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## *Our Lord's Memorial*

**I**n reviewing the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death, when our Saviour met with His little band of apostles in the "upper room" on the evening preceding His sacrifice on Calvary's cross, the careful student of the Bible is at once impressed with the connection between this sacred service and the Jewish Passover ceremony. God had instructed Israel to keep the Passover to effect their release from Egyptian bondage, and then to observe it year by year, as an annual remembrance of that great deliverance by the Lord on their behalf.

The importance of Israel keeping their Passover service each year on the anniversary of their deliverance from Egypt is clearly indicated by the Lord's directions, as we read — "And it shall come to pass when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service, that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever" — Exod. 12:26, 27, 24.

God had also clearly impressed upon the minds of all Israel that only by observing all His instructions, principal of which was the slaying of the Passover lamb and sprinkling its blood upon their homes, would their firstborn be spared by the destroying angel in Egypt, and they as a nation be guided out of the slavery from which they longed to be free. No doubt the Lord intended to impress that the Passover lamb was a type of the Messiah whom He would send, and by whose blood, sprinkled upon their hearts, so to speak, the "firstborns" of God are "passed over" during this Gospel Age as they yield their lives in sacrifice.

Following the commencement of our Lord's ministry at thirty years of age, we have no record of Him observing the Passover ceremony with His

disciples on the three anniversaries prior to His sacrifice, as these would not be of special interest. However, on the anniversary of the Jewish Passover when He was to be the anti-typical Passover Lamb, we read His words — "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer" — Luke 22:15. Yes, the Lord was about to explain the deep significance of the Memorial of His death, which, from that time onward, would take the place of the Jewish ceremony in the lives of His true followers. No wonder that the last Jewish Passover that God could acknowledge is the only one recorded in the Gospels, for at that time our Saviour became "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

In addition to the accounts of the Lord's Supper given in the Gospels, we have a most remarkable presentation of the same recorded by the Apostle Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians. While this Apostle was not a follower of the Master while He was on earth, following his conversion and complete surrender to the service of the Lord he was given some of the most remarkable revelations regarding God's plan of the ages, not the least of which was the detailed record of the procedure when Jesus met with His other Apostles to institute this important Memorial of His death.

It seems very clear that the Apostle Paul had cause to rebuke and exhort the Corinthian church to observe the Lord's Supper with proper dignity and sacred reverence, and not to make it a common feast, as apparently they were wont to do, and this called for the explanation of the subject of the Supper in some detail. We read Paul's words in 1 Cor. 11:23 — "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread." How influential should the Apostle's words have been when we realize that the risen Lord gave him this special communication from

heaven by the spirit. The words — “I have received of the Lord” — should surely provoke the most profound attention on the part of all who are seeking to walk in the steps of the Master.

The fact that Paul records — “I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you” — is worthy of note. Apparently the previous sacred information about the Memorial of Christ's death had not the desired effect, so that the Apostle felt it essential to impress that partaking of the Lord's Supper in a careless or any unworthy manner could bring condemnation upon the recipients, as well as shame upon the Lord's cause as a whole.

The Apostle continues — “The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread.” Yes, it was while Judas was on his final act of betrayal after receiving the sop from Jesus, that our Lord proceeded with the institution of the Memorial of His death. It was quite out of place that the betrayer should be present at the Lord's Supper, as we read — “And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. He then having received the sop went immediately out; and it was night” — John 13:27,30. Yes, “it was night”, and the darkest act of betrayal instigated by Satan, was then under way. What a warning to all who would be disciples of the Master, to think that within the space of about three years, one, who at first set out with a true heart to serve the Lord, could be overcome by the spirit of avarice and become the betrayer of his Lord whom he professed to love, because he allowed the Adversary to take possession of his heart. Speaking prophetically for the Lord the Psalmist declared — “Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me” — Psa. 41:9.

