



## Message to the Church at Philadelphia

“These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name”  
—Rev. 3:7-12.

**T**HIS Philadelphian message is the most cheerful of all these messages to the churches. Of the particular church, situated at the city of Philadelphia, we know nothing but what is implied or stated in these verses. It is evident, however, that it was a happy church; true to its name of “brotherly love”, which Philadelphia means. It was not without its trials, evidently, from those who professed to be “Jews” or of the Israel of God, and were not. “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.” For, says the Apostle—“They are not all Israel who are of Israel”—Rom. 9:7. No, “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it”—Rom. 11:7. “Which in time past were not a people but now are the people of God”—1 Pet. 2:10. And again says Paul, Rom. 2:28, 29—“For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is

a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

From this expression respecting the false claims of being Jews, it would seem possible that the Philadelphian Church in Asia had been troubled by the same Judaising element as had sought to bring the gentile Christians into bondage to the law, in Galatia, at Corinth and at Colosse. The thought then appears to be that there were those at Philadelphia who claimed to be Jews, strictly observing circumcision and such rites, and seeking to enforce Jewish ceremonies on Christians. These, however, were not really Christians, for they did not understand the Christian faith and liberty, and they were not true Jews—not “Israelites indeed”—or else they would have been able to accept the Apostles’ teachings concerning Jesus being the Messiah, and the new and living way to life by faith in His finished work.

While we have no account of Paul ever being at Philadelphia, it is not unlikely that during the three years he spent around Ephesus, that he may have been, and possibly he was the means of establishing that church. The church at Colosse, too, was not a very great distance from Philadelphia.

It would appear from verses 7 and 8 that this church had less of persecution and more opportunity of service than others. “I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.” This privilege of service seemed to be

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granted because they had strength, the talent to use the opportunity, and had proved themselves faithful, had kept the Lord's Word, and not denied His name. They had stood fast in the liberty of Christ, and would not allow these so-called "Jews" to bring them into bondage. "Thou hast kept the word of my patience." There is no reproof to this church, but the promise was that they should be kept from the hour of trial which was to come upon the whole world. This may in the local sense have had reference to the terrible pagan persecutions, particularly the 10 years of the Diocletian terror.

From the prophetic and historical view this message to Philadelphia would appear to refer to the church from the time of the Reformation up to the middle of last century. We have noted in respect of the previous messages that the One giving the message is appropriately described, and this is particularly so with respect to the Philadelphian period. The terrible conditions of assumed authority of the Thyatiran period, during which time the Pope had claimed to have the keys of heaven and hell, and the sole right to say what must be believed and taught, and what might be done and what must not be done, had brought about that "dead" condition of the Sardis period, when even the true Christians seemed to have all opportunity of preaching the gospel shut against them. The Pope was addressed as "his holiness" as head of the "holy Roman Catholic Church", and as representative of Christ he claimed that Christ's kingdom was established. All this only demonstrated that the great false church of Rome was, with the Pope as its head, the great anti-Christ, the great "desolating abomination", foretold in Daniel 7, and the "man of sin" which the Apostle said would come through the "great falling away"—2 Thes. 2.

So in bringing this message of comfort and encouragement to His Church, so as to strengthen the little strength remaining, the Lord is described as—He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth.

The great "man of sin" falsely addressed as holy—"his holiness"—had claimed to be reigning as representative of Christ, and had shut down all evangelical work, claiming to be able to open heaven to whom he would and to shut up in hell and purgatory those who displeased him.

To the church, as seen in Sardis, almost "dead", the true holy One comes—He who rightly possesses the key to David's throne—He whose right it is, He who has the real power to shut or to open, and His message is—"I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it."

Up to this time there had been numerous noble protests against the abominations of

papacy, numerous attempts to preach the gospel of grace by faith, and such noble characters had usually sealed their consecration by a martyr's death. The time had now come, however, when the developments of the Divine purpose required the two witnesses which had been clothed in sackcloth, to speak. The Old and New Testaments had been almost silent while papal creeds and dogmas prevailed. The Pope had almost closed the door, but now He who really held the key and the true holy One declared the door to be open, and no power in Rome or anywhere else could close it.

