



Volume XIX. No. 6 MELBOURNE, 1st JUNE, 1936.

Price—Twopence Halfpenny

## Signs of Christ's Presence.

(Convention Address : Continued from last Issue).

THE great tribulation of this "winter" time is to be unprecedented ; and our Lord's assurance is, that nothing to compare with it has or shall ever come upon the world. This positively identifies His language with the trouble at the close of this Gospel Age, of which the prophet says, "At that time shall Michael (Christ) stand up . . . and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." (Dan. 12 :1). It identifies it also with the period mentioned in (Rev. 11 :17, 18), when "the nations were angry and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged." So great will this trouble be that without some restraining power to cut it short the entire race would eventually be exterminated. But God's power is exerted on behalf of His saints ; and for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Rev. 7:1-3 gives us the picture of the four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds to prevent them from "blowing" on the "earth" (society), "nor on the sea" (the restless masses of mankind) "nor on any tree" (church system). Then is seen in the vision another angel having the seal of the living God, and he cries with a loud voice to the four angels, "Saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads." It would seem that we are now living just at this period when the destructive forces which will ultimately precipitate the great time of trouble are being restrained—"for the elect's sake"—until the servants of God have all been sealed in their foreheads ;—given an intellectual appreciation of the divine plan and purpose.

Verses 23-25. "If any man shall say unto you then, lo, here is Messiah, or there, believe it not. For there shall arise false Messiahs, and false teachers, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect." The deceivers here described are not the fanatics who from time to time have claimed to be Christ and have deceived but few. The Anti-Christ, the great deceiver, the Papacy, the great mother of harlots and her apostate daughters would seem to be here indicated.

Various Protestant denominations, although they acknowledge no head except Christ, nevertheless practically make their Synods, Conferences and Councils into heads, from which they take their laws, usages and confessions of faith, instead of the one only Head of the one true Church. It may be that there will yet be further deceptions by false teachers claiming special power and showing great signs and wonders which, if it were possible, would deceive the very 'elect. How each of the Lord's people will

need to watch and “prove all things,” holding fast to that which is good.

Verses 26-27. These verses show that our Lord at His second presence will not again appear as a man, that they could say, “He is in the desert,” or that, “He is in the secret chambers.” If anyone should tell us that He is here or there, that He can be located anywhere, then we are not to believe them. The presence will be everywhere, just like the sunshine that comes from east unto the west. The word “lightning,” used in the authorised version, allows of a wrong thought, and has misled many to think that the Lord will come like “lightning,” which stays not a moment.

The Greek word means “bright shining,” and is so translated in Luke 11:36. It is used in Revelation for lightnings, but it undoubtedly here refers to the “bright shining” of the Sun of Righteousness. It is a beautiful illustration of the presence of Christ. Those awake and watching may see the glories of the rising sun for some time, even before it rises above the horizon. How it dispels the gloom and darkness, just as the Sun of Righteousness arising will disperse the dark night of sin and sorrow, of superstition and error, and bring healing in its wings. (Mal. 4:2).

Thus the Lord would guard us from the many deceptions which were to be, and undoubtedly are, prevalent in this, our day. The question of the disciples was, “What shall be the sign of Thy ‘parousia’—presence”—not a sign of His arrival and departure, like the lightning. The Lord adds, “So also shall the presence of the Son of Man be.” Lightning has no presence ; it is simply a flash and is gone.

Verse 28. This indicates that there is to be a feast; just as eagles feed upon flesh, so those who hunger and thirst after righteousness and truth will be found where the food is. (See Luke 12:37; Rev. 3:20).

Verses 29-31. The tribulation “of those days,” would seem to refer to the tribulation of God’s people during the dark days of Papal persecution; and should be distinguished from the tribulation at the end of those days, in which this age and harvest will close. The great desolating power of Papacy was broken by Napoleon, who marched to Rome, and took the Pope prisoner. Papacy’s power to “tread down the saints” was broken in 1799. Then there have been the literal demonstrations, in the literal heavens in the notable dark day of 19th May, 1780, when the sun was darkened, and in the wonderful showers of falling stars of 13th November, 1833, as though to draw attention to the more important fulfilment of this prophecy in the fact that the Gospel light has been darkened by false teachings, such as Evolution, Higher Criticism, etc., and that the clear shining of the writings of the apostles, the twelve stars, has been beclouded by destructive heresies.