Most of the Lord's people have similar experiences to those of their Master, whether it be through envy, malice, or tongues “lifted up against them”, and what a lesson we have in the life of Judas, revealing to what depths one can fall from the grace of God, as Paul again warns us — “Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled” — Heb. 12:15.

Our lesson continues — “He took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me.” This bread was unleavened, a fitting symbol of our Lord's perfect humanity — “For such an high priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners” — Heb. 7:26. “Take, eat,” — appropriate the merit of my perfect offering for your sins; that you may gain justification by faith

in the sight of God. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” — Rom. 5:1.

“After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped (after the Jewish Passover supper), saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.” Again we see that the Lord was showing how to gain justification — by appropriating His merit, partaking of the value of His perfect life, pictured by the fruit of the vine. We note also that Christ's blood shall make the New Covenant operative, and to offer His disciples a participation in His blood that will seal that Covenant in the Kingdom age is a very great privilege indeed. This is the secondary or deeper meaning of our Lord's Memorial and implies that all true Christians participate in the cup of suffering with Christ, which they gladly covenant to do when they “present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, their reasonable service.”

Likewise, with the unleavened bread which pictured our Lord's body, there is the deeper meaning implied, in addition to that of justification. The breaking of the bread symbolized the broken body of Christ, and His members are also broken in His service to become one loaf, so to speak. So, coupling the two symbols together, Paul declared — “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (common participation) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not the communion (common participation) of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread” — 1 Cor. 10:16,17.

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.” These words are sometimes misunderstood to imply that the Apostle was advising the Corinthians to observe the Lord's Supper “often”, and it is well known that some denominations celebrate weekly, others monthly, and still others quarterly. Those celebrating weekly misunderstand the references to “breaking of bread” on the first day of the week in the Acts, to refer to the Lord's Supper, but that was not so. Weymouth's translation of 1 Cor. 11:26 reads — “For every time that you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death — until he comes.”

As the Jewish Passover was observed annually, and the Lord's Memorial took the place of that typical Passover, so every time, or each time that the anniversary of Christ's death comes round, and the celebration is observed in spirit and in truth, it is “showing the Lord's death till he come”; firstly, as demonstrating faith in the death of Christ as our Passover Lamb, and also confirming that the

breaking and sacrificing of the members of Christ still continues "till he come" in the full sense, when Christ, Head and Body, shall be fully sacrificed and ready to "drink anew in the Father's kingdom" — Matt. 26:29.

The faithful Apostle Paul continues in 1 Cor. 11 to give helpful exhortation when he states — "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" — Verses 27,28. As one has said — "Each should examine his heart, not his life; the examination of the life can only show that it is imperfect and is greatly discouraging to many." This is very true, and the Apostle was not seeking to discourage any sincere ones, but rather sought to encourage all the Lord's called ones to celebrate the Lord's Memorial in spirit and in truth — "discerning the Lord's body" — 1 Cor. 11:29 — being willing to be broken with Christ, and have their lives poured out in sacrifice, day by day, in the service of the Lord — Phil. 2:17.

It is surely a very great privilege to have been invited into the fellowship of saints, and to be counted worthy to endure something for Christ's sake, as stated by the Apostle — "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church" — Col. 1:24. The celebration of the Memorial Supper is a means of much encouragement and blessing to all the truly consecrated who approach the Lord's table with clean hands and a pure heart. "Christ our passover (Lamb) is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast ... with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" — 1 Cor. 5:7,8.

## *Passover at First Advent*

The following short article was published in the "Peoples Paper" previously, and it is thought helpful to reprint it again at this time.

The question as to whether our Lord and His disciples had kept the Jewish Passover on the usual date at the time Jesus instituted the Memorial of His death has exercised the minds of the Lord's people for some considerable time.