It might well be asked, How was it that Luther, Zwingli, Melancthon, Carlstadt, and others, were not martyred? The Pope was just as intolerant and cruel; he had the kings and princes of Europe under his control, but there was a Divine providence over those noble reformers. The door had been opened, and no one could shut it, and thus the Reformation made progress, and while the Lutheran movement was at first helped, but ultimately hindered, by the favour of the German princes—"Many clave unto them with flatteries"—the evangelical door has never been closed since that time. The light of truth has been shining brighter and brighter as one movement after another has taken up the torch. Each movement, however, after its first zeal and earnestness has been expended, has gradually settled down and declined, while the Lord has raised up others to carry on the work. There has been no hindrance; the door remains open, and by one means and another the work of "cleansing the sanctuary" has been accomplished.

The greatest movement of this period was that under the Wesleys, assisted by the Moravians and John Whitfield. This movement had a wonderful effect throughout the world, the Christian standard of true religion was raised, the line between the consecrated life of faith and the world was clearly defined. Everything of worldly ease or worldly pleasures, luxuries and fleshly tastes or desires, things of show or vanity were denounced, as being contrary to the spirit of Christ, and out of accord with the Christian narrow way. Some of the doctrines of Rome had been left behind, and denounced by Luther, now the Wesleys showed the pathway of sacrifice and sanctification as being essential to followers of Christ.

Other movements followed, clearing away further errors and bringing more truths to light. That known as the Miller movement of about 1829 filled the Christian church with hope respecting the near approach of the Lord's return. Following again the picture of Elijah, who was in the wilderness fed by ravens, drinking of the water of the brook Cherith and living on the morsel of meat and crux of oil at the widow's home during those 1260 days of drought in Israel, after which there was the plentiful rain, we see the church's experiences

pictured. Just as the 1260 days of drought covered the 1260 years of the dark ages of the periods of Thyatira and Sardis, so the abundance of rain following on the slaying of the prophets of Baal pictures the great Reformation work, and open door of opportunity, which came to the church in this Philadelphian period, and the showers of truth which have continued to refresh God's people. Gradually one error after another has been removed, and "still new beauties have we seen and still increasing light", as the truths of the Bible, God's two witnesses, have been revealed, particularly truths regarding the second coming of Christ. These truths have brought hope and joy and fellowship which separated the earnest watching saints from the simply nominal church. Thus there was not only a work proceeding in the way of clarifying the truths of the Bible and breaking away from the credal shackles of the dark ages, but the sanctuary class, the real Christians, were cleansed of the defiling errors and superstitions and separated from formalism and ceremonialism. Ever since that time there appears to have been a band of watchers, which is shown in the parable of the Virgins, as going forth to meet the bridegroom.

No wonder, then, with all the joys of the truth, the deliverance from the Roman abomination and its power to "tread down the saints of the most High", the coming into the liberty of faith, and comfort of the truth of justification by faith, and the privilege of consecration and the brightness of the heavenly hope, that a keen, sweet fellowship sprung up among God's people.

In Wesley's time what happy fellowship existed, what brotherly love was manifested in those early days. The class meetings were the strength of the movement. Brethren and sisters met to speak of their Christian experiences, their trials, their failures, and their victories and to encourage and sympathise with each other in the narrow way.

Methodism, however, soon declined into formalism and worldliness, but the Lord has kept His saints separated from the world, and by one movement or another, has encouraged the Virgin class to watch and wait, or, as this message expresses it, to—"Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

Brotherly love is the feature of this church, and such brotherly love as is derived from love to God. "This commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also"—1 John 4:21. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us"—1 John 4:12. What a power is seen in the truth, when we remember that the Church of Sardis was so dead and alive, but when the great Reformation broke out, how the truth and its liberty produced this loving fellowship.

Yet the church of this period was not free from trials, trials within and without. There

was much persecution and hardship to be endured, of which the Wesleys and their followers had a severe share, but there were also trials from those professing to be Jews, Christians, but were not. There were the nominals, outwardly they appeared to be leaders in the churches—Christians—but they were wolves in sheep's clothing; they usually wore the preacher's cloak, but persecuted and hindered the cause if they could. Such, for instance, were the Church of England clergymen who complained of Wesley's work, because the result was that so many came to the communion table, having been converted from sin to serve the Lord. The complaint was that it gave them too much to do!

