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The Ransom and Sin Offering.

THAT all men are sinners from the Divine viewpoint no one who accepts the word of God would question. The Bible uniformly declares so, and attributes the present reign of evil with all its accompaniments of sickness, pain and death, to the entrance of sin into the world; as the Apostle declares, "by the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world and death by sin," and so death "passed upon all men." (Rom. 5:12). It tells additionally of a time when there was no imperfection, no sin, and no death; of a time when the human family, as represented in the first pair, were in fullest harmony with their God and Creator; but when sin entered, all fellowship with God ceased, the death sentence was pronounced, and man became an easy prey to the great adversary—Satan (Gen. 3:19-24). As a consequence, the history of the race during the past six thousand years might be briefly summed up in the words of the Apostle Paul when he declares "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." (Rom. 8:22).

Hope for All.

While this is true of the race generally, at the same time, God assures us in His word that the case of the human family is not a hopeless one. The present disabilities of the race are not of their own desire but form part of the curse imposed by a wise Creator, who meanwhile has not left them without some hope for the future. (Rom. 8:20). What that hope is, He further informs us, viz., that the "creation itself (human family) also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. 8:21). Now, it is concerning this hope and the method which God has adopted to bring about their deliverance, in which we are specially interested in this connection. •

The Divine Law Unchangeable.

While from a purely physical standpoint nothing is impossible with God, yet from the moral point of view there are certain things which God could not and would not do. The Apostle tells us that "He cannot deny Himself." (2 Tim. 2:13). "He cannot lie." (Num. 23:19). To do so, would be to act contrary to His own law.

God is loving and wise, and therefore could not act in an unloving or unwise manner towards any of His creatures. He is also just, and therefore could not override or set aside His own law. To do so would be a violation of Justice, the underlying principle of the Divine Government (Psa. 69:14). How, then, could

there be any hope for the human family under such circumstances. The trial in Eden was fair and impartial, and the penalty a just one, and since God changes not and cannot set aside His own law, how, then, can there be any hope whatever?

Divine Wisdom to the Rescue.

The scriptures inform us that God's wisdom, prompted by love, has devised a scheme whereby He can be merciful to the sinful race and yet not violate any principle of His own government. We are further informed that in carrying out this plan, He will be "just and yet the Justifier of all who believe in Jesus." (Rom. 3:26). The Plan adopted provides for a Redeemer—one who could correspond in value to, and provide a Ransom for the sinner — and thus meet the requirements of the Divine Law. This Plan for man's recovery, though the essence of wisdom from the Divine standpoint, is regarded from the viewpoint of the worldly wise as altogether foolishness (1 Cor. 1:18). This hope of a deliverer who would thus ransom the condemned race, is not only an established doctrine of the New Testament, but is also clearly taught in the Law and by the Prophets of the Old Testament, (Hosea 13, 14; Exodus 30:12). The result of the operation of this Plan towards the human family is scripturally termed atonement (at-one-ment) (Rom 5: It). The term "atonement" literally means a covering, and suggests the thought of covering or hiding, in the sense of removing an offence which separates two parties. So far as God and the human family are concerned, atonement, from the legal standpoint, will be completed when the Adamic offence, which brought the death penalty upon all mankind, has been removed (Rom. 5:17-19). Atonement, however, as outlined in the Divine Plan, implies more than merely the providing of a Ransom; it implies the additional thought of a work done or accomplished by means of that Ransom price. In other words, to effect an atonement it is not only necessary to provide a Ransom price, but it is additionally necessary to offer and pay that price as a means of propitiation. These two aspects of atonement are generally termed the "Ransom" and the "sin-offering." The "Ransom" is the price or valuable thing itself, while the sin-offering represents the work accomplished by means of that price. The outcome of both is an atonement (Exodus 30:11-15). Failure to note this clear distinction between these terms often leads to their misapplication, and consequently, to a misunderstanding of the whole subject.

Jesus the Ransom.