From an article in the "Reprints" of 1901 the following is a quotation — "There can be no doubt from the account that our Lord and His disciples ate the Passover Supper on the day preceding the one on which the Jews in general ate it; for in John's Gospel we read — John 18:28; 19:14 — that when our Lord was before Pilate in the Judgment

Hall, which was after He had eaten the Passover, the Pharisees, His accusers, had not yet eaten it — nor would they eat it until the evening after His crucifixion."

We may wonder why our Lord had eaten the Passover on that occasion a day earlier than the Jews in general, and while most Bible students have probably concluded that it was for the purpose that He could fulfil the antitype of the Passover lamb on the exact day — becoming the Lamb of God on the 14th of Nisan — yet the particular details how this could have been accomplished have perhaps not been evident throughout the years.

Some time ago a series of articles appeared in a weekly publication from the pen of a Bible commentator, and these were brought to our attention by one of our friends. It is thought that the following extract offers a helpful and enlightening explanation of the celebration of the Passover in the year of our Lord's sacrifice. The quotation is as follows:—

"The Last Supper was taken on the Thursday evening, and the first three Gospels say that it was a celebration of the Passover. On this point they appear to conflict with John's Gospel, which says that Passover eve was on the Friday — the actual day of the crucifixion.

"There is, in fact, no conflict. When, as it sometimes did, the festival coincided with the beginning of the Jewish Sabbath — and it did so this year — it became a question of which was to be given priority, the Passover or the Sabbath.

"Another school of thought regarded the Passover as a public sacrifice, seeing that the festival was a commemoration, and such sacrifices overruled the Sabbath law. So they would keep the Passover on its proper day, even if this was the eve of the Sabbath.

"Thus, at this fateful Passover, there was a slaying of the lambs and eating of the Passover Supper on both Thursday and Friday, according to which authority was followed.

"Again we see the careful planning of Jesus, so that He would both keep the Passover with His disciples, and also suffer the next day in the character of the Lamb of God."

## **Our Bible Translated**

The supply of the above titled booklet is exhausted, so a reprinting has been made and a copy is being supplied to all friends receiving this issue of "Peoples Paper." While this booklet was supplied to all on the mailing list previously, it has been much appreciated, and a rereading will no doubt prove helpful again. Extra copies are available, supplied through the General Tract Fund to all who can use them to advantage.

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## *Despised and Rejected*

(Contributed Address)

**A**dam's sin of disobedience to his all-wise and all-loving Creator merited punishment of the highest order, and the sentence of death, coupled with all the associated pain and suffering, sickness and sorrow, passed from him to his children generation after generation to the present time. To eradicate the effects of mankind's degradation, and to forever demonstrate the value of a character fixed and unwavering in allegiance to the Creator, required an act of implicit obedience far beyond that required of Adam. As the sin brought mankind to a level of moral unworthiness and debasement of horrible dimensions, the moral worthiness and exalted fibre of being of the Redeemer was shown to be just as much higher at the other end of the scale. If the perfection of Adam in the Garden of Eden be considered the standard, God's minimum requirement of an acceptable character, the innate goodness of our Saviour must be demonstrated by a level of worthiness as far above that standard as the human race sank below it.

We learn how God, in His infinite wisdom, demonstrated this requisite of exalted character when we read of the life of our Saviour on earth. That the details of this demonstration were designed and permitted by God is shown in the fact that all the prophets of old testified beforehand of the suffering and ultimate death of the Saviour, despised and rejected, yet triumphant above measure in loyalty and obedience.

To release Adam and the whole human race sentenced to death with him from the prisonhouse of death required the sacrifice of a perfect human life, an equivalent to that lost in Eden. This sacrificial role was prophesied by Abel in the presentation of his acceptable offering of a slain lamb. The foreshadowing was repeated many times over the centuries by men who trusted in the Lord as they brought their gifts to the altar. The ultimate lesson was given in Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac, child of promise and his heir, showing our Heavenly Father's view of this matter.

