and, their fears being allayed. their hopes revived and their faith increased, they felt that they must go at once and see this which had come to pass. And when they had so determined, a strange star (evidently a meteor, as it could not have been a fixed star) appeared, moving in the direction which the angel had told them to go; and they followed the star until they reached Bethlehem, when it stood still over the place where the young child was. And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him and presented to Him gold and frankincense and myrrh, recognising in Him the long-promised Messiah. And being warned of God in a dream, they disregarded the request of Herod to inform him of the whereabouts of the new-born King, and so departed into their own country another way. But as they. went they published abroad the good tidings which the angels had brought to them, and how they had actually seen Him of whom the prophets testified.

Verse 19. “But Mary (motherlike) kept all these things and pondered them in her heart,” doubtless calling to mind also the message of the angel to her. (Luke 1:28-35). Again and again we seem to hear her say. “My soul doth magnify the Lord; . . . for He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden . . . He that is mighty hath done to me great things and holy is His name.” (Luke 1:46-49).

Verse 20. The shepherds returned to their flocks. fully assured of the wonderful truth that the promised seed of the woman who was to bruise the serpent’s head had come. and they rejoiced and glorified God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as they were told unto them.

## FOREVER WITH THE LORD

AS one by one the members of the Body of Christ are gathered I to me we are reminded of the words of John the Baptist: "He must increase, but I must decrease." The Church glorified increases while the Church in the flesh becomes fewer in number.

Those of our readers who have visited Adelaide will remember Sister Ruth Barrie, who passed away recently after a brief illness. Conscientious, studious, and of kindly spirit, our sister for quite a number of years has, we believe, faithfully trodden the narrow way of self-denial that leads to life.

While our sympathies go out especially to the members of her household—mother, sisters, and 'brothers—in the loss of such a loved one, yet we are also comforted with the thought that now that the race has been run, the course finished, there is the crown of righteousness granted to our sister, whose life surely gave evidence that she loved the Lord's appearing, 2 Tim. 4:8.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth ; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them," (Rev. 14:13.)

## CHRISTMAS CONVENTION.

THE Melbourne brethren have pleasure in announcing that the arrangements for their annual gathering are about complete. A syllabus has been drawn up covering afternoon and evening sessions, and setting out the programme extending over a period comprising Sun-day, Monday and Tuesday, December 25th, 26th and 27th . A copy of the syllabus may be obtained from the secretary or will be gladly forwarded to any desiring one.

The meetings will be held at Molesworth Chambers, 450 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, and a hearty invitation is extended to all consecrated believers in the ransom sacrifice of our Lord.

The friends here are looking forward to a profitable and enjoyable season spiritually, and are delighted to hear of brethren who contemplate coming amongst us from other parts and participating in sweet fellowship and happy association.

Provision can be made respecting a 'baptism service should any of the brethren desire to symbolise.

In reviewing the year fast closing we feel that the friends here, and no doubt those in other parts, have much for which to praise our heavenly Father. We gratefully acknowledge the manifold blessings bestowed, and pray that God's continued favour and smile may attend our Christmas gatherings as the clear brethren assemble for mutual encouragement, uplift and blessing.

We ask the prayers of our fellow members to the end that each and all present may be the recipients of that Divine grace which will prove a stimulus, a comfort and a joy in the daily sojourn and varied experiences attending the life of every true follower of the Master.

In order to finally complete our arrangements, we will be pleased to hear as quickly as possible from any of the Lord's people intending to be present during the Convention season, and can assure them of a very

hearty and appreciative welcome. Any requiring accommodation to be secured are asked to forward full information as to their needs in good time.

Kindly address communications to the Secretary. Berean Biblical Institute, National Bank Chambers, 226 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, E.2., Vic.

#### BOOKLETS, TRACTS, CARDS, &c.

The last edition of the booklet, "Where are the Dead?" has become exhausted, but as it has been so greatly in demand and is appreciated by many of our friends, some of whom have been 'brought to a knowledge of the truth by the explanations presented, a further edition has been decided upon and is now on the press.

No thoughtful person can surely fail to give some attention to the condition of departed loved ones; and it is when the Lord's Word is carefully examined and explained on this matter, as it is in this booklet, that satisfaction is brought to both heart and mind.

Friends desiring copies may send their orders at any time, and those unable to purchase may have a copy free upon request. The price is 3d. per copy or 2/6 per dozen.

We trust that the re-issue of this booklet may still accomplish much good to the glory of God, by assisting many more to a clear understanding of the Bible, by which they will be guarded against the many deceptions of our day along the lines of spiritualism, etc.