In the case of the human family, a perfect man sinned and committed the offence which brought the death penalty. Consequently, Justice would not be appeased by anything less than the life of another perfect man, which would atone for that offence. God's law demands an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a life for a life, therefore, no member of the imperfect or fallen race could be a "Ransom," or corresponding price, to offset the offence of the perfect man who sinned (Psa. 49:7). An angel, though perfect and sinless, could not be a "Ransom" for the race because angels are of a higher plane of life and therefore would not correspond to a perfect man. John the Revelator calls our attention to the fact that no one, either in heaven or earth, or under the earth was worthy to be the "Ransom" and thus open the Book of the Divine Plan (Rev. 5:3). When there was thus no eye to pity and no arm to save, God Himself provided the "Ransom" in the person of His own Son (Rev. 5:6). In this we have one of the grandest exhibitions of God's love. There was no obligation on God's part, from the standpoint of Justice, to provide a "Ransom," or even to accept one, had the human family been able to provide it. It was because God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son (John 3:16). Jesus was not the "Ransom" in His pre-human state. As already indicated, the Law of God required that the Ransomer should be one on the same plane of life and thus be a price to correspond to the one who sinned (Heb. 2:14). Nor was He the "Ransom" as the Babe of Bethlehem. It was only when He had come to manhood's estate, having kept the law and demonstrated His right to eternal life, that He was in a position to offer Himself as the Divinely-provided Lamb (John 1:29).

Jesus, the Sin-Offering.

Though Jesus, as a perfect man, was the “Ransom” or equivalent value to satisfy the broken law, yet had he retained his human life, none of the race would have been benefited. It is one thing to possess a “Ransom,” or price sufficient to purchase any object in view, but quite another matter to secure that object by relinquishing the price to the owner, thus making payment for same. The sin-offering pictures the latter thought. Our Lord offered His human life rights (blood) to Justice in order to purchase the life rights that were lost. The ransom is the valuable thing—the price; the sin-offering shows what is done with that value or price. In the tabernacle picture, the Most Holy was the place where the blood of the sin-offering had to be taken in order to make satisfaction for sin, so too in the anti-type, in order to make satisfaction to divine Justice as the anti-typical sin-offering our Lord had to ascend into heaven itself (anti-typical Most Holy), and there relinquish for ever all claims to His human life rights, typified by the blood of the bullock (Lev. 16:14). The sacrifice and sufferings of our Lord, which began at Jordan and culminated on the cross, were all essential and incidental to the payment of the “Ransom” price. This was accomplished when our Lord appeared in the presence of the Father. That He might be fitted to accomplish this work for the race, our Lord had to receive a spiritual nature, first the begetting of the spirit at Jordan and later the full spiritual life at His resurrection (I Peter 3:18). From the foregoing, it will be seen that the price was not paid, nor was satisfaction made for anyone when the Lord died upon the cross. His death was a necessary step towards that end, and corresponds, in type, to the High Priest passing under the second veil. Nor was Justice met for anyone when our Lord on the third day was raised from the dead. This was also a necessary step, and corresponded to the Priest rising from under the second veil. It was only when He ascended upon high, which was represented by the Priest approaching the Mercy seat, that our Lord’s sacrifice was presented to, and accepted by Justice, on behalf of Himself (His members—the consecrated). (Lev. 16:6, Heb. 9:24).

Sharing His Afflictions.

Just as the afflictions of our Lord and Head, incidental to His becoming the sin-offering, are pictured by what was done with the bullock on the typical Day of Atonement, so also the share which the members of the Body have in His affliction and sin-offering, is portrayed by the experiences of the Lord’s Goat. It will be noted, too, that as in the type, the bullock was offered for the Priest and His house, and the Goat for the People; so now, our Lord, as the anti-typical bullock, has so far only made an offering of His blood (human life) for the consecrated—His prospective members (Himself). Later, during this anti-typical day of atonement, He will, through His members (goat class), offer for the people, the world in general. (Lev. 16:15). Failing to keep in mind the clear distinction between the “Ransom” and the “Sin-offering,” some have concluded that there is no practical difference; and that to teach that the followers of Christ share in the Sin-offering would be tantamount to claiming for them a share in the Ransom. There is no reasonable ground, however, for such a conclusion. The Ransom represents the value provided in our Lord, to make atonement possible for the race. Whilst all Bible students will agree to this, yet only the few can appreciate the fact that there is a feature of the Plan (mystery) hidden in types and parables, etc., relating to a class who not only share with our Lord in His glory but also in His sacrificial sufferings and death. (Rom. 6:3).

