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When Christ is King! THE HOPE FOR HUMANITY

MANY have thought that Christ is King of Earth to-day, and that He has been trying to gain control of His Kingdom through the activities of His people. People have been urged to 'win the world for Christ,' and evangelists have taught that the more conversions that were made the more Christ's Kingdom was extending, and that when all the world had become Christianised then Christ's Kingdom would have come.

As we view the world in comparison with even fifty years ago, we have to confess that it is less Christian to-day than then. Not only is there a larger percentage of heathen and avowed agnostics and atheists, but we have to deplore the fact that there is less real earnestness among professing Christians. There are fewer real, consecrated Christians understanding what it means to take up the cross and to follow Christ in the churches to-day than there were. We realise that if all the heathen of India, Africa, China and Japan were converted to the present condition of Christendom they would need still to be converted to be Christians, for there is probably more evil and wickedness in what are called the Christian nations than among the heathen.

In view of this condition of things, it should be evident to all who will consider the matter that if we were to wait for the coming Kingdom of Christ until the churches should "win the world for Christ," we should wait in vain, for it would never come at all.

Yet all men have a hope of a better day coming, and socialists and others have a hope of establishing such a system of national economy that will mete out justice to all and recognise that every man should have a good opportunity of providing for the necessities for himself and his family without so much worry and anxiety and sweat of face—that there must be less of class distinction and luxury and waste on the one side, and less of poverty and need on the other.

Leaders of such thought may not be Christians at all, yet no doubt it is with good purpose they think to bring in a better day. While some alleviation of those who have been oppressed has taken place, yet the results of their schemes only demonstrate that man by his own effort cannot establish an arrangement that will mete out justice to all and make the world a happy brotherhood. Even if that could be done, there is still the fact of calamities, sickness and death, which only the lifting of the Divine curse on account of sin can stop.

It is to the Bible that we must turn to learn of the sure hope for the poor “groaning creation.” Here we find a clear

plan for ultimately releasing mankind from the death sentence and leading all the willing and obedient up the highway of holiness (Isaiah 35) back again to the perfection and happy condition enjoyed by our first parents prior to the fall.

We see that in God’s wisdom- mankind was represented in Adam, on trial in Eden, and therefore all were condemned by that one man’s offence (Romans 5:12-19) , so that in due time, when all shall have tasted of the baneful results of that disobedience to Divine Law, they might be released from that penalty of death by one man’s righteousness and death (Heb. 2:9; 1 Tim. 2:3-6).

In this way, justice, which is the foundation of God’s throne, could be satisfied—life for life—so God provided a way that, while still being just, He might be the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus (Romans 3:23-26).

Nineteen hundred years ago the great sacrifice was made; Jesus “bore our sins on the tree”; He bought us with His blood; His flesh He gave for the life of the world, as “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.” “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.” Thus, “He is the propitiation for our sins (the Church’s sins) and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2).

Without the cross of Christ there was no hope for humanity; death would simply have swept us all away. There would have been no resurrection and no hope beyond the tomb. Thus the mission of Christ at His first advent was to lay the foundation for His intended work at His second coming. The effect of the cross of Christ would have been no use to mankind generally without the work to be done at the second coming. To have released man from the condemnation to death, while so weak and erring through hereditary taint, would only have meant that he would soon have sinned again and so each would have personally incurred the second death penalty.

It is on this account that God has arranged to leave the world in the hands of His Son during the Kingdom Age of 1000 years, so that He may lead them step by step towards righteousness (Psalm 72; John 5:22-29; 1 Cor. 15:22-28).

As steps towards holiness and righteousness are taken there will be rewards of life and health and prosperity, while wickedness and disobedience will have corresponding punishments. This course is termed in John 5:29 a “resurrection (raising up again) by judgment.” (R.V.).

The seeming delay since the first advent has been on account of the Divine purpose to select the Church, the Body of Christ, or the Bride Class, to be “joint heirs” with Christ in the Kingdom, to reign with Him, to bless all the families of the earth (Gal. 3:8, 16, 29) .

Soon now the Gospel Age will close, its purpose being accomplished, and then “the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15).

Our Lord foretold (as did also the prophets, particularly Daniel 12:1-2) in Matt. 24:21, 22 and Luke 17:20-30, that just such days as we see about us at this time should come at the end of this dispensation and precede the establishment of Christ’s Kingdom on earth.

How Christ Comes

Many people expect our Lord to reappear in human form, but such is not in accord with the apostles' teaching, for 1 John 3:2 informs us that we do not know what our Lord's glorious body is like (since His ascension) and we are to see Him "as He is." When He came to earth as a babe, He changed from the spiritual body to the human "for the suffering of death"; "made a little lower than the angels." Jesus said, "My flesh (human nature) I give for the life of the world," and again, "The world seeth Me no more, but ye shall see Me because where I am shall ye be also" (that is the Church) (John 14:19, 3). Paul said, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, henceforth know we Him (so) no more." No one ever saw Jesus in human form after His ascension. Paul, in order that, as an apostle, he should be a witness of His resurrection, was granted a sight of Christ in His glorious spiritual body. ("There is a natural (human) body, and there is a spiritual body.")

Prior to His ascension Jesus appeared in different forms to His disciples in order to converse with them, but never after His ascension.

So now we do not look for Him to return circumvented by a human body, but in His glorious spirit body, "in the express image of the Father's person," "in all His glory and all the holy angels with Him."

Thus He comes to dethrone Satan and all the wicked spirits that have been so long deluding mankind through witches, necromancers, medicine men, mediums of spiritism, and the oracles of paganism. Satan has been the prince of this world (age) and so selfishness, lust, strife, wickedness, superstition, and error have prevailed to ruin and deceive mankind.

What a relief it will be when Christ is King instead of Satan, when all the evil influences are restrained, when all inducements to sin are taken out of the way, when error and superstition are exposed and when evil and wickedness are quickly detected and justly punished.

Then, "when the Kingdom is the Lord's and He is Governor among the nations will the people learn righteousness" (Psalm 22:27, 28; Isaiah 26:9) .

Instead of selfishness, ambition and greed, the spirit of the new King will prevail, the spirit of love and care for one another, a spirit of brotherhood among men. No more will false teachings deceive men, for when the fiery time of trouble is over, the high-minded, the proud and hard-hearted will have been humbled and melted, and the pure teachings of God's Word, showing His great and good purpose respecting mankind, will be made known and "all with one consent will turn to the Lord" (Zeph. 3:8, 9) .

Just prior to His crucifixion our Lord had cursed the fig tree—a symbol of the curse on the Jewish nation, "Your house is left unto you desolate." In Matt. 24:32, 33, He tells us that when we see this fig tree (the Jewish nation) budding again, then know that the time is near for the accomplishment of the matter connected with the questions of verse 3, which He was answering—"When shall these things be? What shall be the sign of thy presence (Greek), and of the end of the world (Age) ? He adds that the generation living when these things are discernible will not pass away until all be fulfilled.