In the Scriptures the sun, as a symbol, would represent the light of the Gospel. The moon would represent the Mosaic Law. The stars as symbols represent the inspired teachers of the Church—the Apostles. The heavens represent the ecclesiastical powers of Christendom.

We can see how the clear sunlight of the Gospel has been darkened by the false teachings of Evolution and Immortal Soulism.

The Apostle Peter foretold that there would be false teachers among the church who would bring in false teachings even denying the Lord that bought them.

The teachings of the inspired Apostles are not now recognised as the guides or stars of the nominal Christian Church but, as it was foretold, many are departing from the faith and giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. There is much of the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Higher Criticism has done much to undermine true faith in God. False teachers (stars) have taken the place of the true stars (the Apostles).

But there comes a time at the end of the Gospel Age when the powers of the heavens (the religious systems) are to be shaken. There has now been a general disintegrating process at work throughout Christendom. When we see such processes at work we may take that as a sign of His presence. This is in line with our Lord's parable, "Let both (wheat and tares) grow together until the harvest" (the end of the Age), when He would send His messengers to gather the tares in bundles to burn them, and to garner the wheat.

We should bear in mind that the whole of this prophecy was given in answer to the question, "What shall be the sign of Thy presence?"

Our Lord's answer assured them that His people would not be left without a suitable and sufficient sign; but of its character He said nothing. "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven." It will be a sign which only the faithful, humble disciples will be able to discern. It is in the symbolical heaven that this sign will appear, the same heaven which the previous verse tells us is to be so terribly shaken as to shake out its stars. It is in this heaven, among the professedly spiritual class, that the sign or evidence of our Lord's presence will first be apparent. In Luke 12:37 the Lord said, "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching; verily I say unto you that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." The clear unfoldment of the Divine Plan—the rich spiritual feast set before the Lord's people during the past half-century is an evidence of the Lord's return.

Also the judgments upon nominal Christendom is another sign of the Son of Man — a sign of His presence. In one of His parables in Luke 19:12 the Lord said, "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a Kingdom and to return." It would seem that the return of the nobleman of this parable represents the second coming of our Lord; His first work at His return was to deal with His servants, rewarding those who had made faithful use of their talents, and taking away the privileges of those lacking in appreciation. "Judgment must begin with the House of God," and while the clear knowledge of the Divine Plan which comes as the result of the Lord's presence, brings joy and comfort to His faithful, humble followers, at the same time it causes confusion among the clergy class, because they cannot reconcile their doctrines and practices with the truths now due to be understood.

The realisation that the Lord is dealing with His servants and separating the wheat from the tares is an evidence, a sign of Christ's presence.

"Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven." (Verse 30).

The tribes of the earth will not be able to see the sign, which only the faithful followers of Christ will discern. On the contrary, they will see the clouds of trouble and confusion in which the heavens and earth will be so severely shaken; and at that time also there shall be a general mourning of all, incident to that great time of trouble which marks the end of the present dispensation.

Verse 31 is a brief description of the harvest work ; the closing work of this present dispensation. We can see that this harvesting work has been progressing for some considerable time now. The Lord's true people are being gathered out of Babylon, and away from her confusing theories; they are being gathered from the four winds—from the four corners of heaven—nominal Christendom. Can we not see this gathering work in progress? Is not the message of present truth gathering the Lord's people together unto Him? And is not this condition of things a sign or proof that we are living in the harvest period of this Gospel Age, and that Christ is present as the Great Chief Reaper? (See Rev, 14 :14-16).

Verses 32-35 give another sign, this one on earth. The separating of the wheat from the tares is a work in

the “heavens”—the religious world. The sign of the fig-tree budding is of the earth, and refers to the nation of Israel, which must come again into divine favour. The cursing of the fig-tree by our Lord just previous to the giving of this prophecy— seems to be a picture of the casting off of the nation of Israel—their rejection by our Lord because of their unfaithfulness, God’s special favour was withdrawn from Israel as the Lord said, “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” But this does not mean that God would never show the Jews any further kindness or favour. No, as ‘Paul says, this nation of Israel is beloved for their fathers’ sakes. God had made certain promises to the fathers of Israel.