These Jews that are not Jews, but are of the synagogue of Satan, still exist. They still persecute and lie against those who preach the truth, and, like their prototypes, the Pharisees of old, they will not enter themselves, and hinder those who would. The Lord promises to deal with this class; we can leave them to Him, while we attend to our privilege of proclaiming the glad, clear message of God's love, of the great hope of the church of reigning with Christ in His kingdom, and of the glorious work of blessing all the rest of mankind during that Messianic reign.

This professing class are to be made—"to know that I have loved you." They are evidently to be made aware of the great love of God bestowed upon the Church which is called to sit with Christ in His throne; they will then realise what they missed.

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience." It is in this period that so definite a time was set by Miller for the second coming of Christ, and the great disappointment occurred. Many seemed to lose hope and lose faith in God's Word, but there were those who overcame, endured patiently and trusted where they could not understand. They knew that it must be that they had understood things wrongly. It was no failure on God's part. They had been looking for Christ to return with outward show, to be seen by all. They had not gripped the truth that the Lord would be present for a time dealing with His church, quite unseen by men, not recognised by any but His own, and He would gradually make His presence known to them. So that which seemed so great a disappointment was, after all, just one of the Lord's arrangements for proving His people and separating those who could endure the word of His patience, from the unfaithful. Shall we say, separating the foolish Virgins from the wise Virgins?

The exhortation is—"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." The indication appears to be that the Lord would be present in this Phila-

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## Heavens Rolling Together

THE passing of two Popes of the Roman Catholic Church recently has prompted the reprinting of a short article which appeared in our "Peoples Paper" exactly twenty years ago, when a previous Pope passed away. The article is as follows:—

The recent death of the Pope of the Roman Catholic Church has revealed a situation amongst the so-called Protestant Churches which has not been so apparent previously. A news item in the Melbourne "Age" of the 13th October last, is presented in explanation:—

"The congregation at Wesley Church P.S.A., at Dr. Irving Benson's invitation, stood in silence as a tribute to 'a simple, humble, kindly, greatly gifted man who had gone to his reward.' At Scots Church Rev. A. Crichton Barr offered a prayer of thanksgiving for the life of a good man. Rev. Lyall Dixon at Independent Church said 'We share the loss occasioned by the death of the Pope, and sympathise with the members and friends of that church.'"

For the leader of any Protestant Church to declare that the head of the Roman Catholic Church had gone to his reward after serving for about twenty years as director of the great anti-christian Papal system is almost unbelievable. Surely the three church leaders quoted above have read a little of church history, and should know that during the Dark Ages the Papacy persecuted and slaughtered millions of innocent people in the name of Christ. They should know also that not many years ago the claim was made that the Roman Catholic Church never alters, and inasmuch as the recently deceased Pope accepted his office on the assumption that his predecessors had acted rightly, then he must have condoned their conduct, and, if he had the power, may also have continued their devastating reign of terror, and that, in the Lord's name.

When Napoleon took the Pope of his day prisoner and broke his power, by the Lord's overruling, that marked the beginning of the end of the greatest anti-christian system the world has known and now in our day we see further amazing evidence of the consuming going on in preparation for the complete destruction of the "mystery of iniquity" which

has deceived all nations. In Rev. 6:14 we read—"And the heaven (ecclesiastical systems) departed as a scroll when it is rolled together." How appropriate the expression—"rolled together as a scroll"—showing that the Mother and Daughter systems will combine, making up Great Babylon, which is shortly to be overthrown like a "great millstone cast into the sea." (Rev. 18.)

The recently deceased Pope along with all mankind, Roman Catholic and otherwise, will no doubt come up in the resurrection day, to unlearn the grossest of errors, if they will, and learn and obey the laws of Christ's kingdom, if they are to prove worthy of everlasting life on the restored earth. (Acts 3:20-23.)