The Jews are to be fully restored to their own land, and will be the visible earthly representatives of the invisible heavenly kingdom of Christ. We read that the Law shall go forth out of Zion, the spiritual phase of the kingdom, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. The prophets are full of rich promises of that time of blessing when evil and wickedness will be stamped out and the way of righteousness will be made easy. The stones of temptation will be taken out of the way and there will be no lion in the path, for Satan as a roaring lion will no longer be at liberty, but is to be restrained (Isa. 35; Isa 25:6-9; Isa 62:10-12;

Micah 4:1-5).

There will be no more war, no more strife, no more the innocent suffering for the guilty, no more oppression, no more injustice. There will be full opportunity for every man and woman to do all that is right and kind and good, and “the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land,” while the proud, the arrogant and evil doer, shall be destroyed in the second death (Psa. 72).

Finally there shall be no more curse, and no more death. “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away” (Rev. 21 4).

Micah 4:1-5 very beautifully describes the happy condition in the earth, when Christ is King instead of Satan, when justice and love prevail instead of hatred, jealousy, strife and iniquity. “In the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains (kingdoms—Israel will again represent God’s kingdom on earth) , it shall be exalted above the hills (lesser nations), and people shall flow unto it; and many nations shall say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths; for the law shall go forth out of Zion (Christ and the Church, the heavenly phase of the Kingdom) and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (the earthly capital). And He shall judge among many people and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under iris vine and under his fig tree and none shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.”

Not only are those who are fortunate to be living at that time to enjoy this happy condition, but “all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth” (John 5:28, 29; R.V.). This is particularly promised regarding Israel in Ezekiel 37:12-14: “O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel.” Jeremiah 31 beautifully describes the joys of returning favor to Israel and the establishing with them of the New Covenant under which they, and all who will, may find Divine favor, blessing and life.

The Apostle Peter speaks of the same matter in Acts 3:20-22; “He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear (obey) in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you; and it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people.”

(It is expected that the above article will be printed in tract form. Friends desiring a supply are asked to state how many they could use to advantage.)

O Lord, grant unto *m e . . .* such moderation in all enjoyments, such diligence in honest labour, and such purity of mind that, amidst the changes, miseries, or pleasure of life, I may keep my mind fixed upon Thee, and improve every day in grace, till I shall be received into Thy kingdom of eternal happiness.—Dr. Johnson.

The Cross is no longer a cross when there is no self to suffer under it.—Henelon.

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Inside Atoms and Stars.

The following article appeared in the Melbourne "Age" some few weeks ago, and permission has been granted for republishing in our "Peoples Paper". It is knowledge of this nature which helps us to grasp the immensity of creation, and the wonderful fulfilling of prophecy in our day.

The core of the atom is the tiny, unseen particle called the nucleus. Its size is measured in million-millionths of an inch, and it weighs less than a million-million million-millionth of an ounce. If the whole length of the earth's equator (25,000 miles) were taken as an inch, the biggest nucleus would still appear less than the breadth of a human hair.

Yet this insignificant mite—what the layman may well rate as one of the most absurd fantasies of science—has been the leading "villain" on the world stage since the end of World War 2.

No other scientific factor has so excited politicians, called conferences and conventions, preoccupied the United Nations and stirred up such public apprehension. For all its enriching peacetime uses, the atomic nucleus stands unrivalled as the most deadly threat to civilisation of all time.

Mushroom clouds billowing skywards over the Monte Bello and Marshall Islands are recurrent reminders that the tiny nucleus is a mighty force in human affairs. Atomic bombs draw their prodigious energy from nuclear reactions. The small war-time bomb dropped on Hiroshima was equivalent to the explosion of 20,000 tons of T.N.T. The so-called "hydrogen bomb" is rated in mega tons (millions of tons of T.N.T.)—a terrible testimony to the very practical consequence of tinkering with the inside of the atom.

But let us shift our gaze for the moment from frightening visions of destruction to the tranquil hilltop observations where astronomers have trained their telescopes on distant galaxies for rather longer than physicists have studied the nucleus. Now just what astronomy and galaxies have to do with bombs and atoms you have good cause to wonder. On the face of it, they don't have much in common except a proclivity for excessively small numbers.

From superlatives of smallness we swing to superlatives of bigness. Here, in the realm of the galaxies, distances are measured in "light years"—the convenient yardstick for six million million miles. The giant grouping of stars which makes a galaxy such as our own Milky Way may be 60,000 light years across or even larger. Within the limits of space probed by America's 200-inch Mount Palomar telescope there are a hundred million such galaxies; each probably numbers something like 100,000 million stars.

Now think of the energy which this represents. The sun radiates about 50 horsepower for every square inch of its enormous surface, which amounts to a grand total, if we use electrical units, of about 466,000 million million million kilowatts. These are numbers to make the senses reel. The sun pours into space every second more energy than man has used in the whole of his history. Its huge furnaces have been doing that for numberless years, yet the sun is just one of all those myriad stars. What is the source of this profligate outpouring of energy through the universe? Nothing delights the orderly mind of the scientist more than finding evidence of a unity underlying the seemingly unrelated ranks of nature. From the ultra-small of the nucleus to the ultra-large of a stropornical space involves writing a fantastic number—10 followed by 39 zeros. Yet this is the range over which studies of the nucleus have been both fruitful and important.

The main stream of astronomy met the main stream of modern physics in the 1930's. Astronomers studying the temperatures, chemical composition and energy output of stars had made common cause

with the physicists who were steadily accumulating data on what happens when the nuclei of atoms collide. The outcome was a theory (chiefly due, by the way, to German-born Hans Bethe working in the United States) which located all the energy of the stars right in the heart of the atom.

Subsequently, by one of those strange twists to which science is vulnerable, this same theory of atoms and stars paved the way for the hydrogen bomb. Most stars, including our sun, consist chiefly of hydrogen, a fairly ordinary gas which comes, as welders know, bottled in steel cylinders. Temperature is the crux of the matter. The higher it becomes the faster hydrogen atoms move about and jostle one another. At temperatures between ten and a hundred million degrees strange things begin to happen.

Colliding at speeds of about 600 miles a second, some of the atoms stick together. What is known as a “fusion” process occurs. Leaving out all the details, the overall effect is to combine four hydrogen atoms into one helium atom. Each time this happens, energy is released instantaneously. Here is the secret of the furnaces of the stars.

However, even though this has been recognised for many years, no process known to man could generate temperatures of millions of degrees on earth—until the atom bomb came along. Explosive fissioning of uranium or plutonium (the original A-bombs) produces a central temperature exceeding ten million degrees over a volume of a few cubic yards during the instant of detonation. In short, a fission bomb can be used to trigger off a fusion explosion, and it is now common knowledge that some such device forms one stage of the H-bomb.

We have now turned a full circle—from the tiny nucleus of the atom to the giant spread of the universe and back again to man’s unhealthy co-existence with atomic weapons. The inter-relation of two sciences illustrated by the story is interesting and instructive. One can never tell where research will throw down roots for nourishment—nor yet where it will lead.

In Thy Name.

“There were only two or three of us
Who came to the place of prayer
Came in the teeth of a driving storm;
But for that we did not care,
Since after our hymns of praise had risen,
And our earnest prayers were said,.