Our Lord alone possessed that inherent value (Ransom price) necessary to start the work of atonement, and which constitutes the basis of atonement for all mankind; but if, in His matchless wisdom, our Heavenly Father has so arranged the Plan that a class who had already received the atonement, should be associated with our Lord and privileged as His members to carry forward that atonement already begun, why should that be considered as in any degree either adding to, or detracting from the Ransom value of our Lord? The Lord’s merit, of itself, was sufficient to atone directly for all, had it been so arranged in the Divine Plan, and it is purely a matter of grace and mercy on the part of our Heavenly Father to permit the members of Christ to share with their Head in the world’s atonement. The same lesson is taught in the

typical day of atonement. The bullock alone had the value necessary 'to start the work of atonement for Israel, but having thus opened the way for atonement, the Lord's goat--an animal of much less value— was permitted to join in the national sin-offering of Israel (Lev. 16:15).

The Church Shares in the Sin-Offering.

That the Church shares in a sacrificial sense in the sufferings of her Lord, all who accept the Scripture will agree. (Rom. 12:1). What some, however, do not so readily appreciate, is the fact that this sacrifice in its collective sense, as representing the body of the world's High Priest, forms a part of this anti-typical day of atonement sin-offerings. (Isa. 53: to).

The Apostle in Rom. 6:10-at tells us that our Lord died, not because he was sinful in any degree, but unto or on account of sin. In other words, he was a sin-offering. Then, addressing the Lord's followers, he says, "Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves (as His members) to be dead indeed unto Sin." The death referred to in this and the previous verses of the chapter is not the Adamic or penal death but the sacrificial death—"buried with Him by Baptism into Death." (Rom. 6:4). All who are dead with the Lord in this sense, the

Apostle tells us (verse 7), were previously justified from sin, consequently, there is no other sense in which they could be said to die unto sin, other than that in which the Lord Himself died— a sin-offering. (2 Cor. 5:21). A similar thought is given us in 1 Cor. 15:29, "Baptised for the Dead." The dead world of mankind is evidently referred to in this verse, and there seems no other way in which the Lord's followers could be baptised for them, except as above suggested, i.e., by being baptised into the Lord's death and sharing with Him, as a part of the sin-offering, to purchase them from under the death penalty. The same Apostle, in speaking of the Memorial Cup (wine) (1 Cor. 10:16), tells us that it symbolises the communion (common union) of the blood of Christ. Likewise, the loaf in symbol represents the communion of the Body of Christ. This deeper and secondary meaning does not, of course, preclude the primary thought expressed elsewhere, viz., that the eating of the bread and drinking of the cup represent the believer appropriating to himself the life and blessing now available through our Lord's sacrifice and death. (Matt. 26:26-28). It will be the privilege of those, who in this age, follow in the Master's steps to share with Him in every aspect of His Kingdom, Glory and Office, and it is also their blessed privilege here, not only to share in His sufferings in a general sense, but to have fellowship with Him in every work and office in which He participated this side of the veil. The "Ransom," which is neither a work nor an office, but an inherent value, was found only in our Lord Himself. (Rom. 5:6).

This He did Once. (Heb. 7:27).

It has been suggested that this text is in direct opposition to the thought, that the Lord's followers share with Him in the atonement work. When rightly understood, however, we do not think that this verse reveals any lack of harmony on this point, but rather emphasises what has already been stated. The Book of Hebrews, generally, is a book of contrasts between type and anti-type. This verse contrasts what was done by the High Priest on the typical day of atonement, with that which the greater High Priest (Christ) does in the anti-type. Paraphrasing the Apostle's words, it would read somewhat as follows:—Israel's typical High Priest, in making atonement for the nation, required to offer the same sacrifices— a bullock for Himself and a goat for the People—year by year, continually. The reason for this was that the sacrifices of bulls and goats could never really cancel the sins of the nation. They were merely a shadow of the better sacrifices. The world's High Priest, on account of His superiority of office and ability to cancel sin once for all, requires to do this same thing only once in the anti-type. The bullock for Himself and the goat for the people offered in the type, continually, represented in this anti-typical Day of Atonement, our Lord offering first His human life at Jordan, and later his members at Pentecost. No repetition of this will ever be required. By placing the emphasis of contrast on the proper words, the

thought of the verse is easily followed: This High Priest needeth not daily (continually), as those High Priests (in type) to offer up sacrifice (first for His own sin and then for the people) for this He did once when He offered up Himself (Head and Body). It will be noted that the pronoun “this” agrees with the word “sacrifice”; while the intervening words. “First for His own sins and then for the people” are parenthetical, and merely explain, in detail, of what the Day of Atonement sacrifice consisted both in type and anti-type._

We have an Altar. (Heb. 13:10).