King David desired communion with God, but realized his sinful and undone condition. "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean", he said — Psalm 51:7. "Cleanse thou me from secret faults" — Psalm 19:12. And speaking prophetically of our Lord, he said — "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me" — Psalm 139:23,24. This was an accurate prophecy of the thoughts of our dear Lord as He went about His earthly ministry, His chief concern being to please His Heavenly Father and bring honour to His name. David was used extensively to record in advance, in the beautiful Psalms, the thoughts and experiences of the Son of God during His sojourn on earth.

Isaiah was also used very largely to foretell the character of the coming Redeemer. In chapter 53:1-5 he speaks of the arm of the Lord — the One who would act for Jehovah in all that was to be accomplished — yet says of Him — "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men: a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed."

To be despised and rejected is a hard experience. It was not required of Adam while in the Garden of Eden; he did not have to do the will of God under such painful conditions. Being despised and rejected did not help to pay the ransom necessary for Adam's release from the death sentence; but it did show the superlative quality of the character of the Son of God, and proved beyond the shadow of a doubt His worthiness of the high exaltation to which He was finally raised. To serve God in a quiet, peaceful way in the absence of adversity is one thing; to continue to serve Him, while the wicked seem to prosper and temptations come thick and fast; to still trust and obey even when despised and rejected, is quite another thing. Our Heavenly Father understood the circumstances which would best bring out the sterling character first of this well-beloved Son, and later on of all those He plans to exalt with Him.

Let us look briefly at the way in which these details of Isaiah's prophecy were fulfilled in the life of our Saviour. The Jews were proud of the fact

that Abraham was their father, and considered themselves heirs of the promises made to him. Throughout the centuries the promised Messiah had figured much in their thoughts; but they gave prominence to the prophecies concerning His glory, and His triumph over His enemies and theirs, without realizing that this was to be thousands of years in the future. Before it could come about the prophecies concerning our Lord's earthly life of sacrifice and eventual death must be fulfilled. All depended on the acceptance of our Lord's sacrifice by His Father, and His resultant resurrection.

At the time of our Lord's ministry the Jews were oppressed under the rule of the Roman Empire, and were looking for a mighty king and warrior to lead them from this captivity, unaware that the captivity God was speaking of was the captivity to sin and death.

So when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the event caused no great stir among the nation. Certainly, the shepherds were honoured with a glimpse of the Saviour, but they soon returned to their flocks. Simeon and Anna recognized their Messiah and rejoiced exceedingly, but they were aged and in a short time left the earthly scene. So the ripples of curiosity and interest subsided very quickly, especially when, after the visit of the Wise Men, the family fled to Egypt. The ready acceptance of their Messiah, which might have been expected had they kept in mind the whole of the prophecies concerning Him, was not forthcoming, and He who was born in a lowly dwelling became a stumblingblock to them. Even in infancy He was despised and rejected.

Our Saviour, born to be king, did not grow up in the palace at Jerusalem, nor in Bethlehem, the honourable city of David where He was born, but in the despised city of Nazareth. Having been called of God out of Egypt, we read in Matthew 2:23 — "He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene." Later on, during His ministry, some said — "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

Our Lord's anointing of the holy spirit at His baptism, signifying the beginning of His ministry, did not cause Him to be heralded throughout the land as the Messiah come to save His people. It was a seemingly insignificant event of a man being baptized by John the Baptist in the River Jordan among those of the Jews who realized their sinful state and were being given the rite of baptism to signify their repentance and bring them back into harmony with God. Only John realized that our Lord had no sin and did not require his baptism. To the onlooker He was simply another sinner. In

accordance with Isaiah's prophecy, He was "numbered with the transgressors."

From an earthly point of view the ministry of Jesus was not a series of triumphs. The common people heard Him gladly, and appreciated His kindness and wise teachings. However, the leaders of the people, the Scribes and Pharisees and the priests considered His ministry objectionable, and sought on many occasions to trap Him, but they were no match for His infinite wisdom. He was a "man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," as Isaiah foretold.