The Master Himself was present there
And gave us the- living bread.
“We noted His look in each other’s face,
So loving, and glad, and free;
We felt His touch when our heads were bowed,
We heard His ‘Come to Me!’

Nobody saw Him lift the latch,
And none unbarred the door;
But ‘Peace’ was His token in every heart,
And how could we ask for more ?
“Each of us felt the relief from sin,
Christ’s purchase for one and all;

Each of us dropped his load of care,
And heard the heavenly call;
And over our spirits a blessed calm
Swept in from the Jasper Sea.
And strength was ours for the toil of life
In the days that were yet to be.

“It was only a handful gathered in
To that little place of prayer.
Outside were struggle and strife and sin,
But the Lord Himself was there.

He came to redeem the pledge He gave
Wherever his loved ones be,
To give His comfort and joy to them
Though they count but two or three.”
—Selected.

Unstopped Wells.

(Convention Address)

IN Genesis 26:12-25 there is an interesting account of some of Isaac's experiences. It shows the problems associated with this man of faith; how he met them, and how, with God blessing him, all annoyances and inconveniences of the flesh were overruled for his good. Isaac was a man of peace, without doubt; he preferred peace to strife, even when his was a just cause against opposition. So peace-loving was he that with superior power he accedes to a request from a weak, but vexatious opponent.

In the account are also records of Isaac's greatness and success as an agriculturist, a cattle farmer, and in addition, a leader among men. He became so prominent in his activities, God granting an abundant increase in every direction, that soon he became the object of envy. The Philistines envied him, not only for his greatness, but because of the water that issued from precious wells that his father Abraham had dug. They probably argued that to take away this source of life would cripple the object of their envy; and therein hangs a story with many implications.

It will be noticed that Abraham was primarily instrumental in opening these wells. He, too, encountered opposition because of the copious supply of water that was his, to guarantee survival in times of famine. Two periods of famine are connected with our story, the first in the days of Abraham when he moved into this section and dug the wells; the next in the day of Isaac, which drove him to the part occupied by his father. He immediately set about digging the same wells, for the Philistines had stopped them after Abraham's death, probably to discourage any would-be neighbours. Isaac set about unstopping the wells, not without opposition, but succeeded in providing for all his camp that most necessary and vital commodity—water. We appreciate water at all times, but at no time would it be more precious than in a time of drought and famine. How a parched, dry, starved land will drink in the life-giving showers.

In the two periods before us there was also another kind of famine prevailing, "not a famine of bread, nor of thirst of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." His wells of faith and love had been stopped; so much so, that Abraham was advised to "move on". He left all his kindred and came to this Valley of Gerar where he enjoyed the Well of Faith as well as the wells of water for his camp and herds. Isaac's was a similar experience, for although the Philistines recognised in him a "man of God" and that "God was with him", they asked him to move on. Note the subtle way it was done. The herdsmen quarrelled with Isaac's servants because of the wells; they had stopped them, not having the use for additional water; and when the wells were unstopped they argued that they were theirs. What a dog-in-the-manger attitude. Fearing civil war and all its evil consequences they entreat Isaac to "move on" rather than cause the pain and suffering of war. Peaceful-like, he consented, and moved further down the valley, and then there was a repetition of the first contention. Surely there was a famine in existence besides the famine of water. Isaac moved on yet again, and this time seemed to be far enough removed from man-made boundaries that he was not troubled further.

Could we view this record of the wells and the ensuing disputes, etc., in a larger way. Let us call the three wells of water by names. They originally had names; but we'll give them modern names. Let us call No. 1 well "Faith". This well yielded precious and pure water to Abraham. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs of the same promise with him; for he looked for a city that had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith when he was tried he offered up his only son, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." How deeply he drank from this well is shown when Jesus declared that "Abraham rejoiced to see my day." And the wells of Knowledge and Love are closely related; the water is similar in many

respects—so vital to be pure, unadulterated, and when understood aright, how refreshing, invigorating, inspiring and a source of strength.

After Abraham's death the Philistines stopped these wells with stones, mud, earth and rubbish. But Isaac is not long in discovering that God's promises are all stopped except they spring from Faith, Love and True Knowledge. He immediately set about to unstop these wells—"By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come." The famine again strikes hard; in a godless world Isaac quickly turned to proven springs of truth. The faith of the fathers, unadulterated, determines that we also drink from waters from which faithful ones have already drunk and been satisfied.

In the re-digging and uncovering, notice particularly that two wells were the source of great strife and contention, and that the third was successfully held. These matters have larger meanings. Transfer these figures to the time when the Great Isaac came, when Jesus at His first advent unstopped the precious wells that had so long been effectually stopped. How He chided them with "taking away the key of knowledge." Instead of love He found hardness of heart; so much so, that it caused Him to weep. Faith was practically non-existent, just a mere spark among His own that He refers to them as "ye of little faith." What a task He began when these old Abrahamic wells began again to gush with precious truths. Remember the incident by the well of Samaria, when He declared to the woman, "If thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." And again, referring to the literal water, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." It was because Israel had forsaken the fountain of living water and hewed for themselves broken cisterns that could hold no water (Jer. 2:12) that Jesus, unstopping the pure water of truth, cried in the temple, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink."

In a larger and wider sense we could say, that with the coming of Jesus, and His ministry of reconciliation being preached, the wells of Faith, Knowledge and Love were truly unstopped and their precious waters began to flow to assuage the thirst of righteous seekers. "All marvelled at the gracious words that flowed from his lips," and "never man spake like this man." The greater Isaac uncovered the source and springs of truth. "In him was life, and the life was the light of man."

You remember how they contended about the water in our story? Two wells were taken away while the third remained open. Modern Philistines use more effectual material than earth, etc., to stop wells; they use stones of ignorance, mud of tradition, and the earth of superstition to quell the life-blood of the Church. Think of how the Ransom, the basic doctrine of salvation, has been beclouded with erroneous teachings. Evangelists of international fame, who command tremendous audiences, becloud the doctrine of the Ransom when they teach that Jesus was God in the flesh, or part God and part man. Along with wholesome counsel and good advice this basic doctrine of the Christian faith is adulterated, and a shadow is cast over such a plain Scriptural statement that "the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (Tim. 2:5, 6).

The doctrine of the Trinity also discounts the ransom; the coming again of our Lord as a human being also discounts the ransom. The purity and harmony of the Word is destroyed as these two wells of Faith and Knowledge are stopped. Down through the age the well of Love has ever been flowing, and through its waters we taste the quality of the others that generally have ceased to flow. To illustrate: What a blessed hope for the early church was the "coming again of the Lord." His second coming was a topic on everyone's lips. Where today do you hear mention of this blessed looked-for event? The promise of His return might just as well never been given for all the notice that is taken of it. This well has been stopped; except, of course, among a very small minority, who, to avoid strife and promote peace have "moved on" down the valley—moved to "the desert" condition of Revelation. Although their supply is sparse, it is

sufficient and copious enough for their immediate requirements. While sometimes we do hear mention of the second coming of our Lord, yet this too has been diluted with the mud of human-mindedness, and intellectual giants of philosophy and theosophy claim He will come again as a man. Peter mentions how some “wrest the Scriptures,” and surely they must do this to distort such plain, undiluted truth as—”the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” And again, just before His departure, “Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more,” and from the Apostle Paul, “Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.”