Here we have a further contrast between the typical and the anti-typical atonement days. We (Christians) have an altar of (consecration and sacrifice), corresponding to the typical day of atonement Altar, whereof they had no right to eat, who serve the tabernacle (as Priests). The Law of Moses’ prohibited the Priests from eating any part of the sin-offering on the Day of Atonement, whereas-it was. definitely specified that those offered on other days had to be partly eaten by them. The significance of this will be appreciated when we see that on the typical day of atonement, the Priest was, in figure, offering Himself representatively in the animals. To eat of the sacrifice on that day would, from the anti-typical standpoint, imply that the professed Christians of this Age, whilst claiming to have consecrated their all to the Lord, were seeking some earthly advantage in so doing. The blood (life value) of the sin-offering on that day was offered to Jehovah on behalf of the nation. We then, as .anti-typical Priests, if we make a proper consecration to the Lord, have the anti-typical atonement day altar, and may not eat—appropriate any benefit from the sacrifice laid thereon. Ours, like our Lord’s life, is given up for the benefit of others.

Without the Camp. (Heb. 13:13).

The three aspects of the sin-offering—type and anti-type—are shown in this connection.

1. The Altar in the Court (verse 10) representing our consecration and that of our Lord’s as living sacrifices, faithful unto death.

2 In verse 13, the camp condition, outside of which our Lord went and where his followers are also exhorted to go.

3 The Golden Altar in the Holy (verse 15), where the Priest offered incense before passing beyond the veil.

This represents praise, prayer and fellowship with our Heavenly Father. In verse 12, Jesus is said to sanctify—make holy and free from sin—the people. To some, this statement seems out of harmony with the record of Lev. 16:5, 6 and 15—a bullock for “Himself” and a goat for the “People.” There is no real lack of harmony, however, when we realise the two standpoints from which the relationship of our Lord to His members may be viewed. From the Divine standpoint, they are regarded as only one sacrifice—one Priest, while from the viewpoint of their actual outworking, as shown on the Day of Atonement, we see two distinct offerings. In Heb. 9:7, a similar view is given; the offering for “Himself” and the “People” is said to be one blood; whereas, the same thing is typically represented in Lev. 16:14-15, as the blood of the bullock for “Himself” and the goat for the “People.” The Divine viewpoint is also expressed in 1 John 2:2. The Ransom value in Jesus was essential to the propitiation for all, but this does not preclude the thought, that in the outworking the body members share with their head.—Extracts from “Old Paths.”

Laid on Thine altar, O my Lord Divine
Accept this gift to-day for Jesus' sake,

I have no jewels to adorn Thy shrine
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make.

But here I bring, within my trembling hand.
This will of mine—a thing that seemeth small,

And Thou alone, O Lord, canst understand
How, when I yield Thee this, I yield mine all.

Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne Christmas Convention will be held again this year, D.V. This early announcement is made for the benefit of friends desiring to make arrangements in good time. A hearty invitation is extended to all able to be present, and the dates and other information will appear in later issues.

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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,

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Light Shall Yet Prevail

MILNER, in describing the condition of the world of mankind when the Saviour was born and The Church established at Pentecost, says: "Christianity found mankind in a universal state of sin and misery. In Judea alone something of the worship of the true God existed. The forms of the Mosaic economy subsisted, but were greatly obscured and corrupted with Pharisaic traditions and Sadducean profanities. The ancient people of God had defiled themselves with heathen profligacy, and though there wanted not a multitude of teachers among them, yet when He who knew what was in man saw the spiritual condition of this people, He was moved with compassion because they fainted and were as sheep without a shepherd."

. . . "Such was the dismal. night in which the 'Sun of Righteousness' made His appearance in the world. Scarcely in any age had ignorance and wickedness a more general prevalence."