To Abraham it was promised that through him and his seed a blessing would come to all the families of the earth, and as the time draws near for the fulfilment of that promise, we see preparations being made to carry it out. We can see the budding of the fig-tree—the awakening of the Jewish hopes and aspirations toward national life. Much has already been done to establish the Jews in Palestine again, but still a great deal remains to be done by way of removing the blindness from their eyes. The fact that indications of God’s returning favour to the Jews can be discerned, is another sign of the near approach of Christ’s Kingdom. “When ye shall see all these things know that it is near.” The generation seeing all these signs of Christ’s presence shall not pass until the great time of trouble has occurred, and the Kingdom of Righteousness and Peace has been established.

Verses 36-39. These verses clearly indicate that just as Noah was a preacher of righteousness for 120 years before the flood, so Christ would be present for some time before the great calamity which is to destroy the world systems of this evil day. Noah preached and warned, but they went on with their own selfish pursuits, regardless of the message they “knew not.” 2 Pet. 3:3-7, 10, 12, 13, foretells similar conditions, and are not these conditions with us to-day?

Luke 17:26, 27 also mentions the conditions in Sodom and Gomorrah, and they also refused the message in the days of Lot, and both Matthew and Luke state “as it was in the days of Noah,” and “as it was in the days of Lot, so also shall it be in the days of the Son of Man.”

Thus the Scriptures clearly declare that Christ would be present for some time prior to the great calamity, although only the watchers would know of His presence. All others, as in the time of Noah and Lot, are not to know, The world goes on in its usual way, unaware of the Lord’s presence until He reveals Himself in the fiery judgments of the great time of trouble. (See Luke 17:28-30). This Scripture speaks of the time when the Son of Man is revealed. In 2 Thess.

1:7 we read that the Lord Jesus shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. It would seem that our Lord’s reference to the deliverance of Lot out of Sodom, and the fiery destruction that came upon that city immediately afterwards, is intended to mean that as soon as the last members of the Church finish their earthly course, the great time of trouble will burst in all its fury. “Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.”

Verses 40, 41. These verses show a separating work going on amongst the professedly spiritual class. “Two in the field” would represent a class in the field of labour in Babylon; “one shall be taken”— (gathered with the sickle of truth) ; “the other left.” “Two grinding at the mill; the one taken and the other left.” The Lord knoweth them that are His, and all his faithful people will be drawn to Him during this Harvest period of His presence.

Verse 42. Here our Lord emphasises the need for watchfulness, for no one would know the day nor the hour of the Lord’s arrival, nor of the actual time when the great time of trouble will overwhelm the world.

The Lord did not inform the disciples so that the church might fix dates for future events. In answer to the

question, “when shall these things be?” He simply has given the signs of His presence and told us to “watch,” so that we may discern His presence when He has come. Then we may enter the feast of spiritual things, which He has promised to His waiting people, and may be gradually called away to be with the “Lord in the air.”

Before He will set up His Kingdom He will gather His elect from the four winds of heaven. Then the saints are to share the glorious work of that Kingdom of Peace. Satan, however, must first be bound, and the Church are to have something to do in this connection, for the promise is, “The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” Then, the time of trouble over, the Prince of Peace shall reign from shore to shore, and the prayer be answered, “Thy Kingdom Come; Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” (Rev. 21:1-4).

Verse 44 indicates the need of continued watchfulness. “Be ye also ready ; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.” (See Rev. 3 :3 Diaglott).

Verses 45-47 speak of the blessings that accompany faithful service. The faithful, loyal servant will be made ruler over all the Lord’s goods. He will have clear understanding of things new and old, and will be able to minister the truth to others of the household of faith, giving them meat in due season.

Verses 48-51 give us a warning of the danger of falling from our steadfastness. If we should lose faith in God, and lean to our own understanding, there is the possibility of becoming blind to the signs of Christ’s presence.

The smiting of fellow-servants would indicate a loss of grace’ on the part of those so doing; and eating and drinking with the drunken would mean having fellowship with those who are intoxicated with the wine of false doctrine.

How we each need to heed the Master’s direction to watch and pray and keep our hearts in the attitude of faith and trust, so that we may be counted worthy to continue to enjoy the light of the Master’s presence. Those who grow careless and neglectful are in danger of losing the light and of suffering the disappointment of having their portion with the hypocrites.

## Faith and Feeling.

FEELING should never be mistaken for faith, yet there is as much connection between faith and hallowed feeling as there is between the root and the flower. Faith is permanent, just as the root is ever in the ground. Feeling is casual and has its season. Just as the root or bulb does not always shoot up the green stem and beautiful flowers, so faith does not always produce ecstasy of feeling. Our faith may be just as strong when we are despondent as when we are filled with joy. As we feel the calamities of war, the pangs of disease, and the hardness of poverty, our feeling sinks down to zero, while our faith may be as firm as the granite that underlies the cloud kissing hills. Measure not God's love and power by your own feeling. The sun shines as clearly in the darkest day as it does in the brightest; the difference is not in the sun, but in some clouds that are between you and the sun. So God loves as well when we see not the brightness of His countenance as when we do.