Faith, Knowledge, Love—these are wells of God-given water. They had been stopped or diluted to such an extent with mud, earth and stones that their true significance had been lost. But Jesus unstopped these wells, and while the Household of Faith remains loyal these wells will continue to discharge their nutritious and healing waters. May God open our eyes of understanding and keep them open. What sights we should behold! Let us not, as Hagar, be depressed, despondent to a degree of exhaustion, while all the time right beside us are wells of refreshing water in what to all intents is a wilderness. Think of the New Jerusalem; in that glorious and desirable city it is not only the “abominable” who are excluded, but also the “fearful” and “unbelieving.”

Some will say of all the various denominations that exist, “Ah, but there is that little golden thread running through each one.” Yes, it is true, for if there was no truth at all in these erroneous teachings they would have short lives. But the fact is that here is some truth and that is what carries it forward; however, take care, for just as it takes one small particle of corruption only to poison a volume of pure -water, and the partaker seems to become sick with the small corruption rather than being healed with the volume. To drink freely from our wells of salvation means we shall have the promise of one of the Beatitudes fulfilled in us: “Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”

Question Box.

Question.—Phil. 3:13, “Forgetting those things that are behind.” To what things does the Apostle refer, and why should we forget them?

Answer.—The Apostle had a very definite and clear view of the real Christian life. To him it was no mere expression, but a vital fact that he had presented himself a living sacrifice to God. All that he had, all that he had hoped for, all his ambitions, aims, objects in life, his education, social standing, business prospects, his wealth, his strength, everything was earnestly devoted to God, to be used in His service to His glory. He had indeed experienced the great change; “old things had passed away and all things had become new.” His object in life was to do, not his own will but God’s will; his prospect was no longer earthly gain, but heavenly hopes. Oh, how many things he learned to forget, to neglect, while he pressed toward the mark for the great prize of the high-calling of God in Christ Jesus.

With this forgetting of the old things, such as advantages of birth and station in life, education and wealth, we all come unto Christ on a common level, and find a happy brotherhood irrespective of social standing. How necessary it is to keep forgetting those things that are behind; how easy it might be to long after some of the good things that were laid on the altar. Remember Lot’s wife, remember the things before us. “How vain is all beneath the skies, how transient every earthly bliss.”

Surely there are many things which ought to be forgotten, which will keep coming up. Sometimes personal injuries are apt to keep wrangling in the mind; we have forgotten that we yielded ourselves, our reputation, and our all to the Lord, and, therefore, can cast on Him our every care, all insults and injuries, and leave them at His feet—forget them. Maybe there are lessons for us in the incidents, and we should not forget these lessons. Nor does it mean that we would not remember the circumstances, but we would forget in the sense that all is past, and not a trace of ill-will or unkind thought remains.

Sometimes we may be apt to keep remembering, our own wrong doings, our sins, and become depressed. Let us remember the lessons and grow stronger from the realisation of the failure, but having come to the Lord and laid it all at the foot of the Cross, let us do like the Lord has promised to do for us for Jesus’ sake, “Cast your sins behind My back.”

Let us press forward with more determination, and look to the wonderful hope before us, “Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.” (Heb. 12:1, 2). There are many things we should remember, and by exercising our memories on these lines it will not be so hard to forget things which are better forgotten. Let us remember the pit from whence we were taken, the Grace of God which stooped to lift us up and set our feet on the rock Jesus Christ. Let us remember the patient long-suffering of God towards us, as we have tried to walk the narrow way, with so many faults, weaknesses and falls. Surely His grace has abounded towards us. Let us ever remember what it cost the Father to permit His Son to die for us, and what it cost our Redeemer to pay the price of sin on our behalf.

Question.—In what way should we expect answers to our prayers, when we pray for guidance on any particular issue?

Answer.—We should remember that while we desire to be guided by God, that ours is a walk by faith and not by sight. That is that we would not expect the way always to be quite clear. It is often by perplexities that our faith is tested, and Peter reminds us that “the trial of our faith is more precious than that of gold.” If our way was so plain and clear, and God’s will for us always easily seen, the Christian way would be much easier. It is, however, by hard experiences that character is formed, and we must not forget that that

is the most important thing in life. “This one thing I do, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Evidently our Lord Jesus did not understand at the time all that the Father required of Him. Paul, too, thought he would have been better without the thorn in the flesh, but the Lord saw it better otherwise. So while we should bring everything to God in prayer, lay open our hearts and minds, our joys, our sorrows, our fears and our hopes, our responsibilities, our anxieties, in connection with loved ones, friends, homes and businesses, yet we would not come with the thought of telling the

Lord that it would be better if He would do this or permit that, or make someone else willing for this or that, but it seems that we should spread our difficulties before the Lord, and ask Him to grant us the “wisdom, which He has promised to give to them that ask Him,” and also ask Him to help us to trust and be content with the lot He has marked out for us; content to drink the cup which He has apportioned for us.

If we had not sufficient trust and submissiveness to the Divine will, we might be found praying for things which we should not, but we are sure that it is right to earnestly desire and pray for God’s holy spirit, for the wisdom from above, and for Divine guidance. The Lord taught us to pray, Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. “The meek will He guide in judgment, the meek will He teach His way” (Psa. 25:9); “For this God is our God for ever and for ever. He will be our guide even unto death” (Psa. 48:14).

However, God guides us to-day very differently to the way He guided Israel. Then the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, showed them when to move’ and where to go. The Lord has provided us with His Word, and given us His spirit, and He has taught us His will in righteousness; He has made us to know His purpose for us, and expects us to co-operate with Him in the attainment of the perfect character. As we gauge so much of the Divine will for us, we shall not be so anxious to escape all trouble, but rather that the trouble has its sanctifying effect in us.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

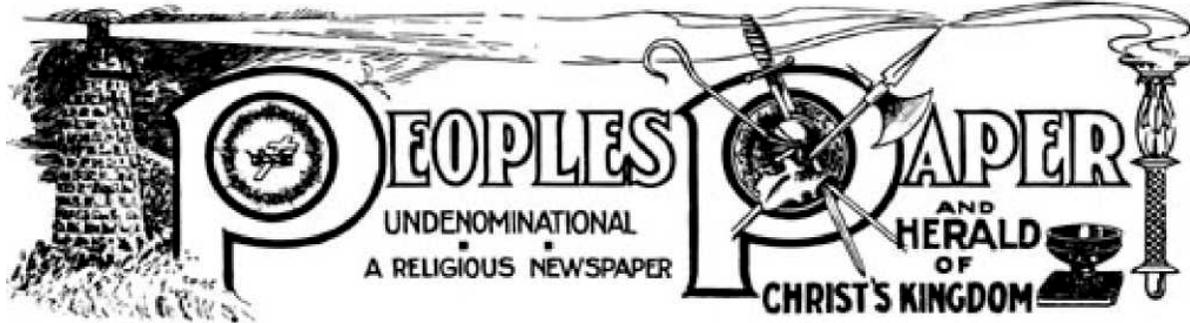
Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.

Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. ., 8.15 a.m.

Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. 9 a.m.

Perth, 6KY, 227 M. ., 4.45 p.m.

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Events in the Holy Land Past, Present and Future.

IN all the references to events in the Holy Land, it should be understood that we are thinking not only of the locality known as Israel or Palestine, but have in mind the larger area, also, which at the present time surrounds Palestine, and which we believe in the future will certainly be incorporated in the State of Israel, as the Central State, so to speak, of the Kingdom of God on earth.

The first important event in the Holy Land, so far as humanity is concerned, was the creation of our first parents in the perfect conditions of the Garden of Eden. That God chose that locality on the earth's surface, at once impresses all thoughtful students of His Word that it must have been the most suitable for the purpose of commencing the habitation of this world. It has been suggested that Palestine and surrounding country is about the geographical centre of the earth's surface, and not only was it appropriate for our first parents to be established there in the first place, but also that same locality will be the most appropriate world centre from which "the word of the Lord will go forth from Jerusalem," in the glorious earthly Kingdom to come. (Micah 4:2).

Be that as it may, the fact is that Adam and Eve were created and dwelt in that perfect garden paradise while they were obedient to their loving Creator. But disobedience came in, as is well known, and we read in Genesis 3:23, 24—"Therefore the Lord God sent him (Adam) forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

While we cannot be sure of the exact location of the Garden of Eden, it is interesting to note that Adam and Eve were driven out eastward in the direction of Babylonia, Persia, and further off, India. This is of interest, because after the recording of the families of Noah, in Genesis 10, following the Flood in Noah's day, we read in Gen. 11:2—"And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east (rather eastward—margin), that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there." Shinar, we are told, was a province in Babylonia and thought by some writers to be the plain between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, and afterwards called Mesopotamia.

Reading on in Genesis 11, we are informed about the building of the Tower of Babel, and how the Lord put a stop to that building by confounding their language, and we read in verse 11—"From thence did the

Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.” In the following verses[^] of this chapter we find the generations of Shem listed, until we come to Terah, the father of Abram, and we read in verse 31—”And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son’s son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram’s wife; and they went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.”

It has been suggested that Ur of the Chaldees was as far off as India. Terah, Abram’s father, apparently moved by some good impulse, took Abram and other family members in the direction of the land of Canaan, to Haran; Terah died and then in chapter 12 of Genesis we find a direct call from the Lord to Abram, as follows—”Now the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation . . . And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” Surely this was a very important event in the Holy Land, and we have Stephen’s record in the New Testament giving further testimony. (See Acts 7:2-4; also Joshua 24:1-3.)

To demonstrate that it was a voluntary act on the part of Abraham (God changing his name from Abram—Gen. 17:5), we have Paul’s words in Hebrews 11:15—”If they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.” Yes, God leaves His servants a free will in all their service and devotion to Him. “If they had been mindful” —if they looked back longingly for the life that was past they could easily have returned to it, and the Lord would have found others to serve His plans and purposes, and receive His blessing in their hearts.

We remember on one occasion in the ministry of Jesus after He had been speaking of the deep truths necessary for His true followers to understand, it is recorded—”From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?” Had they been mindful, they also may have gone away, and forsaken the Lord and His cause! But how grandly and encouragingly did Peter respond—”Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” (John 6:66-69.) So, with all the Lord’s people; they have a free will, and if they are mindful of the former, worldly life, they have the opportunity to return, if they do not value the privilege of service in the steps of Christ.

As with Abram the call or invitation was—”Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee,”—so, the invitation to the Lord’s people of the Gospel Age to walk in the Christian way is beautifully presented by the Psalmist—”Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.” (Psa. 45:10,11.) “Forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house”—Adam’s house, the world in general; human hopes, aims and ambitions.

In Abraham’s case, how beautifully he responded to the call of the Lord; what an example of faith, trust and confidence in God we have in his readiness to offer his son Isaac on the altar of sacrifice, as shown by Paul in Heb. 11:17-19. The outcome was the wonderful covenant promise of God recorded in Gen. 22:15-18,—”And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son. That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”

A further detailed outline of events in the Holy Land from Abraham’s time to his own day is given by Joshua, the faithful leader of Israel into Canaan, and this is most informative. (See Joshua 24:2-25.) Again, from the Apostle Paul, we have a brief review of events from the time of Israel’s deliverance from

Egypt to our Lord's first advent, in Acts 13:16-24. Referring to David and the Lord's declaration that he was a man after His own heart, we read in verse 23 of this 13th chapter of Acts—"Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus." And what an event in the Holy Land was the coming of Jesus, the Messiah of Israel, the Saviour of the world! How fitting also, that the Redeemer should come, and pay the sacrifice for the sins of the world of mankind in the very place where disobedience brought condemnation upon all.

We call to mind also, that as Israel was God's chosen nation, the Messiah was sent first of all to that people, as we read from the Apostle John—"He came unto his own, and his own received him not (as a nation); but as many as received him, to them gave he power (privilege) to become the sons of God." (John 1:11, 12.) So, not only were the first human beings created in the Holy Land, but also the first members for the heavenly New Creation, Christ, Himself, of course, being the first and foremost One of these first-fruits unto God of His creatures.

How wonderfully Jesus encouraged and taught His devoted little band as He walked the roads and dwelt in the towns of Palestine—to think that the Lord of Glory spent 34 years sojourning in that dusty land, calling, teaching, blessing and comforting His people for the heavenly kingdom, surely fills us with admiration and thankfulness beyond description. As Paul declared—"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. 8:9.) We think also of the loving words of comfort and cheer the Lord gave to His little band of followers in Jerusalem, just previous to His death. (See John 14:1-3, 27; also John 16:7, 20, 22, 26, 27, 32, 33.)

Then, of course, Jesus had to declare some sad things respecting Israel, and prophesy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, when, with the rejection of Himself, He declared—"Your house is left unto you desolate." (See Luke 19:41-44, and Luke 21:23, 24.) "They shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Students of history well know that the Jewish people have been scattered throughout all nations since about A.D.70, and Jerusalem was truly "trodden down" of the Gentiles until the ending of "Gentile times"-1914-1918. The Apostle Paul also made mention in his day of the making desolate of the Jewish nation, when he commended the Thessalonian brethren for their faithfulness under persecution, just as the Jewish Christians had to endure similarly from their own Jewish people. (See 1 Thes. 2:14-16.)

In the closing days of the Apostles' lives the witness of the gospel passed from Palestine to Asia Minor, and gradually, during the Gospel Age, extended from country to country throughout Europe, Britain, America, etc., and Palestine was truly left desolate, literally and spiritually. Truly did Paul declare in Romans 11:25—"Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." That is, until the Bride of Christ is complete, and the members gathered into the heavenly kingdom.