Such was the dark night of sin, ignorance and superstition at the first advent of Christ. "He was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." John 1:10,11 Even the people of God had fallen into error and paid more attention to their own traditions than to the Word of God. Indeed that is just of what Jesus accused them, "Ye have made the commandments of God of none effect by your traditions." (Matt. 15:6-9; Mark 7:5; 6.)

The Scriptures clearly show that the world would be in similar darkness at the second coming of Messiah. The Master's own words are: "When the Son of Man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?" The prophets and Apostles all agree concerning the godless condition that would prevail at that time. "As in the days of Noah, so shall the days of the Son of Man be"; and those even who profess to be the Church of Christ will, while "having a form of godliness, deny the power thereof." Peter says, "even denying the Lord that bought them," and the majority of preachers today deny that the Lord bought them with His precious blood. (1 Peter 1:18, 19.) The Gospel that Christ proclaimed and that Paul so clearly taught, i.e., that "the wages of sin is death," and so "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures," is being discarded, and the churches are more like societies for social enjoyment and teachings calculated to encourage good citizenship.

Some little time ago Cardinal MacRory, the Papal Legate, speaking in Auckland, New Zealand, referred to the godless conditions, and said: "The campaign against Christianity and God which had begun in Russia was fast becoming world-wide. The laying of the foundations of a new paganism, worse than that of Greece and Rome, could be counteracted successfully only by the concerted action of all Christian people. That was why the Pope was urgently calling upon the Catholic laity to engage Catholic action, as an organised campaign had to be met by organised forces."

When we consider the extent to which the Papal Church is based on pagan teachings, practices, ceremonies and festivals, and the wicked doings and cruelties enacted during the Dark Ages, when the Pope claimed to be King of Kings and Lord of Lords and many other great swelling titles, one wonders how much worse the "new paganism" can be. The paganism of the Roman Catholic Church is and has been bad enough—it is more pagan than Christian. Indeed, the great Papal system is a wonderful masterpiece of Satan. When Christianity began to take hold of the people and its success could not be prevented by persecution, it seems the great Adversary adopted a method of inducting pagan teachings and practices, vestments, titles, etc., and thus what he could not do by persecution he accomplished in this way. The Gospel was so polluted, its light was dimmed—"the sun was darkened" and the "dark ages" followed; History tells the story and demonstrates that the Roman Church was no longer Christian, but is referred to in the Revelation as the great Antichrist,

As education and enlightenment increased, with such foolish teachings and absurd stories of miracles such as St. Francis preaching to the fishes, who listened with their heads out of the water, etc.; the empty ceremonies and doctrines of demons, purgatory, etc., a great number of people have turned away from the Christian religion altogether, and, without searching for themselves to see what the Bible teaches, have simply become agnostics and atheists. It was because of the same condition in the Greek Church that Russia flung the whole thing aside and has taken the sad step of ignoring God. Thus there is the "no God" propaganda. So, to-day, we may observe the spectacle of one system of Satan fighting against another system of Satan. The Lord's words are that "if Satan cast out Satan he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?" All this is a further indication that the Gospel Age is about ended and the "heavens" (the religious systems) will pass away with a great noise, and the "earth" (national and social structure) will be destroyed in a fiery time of trouble.

Certain it is that the world is getting more and more ungodly, more and more pleasure loving and self-seeking, and utterly careless respecting religion, thus fulfilling many Scriptural prophecies. (1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-6, etc.)

It was when darkness prevailed in the beginning that the spirit of the Lord moved upon the waters and commanded, "Let there be light." It was when the world was spiritually, socially and morally in gross darkness that Christ the "Light of the world" appeared, and now again "darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people," notwithstanding all the advantages of our day, and soon the Sun of Righteousness will arise and scatter all the vapours of superstition and error. The Kingdom will be established just in its right time; man's extremity will be God's opportunity to turn their hearts from idols to serve the living God.

The Lord's Kingdom at Hand.

IN studying the matter of the establishment of Christ's Kingdom on earth, of which so much is stated in the Scriptures, it is well that an understanding of Biblical predictions be first of all gained, and then the events transpiring in the world may be viewed in the light of such Scriptural authority. That we are at present, and have been for some time, living in a period of extraordinary happenings throughout the whole world, most people will admit, but the Lord's people are not dependent only upon worldly conditions—"men's hearts, failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth"—in arriving at right conclusions, for they have "a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn." The fact that "men's hearts are failing them," at the present time, is merely a confirmation of our faith in the sure Word of Prophecy.