## "Peace on Earth, Goodwill Toward Men."

(Luke 2:8-14)

THE angel's message at the time of the birth of Jesus as the babe of Bethlehem is most inspiring, being helpful and encouraging at all seasons of the year, but especially so at the Christmas season. The words of verse 10 in this 2nd chapter of Luke read—"The angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Meditating on these words we realise that they mean something really outstanding, for the "all people" mentioned in the angel's message means **all people who have ever lived on this earth.** This assurance is almost beyond our comprehension until we realise that what the Lord promises in His Word He is abundantly able to perform, in due time.

Further, the message in verse 14 is of the utmost importance also, because it gives assurance that a time is coming when there will be **"on earth peace, good will toward men."** Both these messages, coming from God's holy angels, at the birth of God's dear Son to be the Saviour of the world could not have greater or higher qualifications for the sureness of their fulfilment, because those angels spoke for God.

Examining other Scriptures which also speak for God, through earthly servants, we find that the promised "peace on earth" has never been experienced amongst the human family since Adam disobeyed God and brought the sentence of death upon himself and all mankind who were condemned in him. This is clearly stated in Rom. 5:12—"Wherefore, as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

How different, however, is the prospect for all mankind revealed in the wonderful prophecy of Isa. 9:6, 7—"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall

be called Wonderful Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." This prophecy given by Isaiah at least 700 years prior to the birth of Jesus is surely a wonderful message of assurance that the Saviour would come and establish peace on earth, in due time. The difficulty with many people is that almost 2,000 years have passed since Jesus came, and instead of peace on earth, good will toward men, wars and other world-wide troubles have increased. Indeed, to such a pitch have world conditions developed today, that the greatest men on earth fear for the complete destruction of the human family with such weapons of annihilation that are available today.

When Jesus was on earth at His first advent He made no claim that His Kingdom of Peace could be expected at that time, and this is also strange to many people. In John 18:36 we read Jesus' reply to Pilate—"My kingdom is not of this world." The word "world" in this verse is a translation of the Greek word "kosmos", meaning "order of things." So Christ's kingdom would not be established during this "present evil world." We may reason that if our Lord had set up His kingdom at His first advent, He could have prevented the development of such terrible conditions we see world-wide today. That may have been so, but supposing the Lord's power had been operating throughout the world, and wars had not developed, and nations had not invented such weapons of destruction that are so prevalent today, would "peace on earth, good will toward men" have been possible while all members of the human family were growing old and passing away in death, even if there were no dread diseases to cause pain and suffering? It will be admitted readily that there can be **no real peace on earth** in the midst of death amongst the human family. Therefore, God's promise, through His angels at the birth of Jesus, to establish "peace on earth" was much more far-reaching than the mere prevention of war, however desirable that may be. Yes, the promise of "peace on earth, good will toward men" when Jesus was born as the Saviour, Christ the Lord, meant the taking away of every hindrance to lasting peace and happiness for the human family, including the abolishing of the death sentence rightly imposed upon our first parents 4,000 years previously.

In Matt. 18:11 we read—"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost", and this includes the whole human family. The words of Jesus are also recorded—"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his

life for the sheep. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might receive it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to receive it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."—John 10:11, 17, 18.

The Psalmist gives us a good outline of God's compassion and love for His human creation, that prompted the sending of His only begotten Son to pay the penalty of death standing against all mankind, in the words of Psa. 102:19, 20—"For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death." These human prisoners under the sentence of death, are also well described by the Apostle Paul—"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now"—Rom. 8:22. However, the promise that God would "loose those that are appointed to death" is abundantly confirmed throughout the Old and New Testaments. In Isa: 25:7-9, we have a beautiful description of the blessings of Christ's Kingdom operating throughout the world for the benefit of all the *obedient in that day*—"He will destroy in this mountain (kingdom) the face of the covering (death) cast over all people, and the vail (ignorance) that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." (See also Isa. 2:2-4.)