Then, as the end of the Gospel Age approached, and the last members of the "fulness of the Gentiles" were being found in every nation, kindred and tongue, with Israel still blind in part—blind to the fact that Jesus was their Messiah—a wonderful event took place in the Holy Land as a result of the 1914-18 war. Jerusalem was delivered from the domination of the Turks! Truly this was a fulfilment of prophecy in a remarkable manner! The following quotation from the booklet, "Zionism in Prophecy" is of special interest in this respect:-

"When Jerusalem was captured from the Turks in 1917, not merely Jewry but the whole wide world thrilled to the news of the event. Everybody seemed to sense that here was some unusual history in the making—as if some strange spiritual current had sent a wave of wonder around the entire earth. Even the British troops themselves were peculiarly affected as on no other battlefield, said Sir Arthur Wingate; all being eager for information as to the history of each town or hill as it was taken. And so keenly interested

was the reading public the world over, concerning this sector of the Allied campaign, that the army of newspaper correspondents were kept busy for days thumbing through Bibles, fitting Old Testament records to current events, and cabling column after column of dispatches filled with narrations of things that occurred on this same battlefield far back in the great days of the Jewish kingdom.

“If the capture of Jerusalem thus excited the attention of all Gentile people throughout the earth, how indeed must it have thrilled every Jew—especially he who is filled with a traditional passion for the land of his fathers, so great that he instinctively turns his face toward Jerusalem when he prays; who buries his dead facing east; and who purposely leaves partly unfinished every house that he builds for his dwelling, as mute testimony to the fact that he is but a sojourner, a wanderer, a pilgrim in a strange land not his own.

“How Jerusalem was taken on December 9, 1917, without bombs or gunfire, seems nothing short of a divine miracle. Jerusalem is almost impregnable as a natural fortress or stronghold. The Turkish army could have held out for quite a long time, inflicting many casualties upon the allies. In the end, the city might have been destroyed, even as it was laid low by Nebuchadnezzar at the beginning of the ‘seven times’, and by Titus following our Lord’s first advent. But the time had come for God to deal ‘comfortably’ with Jerusalem; for ‘her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.’ (Isa. 40:1, 2.) Hence, in divine providence, not only was the city spared from destruction, but it was actually taken without a single shot being fired, though it was being held by fierce and modernly equipped Turkish troops.

“It was not until after the armistice that the full story behind Jerusalem’s easy capture came to light. As General Allenby approached with his army, he wondered how he could best take the city without too much damage. He had no desire to destroy it, and in fact abhorred the thought of devastation and bloodshed within its sacred walls. But war is war, and he had a duty to perform. While he was thus trying to formulate plans for capturing yet sparing the city, an enemy runner reached his Turkish commandant, and reported that a strong army was approaching, led by a powerful general named Allah-Bey (Allenby). The news quickly spread among the superstitious Moslem troops, and the magic name Allenby was understood by all of them to be AllahBey—which meant, ‘The Prophet of Allah’. Terrified by what to them was a sacred name, they refused to fight against a ‘prophet of Allah’, fearing Allah’s displeasure; and the commandant finally gave orders to hastily evacuate the holy city ere ‘Allah-Bey’ arrived.”

What amazing progress has taken place in the Holy Land since 1917. Hundreds of thousands of refugees have returned to the Promised Land, and Israel has become a State with its own President, and Parliament, as yet manmade, but all in fulfilment of prophecies of long ago, as well as fulfilling the words of Christ and the Apostles. (See Matt. 24:32, 33; Luke 21:29-31.) The words also of the Apostle Paul in Romans 11:25-32 are most revealing. After describing the condition of Israel during the Gospel Age when the number of the Church of Christ are “come in” from the Gentiles, and with “Jacob’s trouble” at the end of this age all passed, the Apostle declares—“And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion (the spiritual phase of the kingdom) the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins, etc.”

The new covenant which the Lord will then make with Israel and through which His blessings will flow out to them when the Kingdom of Christ is operating, is clearly shown by the prophet Jeremiah 31:31-34. What a wonderful time it will be for Israel, and through Israel for “all the families of the earth” when “all shall know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest,” and have opportunity of gaining lasting life by obedience to the laws of Christ’s kingdom. (See also Acts 15:14-18; compare with Amos 9:11-15.)

How wonderfully also have the prophet’s words been fulfilled respecting the methods used to encourage the return of the Israelites to the Holy Land since 1917. We read—“Therefore, behold, the days come,

saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. But, the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them;

and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain (kingdom) and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.” (Jer. 16:14-16.)

There can be no doubt that the “fishing” and “hunting” experiences upon the Jewish people have been going on for many years, with the results that would have been thought impossible forty years ago. Of course there are yet further extreme difficulties through which Israel must pass, as revealed in Jeremiah 30:3-7—”Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.” Yes, and the Lord speaks with comfort and assurance to Israel in verses 10 and 11 of this chapter 30 of Jeremiah—”Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel; for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee; though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”

The reference in this wonderful prophecy from Jeremiah that “Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and none shall make him afraid,” is one of many assurances of the resurrection of all the ancient worthies of Israel, and indeed, of all mankind, as “all that are in the graves shall hear his (Christ’s) voice, and shall come forth.” (John 5:28.) Truly, what a wonderful future is in store for Israel, as revealed again from the prophet Ezekiel—”Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.” (Ezek. 37:12-14.)

From the prophet Hosea we have additional encouraging words, revealing the response of Israel to all their past experiences and their hope for the future as they obey the Lord in spirit and in truth—”Come, let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days (after the 5th and 6th 1000 year days of the Gospel Age) will he revive us; in the third day (the 7th 1000 year day of Christ’s Kingdom) he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.” (Hosea 6:1-3.) (See also Micah 4:1-4; Isa. 25:6-9; Isa. 35.)

Who of the Lord’s people today cannot rejoice as they see the fulfilment of prophecies relating to Israel, and which give confirmation that all that has been spoken by the mouth of all God’s prophets shall be accomplished in the Lord’s good time and way. The time is surely at hand for further startling events in the Holy Land, and all who have their hopes set on things above will delight also in every evidence of the near approach of the earthly kingdom, which shall prove to be “the desire of all nations.” (Haggai 2:6, 7.)

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Diversity Amongst God's People.

“Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?”-1 Cor 4:7.

WHILE it is true that all men are born with inalienable rights and privileges, yet no man is born without sin. The Scriptures very properly declare that the race in Adam was sold under sin six thousand years ago. In this sense, then, we are not born free, but slaves of sin. Neither are we born equal. No two persons are exactly alike in opportunity, talent and ability. We differ from one another. God did not create some better and some worse—some more richly endowed and some less richly endowed.

We are to take the Bible statement of the origin of humanity, and understand that God made Adam perfect. All the imperfections which encumber the human race are the results of the dying process. Sin has made us all to differ, then, from the original image and likeness of God. Satan brought that difference through Mother Eve.

In our text, however, the Apostle Paul has in mind a New Creation in Jesus Christ—a new order—amongst whose members there is a difference. Some in the Church have many talents, others have few talents; some have special talents, others ordinary talents. The Apostle says that it is God who has set the various members in the Body as it has pleased Him; and that both this setting, or apportioning, of the different members of the Body and the bringing forth of the different degrees of fruitage are manifestations of God's grace in our hearts. Thus we are made to differ from each other.