Taking, then, "Thy Word as a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway," we are led to see at least four or five important and clearly marked signs or indications which would necessarily need to be in evidence and completed before the Lord's Kingdom would be established on earth. One of the first of these signs, given us by the prophet Daniel, is the increase of knowledge. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased . . . in the time of the end." Dan. 12:4. It is needless to elaborate upon these words; our daily papers testify to their fulfilment. The fact to be noted is that it would be in "the time of the end" when this fulfilment would take place, and the record of many being "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God"—"in the last days" (2 Tim. 3:1-5)—seems so closely linked with "running to and fro."

A second sign revealed from God's Word is to be found in Christendom, nominal Christianity, indicating the Lord's favour withdrawn. The message in Rev. 3:14-22, to the Laodicean Church, undoubtedly refers in its historical application to the days in which we are living—the last or seventh period of the church's history. How sad a state is revealed by the words—"These things, saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness (the Lord Himself, who sees all things) . . . I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Christendom as a whole, Roman Catholic and Protestant, is surely rich in wealth of this world, possessing beautiful cathedrals, churches, and institutions, but yet she is poor indeed concerning the real riches of Christ—"The light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee." Rev. 18:23, 1-3. Within the last few days we have heard from two new readers who have certainly observed this "sign," and quote their words in brief—"I do not go to church, as there is so little of the Gospel truth given out from the pulpit, but an embellished address or a little fine oratory from an apt young clergyman which he feels will please his congregation, rather than the simple truth." Another says—"Re literature pertaining to the Bible, cannot procure anything of that kind here, and being attached to a church which will not teach me, am searching on my own."

Another sign to be observed, and one of great importance, closely connected with the previous one is that of the presence of the Lord and harvest work—the calling out of the Lord's people from the various systems and their testing as to faithfulness and loyalty, even unto death. Our Lord's parable (Matt. 13:30) clearly explains the position—"Let all grow together until the harvest" and as "the harvest is the end of the age" (Matt. 13:39), that is the time for the separating of the wheat from the tares. Our Lord indicated that this important work would take place "in the days of the Son of Man" (Luke 19:12, 15; Rev. 3:20), so that He could supervise the gathering of the "wheat" into His barn, by His angels—messengers-- (Matt. 24:31), who are exhorted to "gather My saints together unto Me, those that have made a covenant with

Me by sacrifice.” (Psa. 5). Other Scriptures, such as Luke 17:33-37, explain the harvest work at the close of this Gospel Age and which must all be accomplished before the Kingdom can be established on earth. The question was asked, “Where, Lord?”—where are these taken who are divided from others — “and He said unto them, ‘Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.’ “ In other words, those desiring the truth of God’s Word, those who hunger and thirst for it, shall be truly supplied with meat in due season, as they assemble together with others of like precious faith or through the printed page. (Luke 12:37). See also Rev. 18:4; Acts 15:14, etc.

Further signs clearly in evidence and pointing to the closing down of the present order may be summed up in the distress of nations, mentioned previously, and the progress of natural restoration in Palestine. With regard to the former, there never was known a time of such instability in worldly affairs as to-day. Luke 21:25, 26 explains this very condition, which will culminate in the “great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time,” and to which our Lord added, “No, nor ever shall be.” (Matt. 24:

It is grand to know that this severe trouble will never need to be repeated, for “the day of the Lord will come . . . in the which the heavens (ecclesiastical systems) shall pass away . . . the earth also (social and financial order) and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” (2 Pet. 3: to). Then the Lord’s Kingdom shall be established, for we read— ‘Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens (Christ’s reign begun) and a new earth (new order of society), wherein dwelleth righteousness.’” (2 Pet. 3:13).