If our faith is founded on the immutability of God, our Christian life and love will flow steadily on like a deep river, not easily affected by a cold blast nor obstructed by despondencies.

Moses was not governed by feeling when he stood on the margin of the Red Sea, neither was Abraham when he offered up Isaac, nor Israel when they compassed Jericho seven days.

Have faith in God, move forward all along the line, and we shall have the victory.—Selected.

### PEOPLES PAPER.

Published by the Berean Biblical Institute,  
at National Bank Chambers, 226 Glenferrie Rd.,

Hawthorn, Melbourne E 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 used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported,

A Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to "Peoples Paper" is overdue.

## ANOTHER YEAR

ANOTHER year for the Berean Biblical Institute has terminated with the close of April, and it is with thankfulness to the Lord for all His continued blessings over the past twelve months again, that this report is placed on record for the benefit of our readers and helpers in the work. 'While the assistance of the dear friends generally has no doubt been rendered as unto the Lord Himself, the opportunity is taken of expressing our sincere appreciation of all the loving co-operation on the part of those having the talents and who have used them in the service of the Lord. Many are the privileges granted to those who, like the Apostle, delight "to spend and be spent" in the cause of truth.

Each of the branches of service have continued nicely, even though not in big ways — we are still in the day of small things, and as it was with our Lord, so it is felt now that nothing is too small, if it be of service to our brethren scattered here and there, and also to those still desiring the comfort of heart and mind which the truth alone can give.

A goodly number of the friends have availed themselves of our stock of Biblical literature, including various translations of the Scriptures, Concordances, Bible Studies and Booklets, which are supplied on almost every Bible topic. Recently the edition of pocket "Daily Heavenly Manna" has become almost exhausted, making a second edition necessary, and which is now in preparation at the printers. These new books should be ready in both leather and cloth binding in the course of a few weeks and some improvement will be found in the binding of the cloth books, thus making them more durable. Friends able to dispose of these "Manilas" in quantities, also any of the other Bible helps, are asked to write us for particulars of this work. An announcement in regard to the greatly reduced price of "Studies in the Scriptures" will be found in this issue.

The "People's Paper" has continued to take its message to all desiring it, irrespective of whether the yearly subscription could be provided or not. The number of subscribers to the "Paper" remains about the same, but more are now on the free list. This expense is made up from the Tract Fund, and it is thought that more of our readers could probably help towards making the "People's Paper" self-supporting by encouraging others to subscribe. What is done by some friends in this way is much appreciated, and back numbers and extra copies of current issues of the "Paper" are provided free to those who can help by passing them out, and all are welcome to forward lists of the names and addresses of likely cases of interest. We assure all who, not being able to provide the subscription, are receiving the "People's Paper" free, that they are very welcome to have it continued, and all that is necessary is to let us know of the desire to receive it regularly.

In the witnessing work, all the methods of past times 'have again been used to advantage, as quite a number of new cases of interest have been found through the free literature coupons and general tract distribution. Most of our friends are acquainted with the coupon system, and it is a first-class means of reaching people who are desirous of understanding the Bible message of salvation. The brethren in Adelaide, South Australia, have been doing a good work with the coupons, in addition to our efforts; others may also like to co-operate. Supplies of tracts may be had by all who will wisely distribute, and so, those who possess a talent of time only, may engage in this service. A letter in the "Correspondence" from a Brother in Canada, who is diligent in the witness work there, will be of much interest.

The Tract Fund Account which follows indicates the amount of financial support received from the brethren towards the general work, as also the items of expenditure for the same period of time. No doubt the donations received represent many sacrifices of the earthly good things and these voluntary offerings have been used as wisely and economically as we know how, in the service of the Lord. It will be noticed

that the balance at credit of the Tract Fund has fallen considerably, as the expenses exceeded the amount received by 119/14/2 over the past year, but we are glad to have been able to meet all requirements for the free literature, etc.

The kindly messages from the brethren bringing good wishes and assurance of their prayers for the Lord's blessing on the work are very encouraging, and we trust for that continued interest on our behalf to the end that the Lord may be glorified. Our prayers are also offered and efforts directed on behalf of all the Lord's dear people wherever situated for their highest good. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, who bath loved us and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

TRACT FUND ACCOUNT.