The matter of growth in the holy spirit is one that is dependent in large measure upon each one's zeal to know, to do the will of God. We are put into the school of Christ to learn of Him. Some learn more rapidly, others less rapidly. In proportion as they learn they have greater opportunities and blessings. All are granted a measure of the holy spirit—all granted some blessing. Those who are anxious to know the will of the Lord and to study it grow the more rapidly, and thus have more of the holy spirit. These are zealous to do the Lord's will; their progress is not attributable wholly to themselves, but especially to the favour of God.

The Apostle goes on to say, “Ye are God's workmanship. It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” We could not do this work ourselves. The power that is working in us is of God. He is preparing a glorious Temple. He has provided who shall be the chief corner-stone of this Temple, and who shall be the members of this Temple class. We could not choose the place for ourselves, but in God's providence we each responded to the call to be a living stone. The stones were first cut out of the dark quarry, and now are being shaped and prepared for places in the glorious building.

The great Master-Workman is doing a work upon us; He is chiselling and fashioning us; He is making us what we are. Consequently, there is to be no boasting. There is a certain amount of personality connected with each one, however, and if there is too much cross-grain in the stone it will be abandoned. As the Apostle Peter exhorts, we are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt us in due time. The same Apostle also reminds us that we should look up to God and give Him praise for all that we have and are.-1 Pet. 5:6; 4:11.

We are co-labourers with God. We give God the praise that He has made us to differ from our former selves; that He is making us thus to differ more every day, and that He will continue the good work as the days go by and as we seek to do His will. What have we of ourselves? Nothing! We were wholly dead through Adam's disobedience; we were born in this condition, having no right to everlasting life. But God has a plan which is world-wide in its scheme of blessing. He has offered the blessings of the highest feature of this Plan to us, and invited us to come to Him in advance of the world; and this we receive

through His grace.

Tracts Available.

The article—"When Christ is King"—which appeared in August "Peoples Paper" is expected to be available in tract form shortly. Friends who can use these tracts to advantage are invited to procure a supply without delay.

Bible Student's Hymnal (Music).—A supply of these music hymnals is now available. Containing 462 hymns with appropriate tunes, and well bound, these books are priced at 25/- post paid.

The Tabernacle which the Lord Pitched.

(Convention Address)

AS we contemplate the doings of God's people, Israel, both in The individual experiences of men like Jacob and others, and in the experiences of the people collectively as they journeyed through the wilderness, we find innumerable lessons of helpfulness. Time and again as they are brought to our mind in God's Word, certain incidents serve as a strengthening and refreshing influence.

"Search we may for many years, Still some new, rich gem appears."

How wise indeed has been our God in so ordering and overruling the affairs of this people, Israel, that His spiritual, antitypical Israel should be so warned, admonished, exhorted and strengthened all down through the age to this day.

While we would question the manner in which some earnest, but sometimes misinformed folk confront men in meeting halls, and even in the street with the question, Are you saved? we would acknowledge that it is the question of greatest moment to every man's real welfare.

Man has fallen; he is a sinner and is condemned to death—extinction of life. The man is never found who will dispute the fact that death is universal; it comes to all, and none expect to escape it. But if there is a way to be saved out of it, who will be foolish enough to ignore it. The majority of men today remain unconvinced that there is any hope of escape; to them death ends all. But if a glimmer of hope appears, wise indeed is the man who takes his stand alongside Paul's jailer and asks, What must I do to be saved? The answer today is just as simple as was Paul's—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:30, 31)—and as uncompromising as was Peter's—"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12).

Adam, as the leader into transgression, was the first one to feel the bands of death taking hold. It must have been a frightening experience for one who, up to that time, had not even to think of death, for he had dwelt in the security of eternal life as he lived in obedience. Adam would be quick to sense the change that had come, and we can assume that he would immediately reflect as to how the damage could be repaired, and he be restored to harmony again with his Creator. Of course it was too late, and he and all mankind were compelled to taste the transgression to the full.

One has commented that Adam instinctively would know the principle of justice and that sacrifice would be needed for redemption and atonement. Genesis 3:21 could have intimated it to him; previously, (verse 7) Adam and Eve had attempted to provide a covering for themselves, apparently unsuccessfully. The animals that were slain to provide the skins for a covering for them would in all probability be the first of

God's creation to be slaughtered and suffer death. The verse is brief and the very omissions are significant.

Adam, a wonderful being physically, mentally and morally, far superior to all other earthly creation, had under his dominion the lower animals; he called them all by name, implying that they responded to his will and word. In the perfections of paradise Adam would love them and they him. What a sacrifice must have been involved in the necessity that had arisen for taking their lives, all because of Adam's transgression.

We have witnessed the grief of children who have lost in death a little dog, cat, bird or other pet animal that had become endeared to them as a companion. Well, Adam's grief must have been accentuated greatly as the blood of these, his faithful companions, was shed. A little later Adam was to witness the actual death of one of his sons, as the result of murder at the hands of another son. Truly the draught has been a bitter one that he, and all his posterity have had to drink because of disobedience to the Creator.

Time went by, and in a tabernacle in the wilderness (a temporary building erected by man's hands under God's direction) was shown forth in type and ritual the method by which God would accept offerings for sacrifice to temporarily offset the results of sin. While this arrangement by God for the shedding of the blood of animals in sacrifice continued as a typical covering for sin, it never removed the condemnation, and fresh offerings had to be made from year to year. All this pointed forth to the great antitypical sacrifices which would forever release Adam and his progeny from the thralldom of sin and death, and restore the harmony and perfection Adam had enjoyed before, and had craved again ever since his fall.

What a happy day it will be for Adam when he finds himself restored to the harmony, perfection and glory of paradise again. What lessons he will have learned, and what adoration he will have for God who provided the substitute, and for the Redeemer who made the sacrifice to make it all possible. With what profound interest he and his posterity will follow the story of history, as they trace it through the arrangements of a tabernacle set up in a wilderness, and discern blossoming out from that, the real sacrifice enacted in the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man.

It is not possible to attempt to trace every feature of the tabernacle in the wilderness that had bearing on the great sacrifice made for sins by our dear Redeemer. The ceremonial sacrifices, seen and carried out in the tabernacle, were the pictures or "shadows" of the real sacrifices that took place in the true tabernacle without ocular demonstration to men.

The words of another serve here, and we quote—"When He (Christ) came, He undertook to carry out the provisions of the Law, not to offer the blood of animals, but to offer Himself. That is why when He came into the world He said, 'Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired, but a body hast Thou prepared for me. In whole burnt offerings Thou hast taken no pleasure. Then I said, I have come; in the roll of the book it is written of me, to do Thy will, O God.' (Heb. 10:8, 9) . . . Consider the nature of His humility and sacrifice. It was not necessary for Him to offer anything for Himself, for He was the perfect Son of God . . . All the circumstances of His life were ordained by God and any resistance thereto would have constituted sin. He said, 'The cup which my Father hath poured out, shall I not drink it'? It left no room for the exercise of his own will; therein lay the completeness of His sacrifice . . . Unlike the offerings of Israel, His were done in the heart, in the spirit, and could be seen only with the eye of faith. He did not enter a visible tabernacle, but the one the Lord pitched—the Divine purpose itself. (Heb. 9:11, 12) . He humbled Himself even to death on the cross and the Father who seeth in secret' understood and approved—it ascended to Him as a sweet smelling savor and His approval was demonstrated by raising Christ from the dead . . . Thus, by His sacrificial life He went to the Father and asked' for the redemption of His people. He broke down the barrier of sin so that thereafter they could go to the Father clothed in His righteousness. God's justice was satisfied and there was no further need to offer tokens."