Concerning the latter of these two signs, that our Lord intended us to understand the restoration of Palestine to be of importance preparatory to His Kingdom reign is shown in Matt. 24:32. The term “summer” is used to denote the time of God’s favour, which will be manifest so fully towards Israel under the New Covenant and extend to “all families of the earth,” just as the term “winter” gives the opposite thought, representing the dark, troublous times with which this Age will close—before the “summer” (Matt. 24:20). While, then, the Lord’s people recognise that God’s time of favour is near at hand, as demonstrated by the “fig tree” (Jewish nation), “putting forth leaves” (restoration commencing) there is also to be “a time of Jacob’s trouble” first, corresponding to the “great tribulation” upon the world. The prophet Jeremiah assures us, however, that “he shall be saved out of it” (Jer. 30:7), and other Scriptures, such as Zech. 14:1-3, show that Jehovah will mightily deliver Israel from the hands of their enemies, as He did in past ages. See also Rom. 11:26, 27, etc. Then all Israel will recognise the

Lord in control of earth’s affairs, their summertime of favour will have come with Christ’s Kingdom established and which shall gradually extend throughout the whole world, “that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.” (Acts 15:16, 17). “Thy Kingdom Come; Thy will be done on earth, as in heaven.”

“What doth it profit me?” Malachi 3:14-18.

I hear a weary Pilgrim say, As he sinks beside his burden upon the “narrow way!”
“What do I gain,” he, plaintive moans, “in service of my God,
Save weary pain and labour, bearing this heavy load?
For many dreary years I’ve toiled through sunshine and through rain,

Through chilling winds and wintry blasts I’ve suffered keenest pain,
The rocks have cut my weary feet, I’ve left a bleeding track,
I cannot climb this mountain side my feet are slipping back.
“Why should I suffer day by day, bearing this heavy cross?

Why may I not the ‘promise’ gain without this pain and loss?
I see so many all around who do not serve the Lord,
Yet they are not thus burdened and their lives hold rich reward;
Their barns are filled with plenty and their vats with wine o’erflow,

While I am made to drink the dregs of bitterness and woe.”
And thus he faints upon his way, and darkness tills his heart.
O, foolish one, with “armour” loosed, and pierced by Satan’s “dart.”
Dost thou not hear the Master: “The servant’s like his Lord,”

O, listen to His message and heed His Holy Word:
“If ye will suffer with Me, then with Me ye shall reign,
He who would shine in glory, is perfected through pain.”
We cannot walk with Christ our Lord and still find flowery ways,

The path that leads to Heavenly heights finds many sunless days;
The “narrow way” to life Divine oft leads through shadow-land,
Yet the loving Master walks beside, and holds our trembling hand.
The “shield of faith” we must not fail to use as on we go,

For “darts” are flying thick and fast from the Christian’s wily foe;
The world has not been “called” to walk upon our “narrow way,”
The shallow pleasures they enjoy are only for a day.
O, who would covet their poor joys, or look with envious eye

Upon the flowers which deck their path and blossom but to die?
Happy your lot, ye sons of God! O, “jewels” of the Lord,
Press on! nor faint upon the road that leads to your reward!
The way is weary, yet it ends in life, in bliss, in God! Press on!

Nor longing look ye back o’er the path that ye have trod.
Keep looking upward toward the “Prize,” and let its glory wake
Glad “Hallelujahs” to our King, who suffered for our sake;
Who died to give us life, that we might also with Him die,
Then share “His resurrection” and His glorious throne on High! —Alice G. James.

Correspondence,

New South Wales. Dear Brother,

Greetings to you in the name of our Redeemer. Just the day before I received your letter I had been out again with the papers. I had visited sixty people, also have been out once more, yesterday, and visited forty-five people. It is strange the various, different answers one gets to the question: "Do you love the Word of God?" Some say straight out, "No"; they are at least honest. Others say, "Not much," or "a little bit"; they are either the lukewarm ones, or those who have never been touched by its power. Then there are a few who just bubble over (a very few); they say, "Oh, I love it very much," and they thank me for the little paper I hand them, and with them I generally tarry a while. Then, again, there are some who give an evasive answer by saying: "I believe in my church," or "I am a Roman Catholic, it is enough for me." It is useless to waste time with such people.

Well, dear Brother, I need some more literature. You can, if you think best, send a larger parcel by boat. I would like to get the following:—"A Blessed Hope for Suffering Humanity," "All Flesh shall see the Salvation of God," "Why Sorrow, Sin, Death and Evil are Permitted," "The Two Salvations," and "When Christ is King."

I have been at Brother — last Monday; we had a real blessed time together, finishing Study I of the "Divine Plan."

I am, as ever, in Christian love,

Your Brother in Christ, B.E.