To Balance Carried Forward	13317	5
Donations Received ..	96	18 2
	<hr/>	
By Coupon Advertisements and Pilgrim Work	113015	7
Free Tracts and Deficiency "People's Paper General	190	10
Expenses (Office, etc.) ..	131	2
	6218	10
	3111	6
	143	3
	<hr/>	
	113015	7
	<hr/>	

"DAILY HEAVENLY MANNA."

NEW EDITION. Vest 'Pocket Size.

This Book, with Scripture text and helpful comment for every day of the year, is well known amongst the truth brethren.

Every Christian should use this "Manna" daily.

Bound in strong cloth, black or dark green, gold stamped, and posted to any address-1/9 per copy.

In good black leather covers, nicely stamped in gold, either red or mottled edge,-2/6 per copy, posted. (Reduction in price for three or more copies).

Christ is come to he my Friend, Leading, loving to the end; Christ is come to be my King, Ordering, ruling everything. Christ is come! Enough for me, Lonely though the pathway be. FR.H.

# Correspondence.

Canada, 11th April, 1936. Dear Brother,

Loving greetings in the name of our dear Lord and Head!

Thank you very much for the little parcel of cards and papers, which arrived safely to-day — also for your very kind letter.

Just a few words to explain about our renewed efforts. For some little time past we have wondered just what we could do and what the Master would have us do — in His service here in this District. Our .friends in the I.B.S.A. (now called Jehovah's Witnesses) have made themselves very unpopular with their high-pressure sales methods—and have brought reproach on the Truth and all things pertaining thereto. For many years we have been known as Bible Students in this District — in fact — we were the first to start the work in this District and hold classes, with the result that though we left the I.B.S.A. many years ago—still the people at large do not quite understand what the difference is—and while some notice a difference, still they are very reluctant to accept any tracts from us—as they are prejudiced against Brother Rutherford and the methods of his followers.

We, therefore, gave the matter very serious and prayerful consideration, and finally decided that we would adopt our dear Brother Russell's method--when he changed the name of the volumes from the Millennial Dawn to the Studies in the Scripture—and so we decided to take ourselves right out of the picture altogether. We rented a Post Office Box and had letterheads prepared. Then we obtained 500 of a set of six tracts from "THE DAWN" office—and we selected, for a start, fifty of the most sincere and reasoning minds in this locality—and we commenced to mail them ONE tract each week, regularly, with our own rubber stamp thereon—and kept it up until the full set of six was mailed. The regularity of the work has already had some results. We have been requested for copies of "GOD AND REASON," and been advised what a comfort some of the messages have been, and others have said that the regularity of the tracts made them that they went looking for them and sat down and read them before doing anything else.

You are, no doubt, in receipt of some of these tracts from the "DAWN" office. They are got up very much along the line of your little tract, "THE VOICE"—they are just the right size for handling in the way we have been doing. That is why we like your little tracts, and we hope to be able to obtain a supply of yours to follow on with this work which we have commenced. Our circulars went out (1) "The Divine Plan"; (2) "Earth's Coming Glory"; (3) "The Soul Defined"; (4) "The Resurrection Hope"; (5) "Coming Back from Hell Soon"; (6) "Why Not Live Forever?" This last tract went out this week. Then next week (D.V.) we are following it up with a letter—as per the attached copy—and to those who reply we are intending mailing your little tracts: "A Blessed Hope for Suffering Humanity"; "Why Sorrow, Sin, Death and Evil are Permitted"; "All Flesh Shall See the Salvation of our God"; just as long as our supply lasts out.

Of course, dear Brother, we are fully aware that this is NOT a sowing of seed, because the time for the sowing of the seed is past; but, we might be able to glean another grain of wheat. The Lord richly blessed our deliberations last year, and gave us the privilege of gleaning ONE grain of wheat into His garner—and, additionally, we are able to give a little message of comfort and joy to some poor hearts in these dark, troublesome days, when people are so severely bewildered. Furthermore, we KNOW the DARK NIGHT has not, AS YET, set in, when NO MAN can work. We realise that — that time is very close — BUT IT HAS NOT STRUCK THIS PLACE AS YET—and so we are trying to do as the Scriptures advise: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not

whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike, good"; therefore, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do — DO IT WITH THY MIGHT." Therefore, dear Brother, we ask an interest in your prayers, and thank you for your help in doing a little service in the Vineyard—and if, as you state, we have a slight balance in our favour—could you mail us some more tracts and use the balance to cover postage?