A good supply of tracts is now just in from the printers on the topic, "Why Sorrow, Sin, Death and Evil are Permitted." These may be obtained by all friends who are zealous for the welfare of others, but we advise that they be not cast too broadcast—rather handed out with discretion and a word to encourage reading, and to enclose in letters.

Many thinkers today are wondering why certain happenings are so, and we trust that some help and comfort may be conveyed by this tract to those who can receive its message, and those friends assisting in this work will undoubtedly be much blessed themselves.

At this time of the year many of our readers enquire about greeting cards for Christmas and general use, and so as to provide a wider assortment to our stock, a new series has been prepared by the printers.

These are not specially Christmas cards, but have been chosen more for the value of the verses, and so are 'suit-able' for all seasons. Many of the Lord's people have been encouraged and blessed by some helpful words in times of trial, and in this connection we quote from a letter of a dear friend just to hand still have that list card sent me when I was getting the Bibles in 1926, 'If I Could Know,' and feel it is part of me; and like the woman in the Bible I feel I can say I have seen a man who told me all that ever [did, and can realise, 'My presence shall go with thee.' "

Orders for the cards can be filled immediately, and the price is 1/4 per dozen or 9d. per half-dozen posted.

## The Test of Endurance.

“Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast him—self as he that putted) it off.”—1 Kings 20:11.

THE test Of endurance is certainly one of the severest tests of faithfulness to which the elect Church, the Body of Christ, is subjected. It is the test which gauges and registers the strength of every other virtue and grace, and no soldier of the cross will be crowned with the laurels of victory who has not stood this test. The Christian life is a warfare, and the above words of one of the kings of Israel to a ‘boastful enemy of the Lord’s people are applicable, not only to every new recruit in the Lord’s army, but, similarly, to all who have not yet finished the good fight of faith.

The first gush of enthusiasm in the Lord’s service, much as we may and do appreciate it, may be but the hasty production of the shallow soil of a heart which immediately receives the truth with gladness, but, having no root in itself, endures but for a time, and afterward, when affliction and persecution arise, immediately is offended. (Mark 4:16, 17.) Such characters cannot stand the fiery tests of this “evil day,” whereof it is written: “The fire (of that day) shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is.” (1 Cor. 3:13.)

### NECESSITY FOR THE WHOLE ARMOUR

Therefore, says the Apostle Peter, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though sonic strange thing happened unto you.” Peter 4:12). All of the elect Church must be so tried; and blessed is lie that shall endure unto the end. The sure Word of prophecy points to severe conflicts and great trials in the closing scenes of the Church’s history. Elijah, a type of the Body of Christ, finished his earthly career anti went up by a whirlwind in a chariot of fire—strong symbols of storms and great afflictions. John, another type of the Church, was cast into prison and then beheaded. And we are forewarned of the great necessity of the whole armour of God, if we would stand in this “evil day.”—”Studies in the Scriptures,” Series 2, chapter 8.

It therefore behooves every one who aspires to the prize of our high calling to brace himself for the severer conflicts and trials of faith and patience that may suddenly and without a moment’s warning be sprung upon him. In the ‘battle of this day, as in all other battles, the effort of the Enemy is to surprise and suddenly attack and overwhelm the Lord’s people ; and the only preparation, therefore, that can be made for such emergencies is constant vigilance and prayer and the putting on of the whole armour of God—’the Truth and the spirit of the Truth.

### WHICH WAY WILL YOU TURN?

“In your patience possess ye your souls.” No other grace will be more needed than this in the fiery ordeals of this “evil day”; for without great patience no man can endure to the end. All along the Christian’s pathway, ever and anon, he comes to a new crisis; perhaps these are often seemingly of trivial importance, yet he realises that they may be turning-points in his Christian course. Who has not realised them? There comes a temptation to weariness in well-doing, together with the suggestion of an easier way; or there springs up a little root of pride or ambition, with suggestions of ways and means for feeding and gratifying it. Then there conies, by and by, the decisive moment when you must choose this course or that; and lo, you have reached a crisis!

Which way will you turn? Most likely you will thin in the direction to which the sentiments you have cultivated have been tending, whether that he the right way or the wrong way. If it ‘be the wrong way, most likely you will be unable to discern it clearly; for your long cultivated sentiments will sway your judgment. “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is the way of death.” , (Pros. 14:12.) How necessary, therefore, is prayer, that in every crisis we may pass the test successfully! Nor can

we safely delay to watch and pray until the crisis is upon us; but such should our constant attitude.