In Psa. 72:17 we read—"His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed." This surely will be the time when the message of the angels at the birth of Jesus will be fulfilled—"Peace on earth, good will toward men." However, it may be asked, Why did God allow about 2,000 years to pass from Jesus' birth before the promised peace should come to mankind? The answer is, for the special purpose in God's plan to select the Church, the Bride of Christ, to inherit the heavenly kingdom with Christ, and assist in establishing **lasting peace** throughout the earth, to God's praise. To accomplish the calling and developing of this class of followers of Jesus, the whole Gospel Age has been devoted and each one drawn of the Father to Jesus has been blessed with a measure of inward peace which our Lord exhibited so completely against all the contradiction of sinners against Himself. (See Heb. 12:1-3.)

Our Lord's legacy of peace has been a great blessing to all His true followers, as stated in John 14:27—"Peace, I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This peace, comforting the hearts of God's people, comes from the indwelling of His holy spirit, but of course does not fulfil the promise of "peace on earth, good will toward men", which can come only with the setting up of Christ's Kingdom and His rule of righteousness throughout the earth, Satan of course being bound that he deceives the nations no more at that time—Rev. 20:1-3.

While waiting for the kingdom the Lord's people realise what a privilege it is to have a part in the service of Christ, to be active in witnessing with the glad message which has been such a blessing to their own hearts. An important part of the Christian's armor is to have our "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace"—Eph. 6:15. In other words, to have one's heart prepared in meekness, humility, and devotedness to the Lord, and so be fitted to commend Christ's gospel of peace wherever there are hearing ears. The same thought is found in Paul's words in Rom. 10:15—"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Yes, indeed, what a favor to have been entrusted with the glad tidings of the gospel of peace, to be proclaimed at all suitable times now, and also assuring all who have ears to hear that the message from the angelic host is sure of fulfilment in the near future, with the establishment of Christ's kingdom—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

## *How the Spirit Reproves the World*

"When he (the spirit of truth) is come he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment"—John 16:8.

**WE** now examine this text, used by some as a proof that the holy spirit operates in sinners for their reformation. We contend that such a view is wholly incorrect—that the Scriptures, rightly understood, teach that the holy spirit is granted only to the consecrated believers; that it is not given to the unbelievers and consequently could not operate in them, after the manner generally claimed. Quite to the contrary, the children of this world have the spirit of the world; and only the children of God have the spirit of God, the holy spirit, mind, disposition or will. "The spirit of the world", or "the carnal mind, is enmity against God." Neither can the carnally minded know the things of the spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned—can be discerned only by

those who have the holy spirit. Hence it is, that wherever we find it, the holy spirit of harmony with God and obedience to His will and providence, evidences regeneration, begetting to newness of life. In harmony with this we read the apostle's words—"If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his"—Rom. 8:9. Those who have not the spirit of Christ, and who are not of His, are the world in general—they are not Christ's, because they have **not received** of the Father's spirit.

The spirit of God, by means of its fruits and its witnessing through the Word, is the evidence of our having been regenerated. It is evident to all that the holy spirit of God which is in the Church is not the same spirit which is in the worldly—that the spirit of God is in no sense in the worldly, carnally minded, who consequently in the Scriptures are designated "children of wrath", "children of this world" and "children of their father, the devil." Nevertheless, we should not forget that the "spirit of truth", the "spirit of love" has, to a certain extent modified the spirit of the world; so that while it is still a spirit of darkness, a spirit of selfishness, a carnal spirit, yet the world to some extent is copying in a formal, outward manner, some of the graces of the holy spirit. It would be strange, indeed, if the beauties of the spirit of holiness, as represented in gentleness, kindness and patience, made no impression upon the unregenerate.

Some people of the world cultivate these graces of the spirit because they are styled part of the amenities of life, signs of good breeding, etc., and many whose hearts are wholly out of harmony with the principles of the spirit of holiness, copy these graces as a gloss or surface gilding, to cover the baser metal of a depraved nature—unregenerate, unsanctified, selfish, out of harmony with the Lord and the spirit of His holiness. We are, therefore, to closely distinguish between those who gild the surface of their conduct and those whose hearts have been transformed by the spirit of the Lord. The latter only are the sons of God, who have His favor, and who will shortly be blessed and glorified.

The question then arises, If the spirit of the Lord is communicated only to those who are His, through faith in Christ and consecration, what did our Lord mean by the above statement, that the spirit of truth would reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of coming judgment?