With much Christian love to you and all the dear ones over there; I am, by His kind favour,

Your Brother in Christ.

[A supply of tracts has been gladly forwarded to our Brother in Canada].

England, 30/3/36.

Dear Brother in Christ,

Loving greetings in His precious name. Many thanks for sending "Foregleams" to Canada, also for our four received to-day. We are enjoying the study of these books daily with those who are coming along in the truth, as it is put so simple and easy, and the questions are so good.

Would you kindly send some of those free tracts you mention in your leaflet, which was around the books; they are just what the poor world needs—"God's Great Plan of Salvation"; "Our Lord's Return"; "Where are the Dead?"; "All about Hell"; "Our Lord's Parables."

Praying the Lord's blessing on your work and labour of love.

Your Sisters by Grace Divine.

Victoria, 7th May, 1936. Dear Friend,

I am sending you payment for "People's Paper," which I continue to find both helpful and instructive, and please send a copy of "Plan of God — In Brief" to the address as under. I hope the message in the little booklet may be to him as seed sown on good soil.

From Your Brother in the Lord.

Victoria, 14/5/36. Dear Brother,

You will please find enclosed — for payment of the “People’s Paper” for another term; the balance you may use for what purpose you deem necessary.

I greatly appreciate the little paper, and look forward to its arrival; I enjoy reading the thoughts there expressed, and often find helpful aid from them.

In this time of doubt and trouble is it not splendid to be able to look forward to the one sure hope in Christ our Lord?

May all things be prosperous with you in your work, and God’s blessing be with you.

Yours in Fellowship.

South Australia, 5th May, 1936. Dear Brethren,

I received the papers “Oath-Bound Covenant,” in good order, and thank you very much for same, and please find a postal note, value — to be donated for the general work of the Institute.

Trusting you are all well and rejoicing in the Lord and His glorious promises, with Christian love from Sister and myself.

Yours in the Anointed.

# Wisdom.

(Convention Address.)

“The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”--Psalm 111 :10.

SOLOMON, generally referred to as the wise man, writes : “The commencement of wisdom is the fear of the Lord and the knowledge of the Most Holy is understanding . . . Give to the wise instruction and he will become yet wiser, impart knowledge to the righteous and he will increase his information.” (Leeser.) How may we obtain this wisdom? (See Job 28:12-15, 20, 21, 23, 28; Prov. 1:5, 7; 2 :1-12.)

From these passages of Scripture we are advised respecting the beginning and a measure of development of wisdom. Then the Apostle James gives us some advice how to gain wisdom. (James 1:5, 6.) We may rest assured that the Lord would grant the right kind of wisdom, but we need to know how to ask for it, otherwise it would not be extended to us. The Apostle says we would need to ask in faith, nothing wavering. Such as would ask for knowledge out of vainglory would certainly ask amiss; only by having a truly humble mind, in all sincerity, could we expect wisdom from the Lord.

The Apostle Peter says : “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” How necessary that we might all have this lesson deeply impressed upon our hearts and minds, that it may be true of us and we in harmony with the instruction—“In all thy ways acknowledge Him.” While such an acknowledgment of the Lord is proper in all the affairs Of life, it certainly is especially appropriate in connection with the study of the Divine Word and in any attempt to give an interpretation thereof.

May we always acknowledge Him—His Word and His arrangements in connection with His truth, To whatever extent self-seeking is indulged in, and the honour of men is craved, while the Lord, as the fountain of wisdom, and the channels which He uses in dispensing His truth are ignored or belittled by any of us, to that extent we may be sure we are in a dangerous situation and cannot make real progress in the right way.

Who could choose more wisely, or as wisely as God? The Apostle James says, “The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.” First it is pure --that is, it is sincere, honourable, guileless, open; it loves the light, being utterly opposed to secret and underhand works and ways. Further, this wisdom is peaceable—that is, as far as it is possible in harmony with purity and honesty. It loves peace and unity ; but as wisdom is first pure, it can only be fully at peace and in harmony with that which is pure, honest and good. Then, it is gentle—it is not rude, coarse, rough and cannot sympathise with such methods and spirit. Its gentleness follows its purity and peaceableness.