The point desired to be especially impressed from this quotation is the secretiveness of our Lord's sacrifice within the true tabernacle. The deepest sufferings of our Lord were within. A few only of our Saviour's sufferings throughout the 3 years of His consecrated life are recorded in Holy Writ; innumerable others were not mentioned. It would seem that His mental agonies on the cross were more keenly felt than even the physical. What must He have endured when one of His own chosen disciples turned against Him and betrayed Him. The incident of Matt. 12:46-50 might well contain more than we think. Jesus' tender love for His mother could well have caused severe tugs at His heart strings, as He quietly demonstrated that His Father's business must come first just then, and did not allow Him at the time even to enquire the nature of their request; as also the incident of Jesus discerning His mother in the crowd as He was about to die, and His commending of her to John's care. The half has never been told of the mental anguish that our Master must have endured.

The disciples of Jesus are said to "fill up that which is behind" of Christ's afflictions in „their earthly experiences, and in these they need the assistance of their High Priest who ministers to them in the true tabernacle. Many are the proofs that the Apostles endured such experiences, and every one of God's true people down the age have had, or are having them. Despite the fact that Paul, like his leader and Lord, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, he was ever rejoicing (calmly happy) in the Lord, so that he could say, "I would to God that all that hear me this day were both altogether such as I am . . . except these bonds". (Acts 26:29) . The "bonds" were very real and he felt them keenly, and he could not find it in his heart to wish that others should have them; but he knew, nevertheless, that all who took their stand beside the same Lord would have "bonds" of some kind, so he admonishes in other places to regard them as but light in comparison with the glory to be theirs later on.

With Paul it was often prison thongs that fettered him, but though our "bonds" be not so, they can be just as real. Opposition of wife or husband, son or daughter, mother or father, or any other in a home, employer or employee at work, or any such like, can be a severe and continual "bond" keenly felt and giving rise to innumerable incidents that cause extreme mental anguish and suffering. But, dear friends, we are in the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, or has prepared, and every incident is witnessed by Him—every hidden sorrow of heart is known to Him. True, the world may know little of our real anguish, and even the brethren be scantily apprised of it, but the Lord knows it all. He who "seest in secret" understands and approves, and it ascends to Him as a sweet smelling savor; and in due time His approval will be openly demonstrated as He raises us in resurrection to participate in our Lord's glory.

Sometimes I almost wonder if my Lord doth know
About the many little things that wound my poor heart so;
I can but wonder if He knows the anguish of my soul

When tempests beat upon my head, and surging billows roll.
Ah; No I do not wonder; I am sure my Lord doth know
About the many, many things that wound my poor heart so.

We may even, at times, when assisting others to a knowledge of God's truth, become apprehensive for fear that one may also receive our "bond". Every Christian may feel like Paul, and could say, My friend, I wish you most earnestly the truth that I enjoy, but not my bond. But we should not falter, for though every Christian will have their bonds, they will also receive the same consolatory joys that has enabled every Christian to continue in the way rejoicing.

Some of you may even have read a letter of recent time, telling of a Brother who had long time diligently searched the truth while still connected to his denomination of the nominal church. Just occasionally he would meet with a little group of Bible Students who did what they could to assist him. At last convinced,

he knew he must take his stand.

He had not pursued his studies secretly from his wife, and she knew something of his struggles to get things straight. Now, in his decision, he was open too, and frankly confessed that he was through with his previous connections, and in future intended only to meet with the little band of Bible Students. His wife replied in the words of Ruth to Naomi in Ruth 1:16—"Whither thou goest I will go." How lovely! That dear Brother and Sister would receive their "bonds" also, we know; but He who (symbolically speaking) walks amid the golden candlesticks of His sanctuary has a faithful oversight of each individual member, and what wonderful things He has in store for each one that "overcometh".

O sacred union with the Perfect Mind!
Transcendent bliss, which Thou alone canst give,
How blest are they this Pearl of price who find,
And, dead to earth, have learned in Thee to live.

And thus, while dead to human hopes I lie,
Lost, and forever lost, to all but Thee,
My happy soul, since it has learned to die,
Has found new life in Thine infinity.

With joy we learn this lesson of the cross,
And tread the toilsome way which Jesus trod;
And counting present life and all things loss,
We find in death to self the life of God.

Yes, the life that is ministered to us by our great High Priest, the minister of the sanctuary—all hidden within the true tabernacle.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren of the Melbourne Class wish to announce that their Annual Christmas Convention is to be held this year over the four days at the Christmas period D.V., in Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. The exact dates for the gatherings will be announced in later issues of "Peoples Paper". This early notification is for the benefit of brethren at a distance who may be assisted in their arrangements by knowing of the gatherings at this time. All able to attend this Convention are cordially invited to be present.

To Be Thine.

“Oh, to be clean, to be pure, to be true!
Cost what it may, to be Thine through and through;
Purged from the promptings of evil within,
Freed by Thy grace from the thralldom of sin!

“Oh, to be simple to that which is ill,
Wise with a wisdom alert to Thy will;
Earnest of purpose and single of eye,
Eager to live and unfeared to die!

“Oh, to be fair, to be just, to be kind,
Sober in spirit, and humble in mind;
Patient, unselfish, regardful of all,
Thinking no evil, though evil befall!

“Oh, to be fervent, unceasing in prayer,
Watching thereunto Thy praise to declare!
Living or dying, this blessing be mine—
Always, in all things, to wholly be Thine!”

—Selected.

Bible Study Meetings.

Assemblies for undenominational Bible Study are to be found in the various States, and all earnest truth seekers will be very welcome.

Melbourne.—Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond (near Church Street)—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Geelong, Vic.—Sons of Temperance Hall, Ryrie Street—Sundays, 3 p.m.

Adelaide.—Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Way-mouth Street.—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.

Perth.—No. 7 Harvest Terrace (opposite Parliament House).—Sundays, 3 p.m. and 5.30 p.m.

“Hymns of Dawn Music Book.”--Containing the original 333 hymns, 27 additional in an Appendix, well bound in strong cloth, with silver lettering, this new edition is priced at 10/- post paid.

A very good Oxford Bible, with References, India paper, thumb index, Brevier clear type, Persian Morocco binding, is now available at 57/6.

FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m.
Sydney, 2KY, 294 M. , 8.15 a.m.
Brisbane, 4KQ, 435 M. , 9 a.m.
Perth, 6KY, 227 M. , 4.45 p.m.

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