The meaning of our Lord's words will be readily discernible when we remember His declaration, that His followers, upon whom His spirit would come, and in whom it would dwell richly, in proportion to their faith and obedience, were to be the **light** of the world. It is this light of truth which shines forth from the truly consecrated Church, upon the world and the worldly minded of the nominal church, that

tends to reprove their darkness. Our Lord said of Himself, after He had been anointed with the spirit of God—"I am the light of the world", and again—"As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world"—John 8:12; 9:5. And addressing His Church of this Gospel Age, sanctified by the same holy spirit, He said—"Ye are the light of the world... Let your light so shine before men"—Matt. 5:14-16.

The Apostle Paul, addressing the same body of Christ, says—"Ye were at one time darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of the light"—Eph: 5:8; 1 Thes. 5:5. Again he says—"For God (the spirit of God, the spirit of truth) hath shined **into our hearts**, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God"—2 Cor. 4:6. Thus we see that it is the light of God's truth, the holy spirit, mind or disposition, shining in our hearts, which shines **out upon the world**; and hence the exhortation—"Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, amongst whom ye shine as lights in the world"—Phil. 2:14, 15.

Thus we see that the holy spirit shines upon the world—not directly but reflexly. It is not the spirit of God communicated to them and operating in them, but the holy spirit of God operating in His people, who are sealed by it, which shines forth upon the darkness of the world.

The apostle gives us a clue as to how the world is to be reprov'd by the spirit of holiness in the consecrated Church, saying—"Walk as children of the light... and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather **reprove** them... All things that are reprov'd are made manifest (shown to be wrong) by the light"—Eph. 5:8, 11, 13. The light of God's truth, which is the expression of His mind or spirit, as it shines through a sanctified life, is the holy spirit, reprov'ing the darkness of the world, showing those who see it what **sin** is, in contrast with **righteousness**. And from this enlightenment will come to them the conviction of a coming judgment, when righteousness will receive some reward, and sin some punishment. A godly life is always a reproof to the ungodly, even where no word of truth may be possible or proper.

It is because the holy spirit in God's people reprov'es the unholy and selfish spirit in those about them that the apostle urges the sanctified to remember that they are living epistles, known and read of all men—2 Cor. 3:2. The justified and sanctified Church, following in the footsteps of Christ, has always been a light in the world, even though its light has not always had as much influence as it desired. Thus it was also with our Lord, who declared that all who were of the spirit of darkness

hated Him the more because their spirit of darkness was reprov'd by His spirit of light. For this reason, not only the Lord, the great Light-bearer, was persecuted unto death, but similarly all the light-bearers who follow in His footsteps must be sharers also of His persecution and suffering—John 16:3; Rom: 8:17, 18.

While the chief mission of the Church has been her own development—"building up yourselves on your most holy faith" etc.—Jude 20—yet she has always had a secondary mission, that of witnessing to the truth, letting the light shine, reprov'ing the world. And this reprov'ing has necessarily been more toward nominal professors than toward the openly worldly, just as in our Lord's day His light was shed upon the professedly godly and holy, reprov'ing their darkness. And our Lord warns us of the necessity of letting our light shine **continually**, saying—"If the light that is in thee be (become) darkness, how great is that darkness!"—Matt. 6:23—both to the individual soul in whom the light has gone out, and to the world, from whom the light is thus obscured. Satan achieves no greater triumph than when he seduces a soul which was once enlightened and sanctified by the truth. The influence of such an one for evil is more than doubled. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall", and remember that to put his "light under a bushel" is a sure step toward darkness. (From—"The Atonement Between God and Man".)

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### The Refiner's Fire

He sat by a fire of seven-fold heat  
As he watched the precious ore,  
And closer He bent with a searching gaze,  
As He heated it more and more.

He knew He had ore that could stand the test,  
And He wanted the finest gold,  
To mould as a crown for the King to wear,  
Set with gems of a price untold.

So He laid our gold on the burning fire,  
Tho' we fain would have said Him "Nay";  
And He watched the dross that we had not seen,  
As it melted and passed away.

And the gold grew brighter, and yet more bright,  
But our eyes were so dim with tears,  
We saw but the fire—not the Master's hand—  
And questioned with anxious fears.