Those who receive this wisdom from above are then primarily pure, sanctified with the truth and thus are peaceable and gentle, and the result of these fruits is further expressed in the words, “easy to be entreated.” Additionally, the wisdom from above is “full of mercy and good fruits.” It appreciates mercy because it is a part of its very self ; all the good fruits • of the spirit of the Lord—love, honesty, purity, peaceableness, gentleness and mercy—are sure to proceed from the heart in which the wisdom from above rules.

Furthermore, this wisdom is “without partiality,” which is quite foreign to the spirit of the world. There is to be no respecting of persons other than What is demonstrated by character in line with the spirit of the Lord. And finally the wisdom from above is “without hypocrisy,” the Apostle thus completing in detail a description of this great quality so as to impress it upon the minds of all who are in anyway open to

receive it. Let us be wise and continue to examine ourselves, endeavouring to be of those of whom the Master said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

In self-examination may we not see whether we are using our time, talents and influence wisely ? Are we peaceable, seeking to cultivate peace, as we are exhorted : "Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"? Are we easy of entreatment or are we hard-hearted and cold, or indifferent? Are we gentle, sympathetic and kind to those with whom we come in contact ? Even though we may think we can answer these questions satisfactorily, let us not too hastily arrive at this conclusion. Does not the Psalmist say, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults"? (Psa. 19 :12.) Seeing that we have secret faults, our understanding has perhaps not developed sufficiently to discern them, and as there are others similar to ourselves, who, having not discerned their secret faults need forgiveness from us, therefore, let us be forgiving. "Mercy and truth are met together." "His mercy endureth forever." (Psa. 85:10; 106:1.)

The Apostle says,. "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you, let him show out of a good conscience his works with meekness of wisdom." (James 3:13.) He speaks of a wise man ; he is putting it in a way which would indicate that some with knowledge are not wise. Around us in the world we may find people who acquire knowledge by education, learnt by what others have discovered, yet of themselves are very deficient in wisdom.

We remember the record of the Apostles, how that the great majority were unlearned men, but had taken hold of the wisdom from above, to which those learned in the Jewish schools had not attained. So, likewise, we are to walk in wisdom. (1 Thes. 4 :1.)

Again we read in 1 Cor. 3 :18, "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." There was a clear line of separation drawn between the Apostle Paul and 'the world, and anyone observing him and his manner of life was not left in doubt as to his firm purpose and faithfulness in carrying it out. And there was no misunderstanding that the wisdom to which he referred pointed to the narrow way of sacrifice, in which on matters of principle there was no compromising, but as far as liberty was concerned, as great a man as he was, he was willing to humble himself and become all things to all, that he might gain the more. To the weak he became as weak ; he could sympathise with them in their infirmities. How great must have been his tact and patience, and what wisdom he must have exercised—surely a worthy example to all. (See 1 Cor. 4:9.) Seeing that the disciples of Christ are being made a spectacle to all those outside as well as within their own company, the Apostle urges that we walk wisely, so that as far as possible our conduct may be helpful and uplifting to all, being transparent before the world.

If it happens that we are unavoidably placed amongst disagreeable and contentious people, here a good opportunity to show them a calm and benevolent disposition. Such a spirit will rebuke the world and show the more excellent way, whether they are inclined to walk that way or not. Sometimes it may be wise to warn and speak plainly of a coming time of reckoning when the present actions must be accounted for. Even a strong worldly man like Felix trembled in view of the time of reckoning of which the Apostle Paul spoke.

How much wisdom is required in guarding the tongue, because of the many misunderstandings and misinterpretations of our well-meant words. It stands to the credit of wisdom that we think well! before we speak.

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." (Col. 4:6.) Moderation should characterise all our conversation, in all our dealings with people of the world as well as Christians ; liberality and kindly consideration for their interest should be in evidence, though their lack of consideration toward us may he

glaringly manifest.

Our Lord said, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves." (Matt. 10:16.) What could have been the reason for our Lord to use the serpent as an example of wisdom? It must have some special peculiarity to be used as a lesson of instruction. Why not have used the picture of a faithful and intelligent dog or such like? As we consider the habits of a serpent we realise that it does not rush after its victim so as to frighten it away. It glides along in a very silent and cautious manner, so as not to cause needless alarm. It is supposed to set its eyes upon its victim with a certain fascination which causes a bird to fly into its mouth. According to record a snake can wait long and patiently while it brings its victim under its spell. There is some drawing influence which is very effective. And so with the Christian. The Father draws him and this drawing influence will attract like minds unto Christ. Our Lord said, "And I if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto Me." (John 12 :32).