P. S.—I always refer people to' the address on the papers and invite them to write for more literature.

19/9/'35. Dear Brother,—

I noticed on the back page of August "People's Paper" a letter from one who is desirous of having sent to him Pastor Russell's books, "Scripture Studies," "Book of Sermons," and "Tabernacle Shadows." Please find enclosed postal note to pay for them; if any money is left over, use it as you deem best. I remain,

Your Sister in Christ, T.M.

New South Wales,

7th September, 1935.

Dear Brother,—

I liked the “People’s Paper” very much this month. Will you please send me a copy (paper bound) of the book “God and Reason,” which you review in this issue, and also a copy of “God’s Covenants” by Bro. Barton. I enclose postal note. Any balance please put to the funds.

The affairs of this present evil world seem to have taken another definite step towards the end since last I wrote to you. Exactly how this Abyssinian affair is going to develop in the light of prophecy I wouldn’t like to say; but one or two things stand out clearly—it will either break the League of Nations or make it into a formidable alliance capable of developing on the lines foretold in Revelation, but it will never be the same as before. A different spirit has entered into the world. We seem to be standing at the threshold of great events, and, as Bible students know, even fearful events.

I believe that prophecy should be taken in the spirit of our Lord’s words when He said: “I have told you these things, that, when they come to pass, ye may know that what I have told you is true.” We know that great things will come to pass, because the words of our Lord and the prophets tell us so; we know that they will come to pass shortly, and are even at the door, because we see the signs of which our Lord foretold us being fulfilled. But as regards the exact method and time in which they will be fulfilled, I don’t think God intends us to know. Looking back through history, we can see the way in which prophecy has been perfectly fulfilled, but to those who lived then it was vague; they saw, but not clearly. We, who live in these last days, see much more clearly than they; but it is not until all the turmoil and the strife is over and we are gathered together at last, as one, in the presence of our Lord, that we shall truly realise the wonderful glories of the purpose of God, which we but glimpse now. Then we shall see how perfect have been the prophecies and how perfect the fulfilment; then shall we sing: “Glory, Praise and honour to Him that sitteth upon the throne.”

With sincere Christian love to all the brethren,

Yours very sincerely,

N.W.

Bibles.

The following varieties of Bibles are now in stock, and prices mentioned include postage cost to any address:

Bible Students’ Edition, Cambridge, India paper, Minion type, with Berean Manual .. 15/6

Holman Teachers’ Bible, bold black type, special Dictionary Concordance and Helps, genuine leather binding; a very good Bible ..21/3

Oxford Concordance Bible, India paper, Brevier type (the largest type used in Concordance Bibles), good binding

Oxford Concordance Bible, India paper, Emerald type, Persian Morocco, Silk sewed (a fine Bible, just to hand)

Oxford Reference Bible, India paper, Brevier type, Thumb index, good binding .. 22/-

Oxford Reference Bible, Minion type, well bound .. 15/9 Oxford Palestine Pictorial Bible, 116 Engravings and

coloured pictures, references, Emerald type, good binding- Oxford Reference Bible, Emerald type, good binding,

Oxford Reference Bible, Brevier type; a good useful Others at lower prices are also available, and special Bibles can be procured as desired.

Consecration.

“Consecration is not a religiously selfish thing. If it sinks into that it ceases to be consecration. We want our lives ‘kept’ not that we may feel happy and be saved the distress consequent on wandering and get the power with God and man and other privileges linked with it. We shall have all this because the lower is included in the higher; but our true aim, if the love of Christ constraineth us, will be far beyond this. Not for ‘me’ at all, but ‘for Jesus’; not for my safety, but for His glory; not for my comfort, but for His joy; not that I may find rest, but that ‘He may see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied,’ Yes, for Him I want to be kept; kept for His sake; kept for His use; kept to be His witness; kept for His joy; kept for Him that in me He might show forth some tiny sparkle of His light and beauty; kept to do His will and His work in His own way; kept, it may be, to suffer for His sake; kept for Him that he may do just what seemeth Him good with me; kept so that no other lord shall have any more dominion over me, but that Jesus shall have all there is to have; little enough, indeed, but not divided nor diminished by any other claim. Is not this, to you who love the Lord is not this worth living for, worth trusting for?”—F. R. Havergal.

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