Yet our gold shone out with a richer glow  
As it mirrored a Form above,  
That bent o'er the fire, unseen by us,  
With a look of ineffable love.

Can we think that it pleases His loving heart  
To cause us a moment's pain?  
Ah, no! but He saw thro' the present cross  
The bliss of eternal gain.

So He waited there with a watchful eye,  
With a love that is strong and sure,  
And his gold did not suffer a whit more heat  
Than was needed to make it pure!

—Unknown.

## RESIST THE DEVIL

"Your adversary the devil goeth about as a ferocious lion, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist stedfast in the faith", says the Apostle. We may be sure that he attends all the Conventions, and even the regular meetings of the Lord's people, and that his influence is continually exerted to sow discord, strife and every other work of the flesh and of the devil. He works upon our imperfect heads and hearts. "We are not ignorant of his devices", writes the Apostle, and we well know that wrong-headedness is far more dangerous than wrong-headedness. The latter the Lord had promised to protect us from, but not from the former; we must be "pure in heart", else we will not long be reckoned amongst the branches of the true vine, but be cut off; for love is the fruit of the spirit—the fruit of the vine. And "herein is your Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." Oh! then, how we should watch and pray against the spirit of envy, malice, wrath, strife, contention; and cultivate meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. Thus, as directed, let us keep our hearts in the love that is of God; keep them with all diligence, for out of them are the issues of life—the decision as to our everlasting future of life or death eternal. Let us all be on guard. And let those who have on the whole armor and who know how to use the sword of the spirit assist the weaker to overcome the tempter's snares and wiles.—Selected.

My soul be on thy guard,  
Ten thousand foes arise,  
The hosts of sin are pressing hard  
To draw thee from the prize.

Ne'er think the victory won,  
Nor once at ease sit down,  
Thine arduous work will not be done  
Till thou hast gained thy crown.

## Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 23rd, 24th, 25th and 26th, in the Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew. Further information from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

## New Meeting Location in Melbourne

Regular meetings are now held in the Auxiliary Room, Kew City Buildings, Charles Street, Kew, on Sundays at 10 a.m. by the Polish brethren, and at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., by the Melbourne Class. A welcome awaits all desiring to attend these undenominational gatherings.

## "Earth's New Ruler—Humanity's Only Hope"

A booklet bearing the above title has been printed, and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." Extra copies are available supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

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delphia period. What must we hold fast; what little thing might just hinder the gaining of the crown; what would cause us to lose the crown? We must hold fast the chief characteristic of this Philadelphia Church, brotherly love; we must hold fast the earnest hope of the glorious appearing and kingdom; we must hold fast the truth, and keep His word and not deny His name.

Then He that has the key of David, He who can open the door to the kingdom (the Pope falsely claimed to be able to let one in or shut another out) will reward His faithful overcomers with the crown, to share His throne. He will make them pillars in the temple, to be there and to stay there, never more to go out. They will receive the eternal reward as members of that glorious city, the New Jerusalem, that descendeth from God out of heaven, and to have that new name, the new nature—the exceeding great and precious promise that we should be made partakers of the Divine Nature. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches."

## Books Available

In view of the greatly increased postal charges, literature prices are now as follows:—

- "God's Promises Come True"—\$2.00 (postage from 90c to \$2.60, according to distance in Australia).
- "The Divine Plan of the Ages"—50c (Postage 70c in Victoria; 80c interstate).
- "The Creator's Grand Design"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "The Book of Books"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Daily Heavenly Manna"—50c (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Songs in the Night"—50c (Postage 45c).
- "Emphatic Diaglott", New Testament—\$2.00 (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Poems of Dawn"—\$2.75 (Postage 70c and 80c).
- "Tabernacle Shadows"—50c (Postage 45c).
- "God and Reason"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "God's Plan"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Hope Beyond the Grave"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Israel in History and Prophecy"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Manner of Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Christ's Return"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Some of the Parables"—10c (Postage 25c).
- "Where are the Dead?"—10c (postage 20c).

Numerous other smaller booklets.

The postage quoted on booklets is for single copies; proportionately less for more than one copy.

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