Thus, by exercising wisdom, a few words in their proper place may do much more good than a multitude of words. The wise man says : "A word at the proper time how good it is." On the other hand, how much injury can and has been done to the cause of truth in the past by some being too ready to speak when they should mind their own business, and have thus hindered instead of helped. How true that some have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge or true wisdom. It is good to follow the directions of St. Peter-- "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and reverence." The other class will not wait for any to ask them the reason of their hope; they do the asking and press it upon people against their wishes and make it distasteful to such an extent that their ears cannot be reached again.

Another necessity for the exercise of wisdom is when we meet difficulties hard to understand; we need to wait and consider awhile. The Psalmist says, "Wait patiently for Him." We take the incident of the Apostles wishing to install one in the place of Judas. They prayed unto God and cast lots and it fell upon Mathias. Probably they believed their prayers answered; we would believe that they were sincere, but we know it was not God's will. They had not waited patiently, as we know they had been told to wait, until they should receive power from above. How we can rejoice that God's choice and not theirs was the result. We may come to conclusions and believe it is God's will, yet if we had exercised the wisdom from above and waited patiently for Him, the results may have been more helpful and we could accomplish more good.

Let us always do the things we can do and perhaps greater opportunities may arise for us; but if we aspire to greater things and neglect the smaller, we may miss both. If we fail to do unto the least of these His brethren we fail to do unto Him. Thus we see how wisdom begins, how we develop in it, and become "knit together in love and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God and of Christ ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

### Booklets on Bible Truths.

“Plan of God—in Brief.” A helpful booklet to pass on the message to others. Good supply on hand at 6d. per copy. “God and Reason.” Further supplies of this very useful booklet expected shortly. Orders may be placed at 10d. per copy; reduction on three or more.

“Some of the Parables.” An instructive work on some of our Lord’s Parables priced at 8d. per copy; reduction on three or more.

“Christ’s Return,” also “Hell, Death, Spiritism,” at 4d. each.

“Where are the Dead?” and “I will Come Again,” at 3d. each.

### Special Book Offer.

An unusual opportunity is now available for all desiring to procure new copies of “Studies in the Scriptures” in the red cloth binding at exceptionally low prices. We are able to offer as follows:—Vols. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 at 6d. per copy; plus postage of 3d. per book for Vols. 1, 2, 3; 4d. for Vol. 5; and 5d. for Vol. 6.

In addition to the above single book rate, Vol 1, “The Divine Plan of the Ages” may be procured at the price of 4/6 per dozen plus the postage or freight charges. These offers may appeal to Classes or individual brethren able to engage in placing them in the hands of those who will promise to read.

### Helps to Bible Study.

Strong’s and Young’s Concordances.--These fine Concordances are now available new, and one or the other is really indispensable to the earnest Bible student. Prices on application.

Oxford Concordance Bibles.—In first-class Oxford binding, silk sewn, Emerald type. India paper. Just to hand a beautiful Bible, for 21/9 posted.

Helps to the study of the Bible.—By Oxford and The Queen’s Printers. Helpful books in handy, pocket size. Used, but as good as new, well bound in brown cloth. Price 1/3 posted.

“Daily Heavenly Manna.”—One large copy only, suitable for person desiring larger print than in the pocket size.

“Manna.” Price 2/3 posted.

“Watch Tower Reprints” (Prior to 1919).—Some used volumes of these “Reprints” available, in good order, and containing much helpful reading on the Scriptures. From 1/6 per volume, plus postage.

### BIBLE STUDY MEETINGS.

Regular Class Meetings for Bible Study, etc., are held each Sunday afternoon and evening, also mid-week, in Melbourne and Adelaide, at the following addresses :—

“Tower House,” 18 Queen Street, (near Flinders Street), Melbourne.

Liverpool Buildings, Flinders Street Adelaide, South Aust. The gatherings are quite unsectarian, and all desiring to attend will be very welcome.

### NOTICE.

Friends desiring to communicate with this office by telephone may now do so direct by calling Hawthorn 6251. While we are in attendance for the greater part of each day, the following hours are recommended for telephone calls:—Between 9 a.m. and 10.30 a.m.; and from 3 p.m. till 5.30 p.m.; or by arrangement.

Published by Berean Biblical Institute. National Bank Chambers, Hawthorn - Printed by Hickling;81 Powell, Brunswick Victoria.