#### THOSE WHO OUTRIDE THE TRIALS WILL BE THE OVERCOMERS.

The life of a soldier, ever on the alert and on duty, is by no means an easy life ; nor do the Scriptures warrant any such expectation. On the contrary. they say. “Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ”; “Fight the good fight of faith,” etc. And yet many Christian people seem to have the very opposite idea. Their ideal Christian life is one without a breeze or a storm; it must be one continuous calm. Such a life was indeed inure possible in former days than now, though the world, the flesh and the Devil always have opposed them, and always have had to be resisted by every loyal soldier of the cross. But now the opposition is daily becoming more and more intense; for Satan realises that his time is short, and he is determined by any and every means to exert his power against the consummation of the Lord’s plan for the exaltation of the Church.

Consequently, we have had within this Harvest period many and severe storms of opposition and still there are doubtless more severe trials to follow. But those who, with overcoming faith, outride them all—who patiently endure, who cultivate the spirit of Christ with its fruits and graces, and who valiantly fight the good fight of faith, rather than withdraw from the field—such will be the “overcomers” to whom the laurels of victory will be given when the crowning day has come.

## Christ in You : The Hope of Glory.

(Col. 1:27-29).

THOSE who accept of Christ's teachings and follow Him in entire consecration of every power and talent to God's service, become infused with the same desire to do the will of their Father in heaven. These have the same mind as Jesus—a mind, or will, to sacrifice self in the carrying out of God's plans—a spirit or mind, dead to the praises and scoffs, the hopes and fears of the world, but alive and active to the heavenly smiles or frowns, prizes or losses.

The spirit or mind of Christ, thus received, bears fruit in every action, word and thought; some of which are mentioned by Paul—love, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, patience, godliness (God-like-ness).

These graces, these fruits, grow gradually — the rapidity of the growth depending upon the nature of the soil, the purity of the seed (example followed), and the amount of moisture and sunlight of truth (the Word) with which the ground and seed are supplied. If we would have increase of the spirit of Christ, and bear much fruit, how important that we be particular to have pure seed—following only our Master—and that we keep out from the shadow and shelter of all human creeds, and let the sunlight of heaven and the refreshing dew of truth into our hearts, by lifting them to heaven for these, as do the flowers for the natural. Such shall receive from the heavenly store—the Word.

This continual and increasing growth of the fruits is not only expressed by Jesus as above, but the apostles urge the “increase of the fruits of your righteousness,” and that we be “filled with the fruits of righteousness.” (2 Cor. 9:10 ; Phil. 1:11).

As it is natural for a good tree to bring forth good fruits; so all who have received really of the spirit of Christ will ultimately- show it. It was Jesus who said, “By their fruits ye shall know them.”

Christianity is much misunderstood- to-day, and many that bear thistles are members of the nominal church, and thus pretend to be members of the “true Vine” ; but by their fruits ye shall know them. “If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” ( Rom. 8:9). This is a searching test for all; let us each apply it to ourselves. Do I (as Jesus), “do not mine own will,” but God's? Do I seek to please not myself, nor my fellows, but God only? Do I present myself daily and hourly a living sacrifice, for right and truth, and in- just the way God's Word (not my feeling) directs? If so, this is' Christ in me, and is a good basis for the “hope of glory” promised to those who walk in His footprints..

This spirit of Christ—or renewed mind — is the anointing which we have received, and it is an evidence to you, and to others that your consecration is complete; that you are begotten to the higher (divine) nature which God has promised to those who so walk in the Spirit; that you are members of the Christ (the anointed body, of which Jesus is the Head).

So, then, Christ is manifest in your mortal body. (2 Cor. 4:11). When the world sees you it sees a member of the Christ, not in glory, but in the flesh ; and in us as in our Head, only to a less degree, it is still true—God is manifest in the flesh.( 1 Tim. 3:16).

Thus, for “me to live is Christ” (Phil. 1:21). In this sense, Christ in the flesh is still in the world as its teacher and reprover—illustrating the word and love of God. All the body following the Leader have been “despised and rejected of men.” There is no beauty in any of them that they should be desired of the world. Soon, when manifested with the Head, as the agency for blessing the world, they will desire them. They desire deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the liberty Of sons of God, and will soon come to know Him whom, for 1800 years, they ignorantly rejected, thinking Him weak and powerless.

Then “the Desire of all nations shall come” into power and glory for their deliverance.

During all the age we find it true, and an evidence that we are in the Leader’s footsteps. that the world loveth us not. Jesus said, “Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated Me before it hated you.” “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own!” “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” And “Whosoever will live godly shall suffer persecution.”

Any who think they are being carried to glory on “flowery ‘beds of ease,” should awake to the fact that our Master trod the narrow, thorny way. Now is not the time to glory in ease in the lap of the world, but a time to “fill up that which is ‘behind of the afflictions of Christ.” •

We suffer as members of the Christ of which the prophets spake when they testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ (during this age), and the glory that should follow.

To him that overcometh—self, ease, the world—even unto death. “shall be the Victor’s crown.”

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