Matthew tells us of our Lord's character, beginning at chapter 14:14 — "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick." It must have taxed His strength to perform these many acts of mercy, yet He did not stop there; realizing the multitude were hungry and far from their homes He said — "They need not depart; give ye them to eat" — verse 16. He then performed the miracle of feeding 5,000 men beside women and children, with only five loaves and two small fishes. It was just after this that the people living in Genesaret, hearing about Him, "brought unto him all that were diseased; and besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole" — verses 35,36.

Jesus was acquainted with grief also when He performed such miracles as the raising of the son of the widow of Nain, and the raising of Jairus' daughter. He was greatly grieved at the death of His friend Lazarus, so that it is recorded — "Jesus wept" — John 11:35. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," said Isaiah.

Jesus' little band of intimate followers, mostly humble fishermen and even a despised tax collector, were not the type of men an earthly king would have surrounding him. They did not dwell in fine buildings. Jesus said, of Himself — "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" — Matt 8:20.

We read that at the end of His ministry Jesus "stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem". In Luke 19 we have the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, riding upon an ass, and the tumultuous welcome of the common people as they shouted — "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest" — Luke 19:38. But still some of the Pharisees tried to stop this display of acceptance. We might note that this riding on an ass, which was in fulfilment of prophecy, was in ancient times a sign of surrender; the ass was certainly not the animal normally chosen by a king.

We see the compassion as well as the continued grief of Jesus for His own people, then about to finally reject Him notwithstanding their cries of Hosanna. As He came closer to the city of Jerusalem, we read — “He wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes” — Luke 19:41,42. And in Matthew 23:37,38 we read His words of disappointment — “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.”

It remained for the Lord's cup of sorrow to overflow as the events of His last hours followed in quick succession — the pain He must have felt at the pettiness of His own followers, vying with one another for the place of chief favour, and neglecting the opportunities of service such as washing one another's feet. Their inability to watch with Him, deserting Him at His betrayal; the trial, the crucifixion — He suffered for us, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. He was despised and rejected at His birth, during His ministry, and at His death.

The Apostles had their faith confirmed by the resurrection of Jesus. They understood what He had done for them, and they attested to His grand and glorious character. They exhorted those to whom they ministered, and they still exhort us to consider well this Son of God, taking Him as our Exemplar. He Himself said — “If any man will be my disciple, let him take up his cross daily, and follow me” — Luke 9:23.

We may be assured of the tender love of our Saviour for all His disciples, including us, as He prayed to the Father on their behalf, just before His own Gethsemane experience. As we read in John 17:24-26 — “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

The Apostle John recorded in Revelation 5:11-13 that in vision he heard the voice of many angels, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand — “Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and

glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”

## God is Able

(Contributed Address)

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us”; “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy”; “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day”; “God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” — Eph. 3:20; Jude 24; 2 Tim. 1:12; 2 Cor. 9:8.

**T**hese Scriptures apply only to the Church of this Gospel Age. Those who are called to be followers of Jesus during this Age are the children of God, and come under His special care.

There are also records in the Old Testament of the faithful ones of past ages and how God was able to keep and guard them under the most trying experiences, when subjected to severe tests of obedience and faith. These accounts of their faith and obedience are recorded for the benefit of the Lord's people during their tests of faith and obedience. In Hebrews 11, the Apostle Paul says they are examples of faith and that they obtained a good report. Their experiences should help us to realize that God is able to fulfil His promises to us also.

One of the most remarkable records of God's power to deliver His people out of the hands of their enemies is found in Daniel, chapter 3. Here we are told how Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stedfastly refused to worship the golden image which the great king, Nebuchadnezzar, had made. The king had commanded that when a certain signal was given all the people should bow down and worship the image. The penalty for disobedience was death by being cast alive into a burning furnace of fire, heated to the hottest temperature possible. These three men were Hebrews and did not wish to violate their consciences by worshipping an idol, and so refused to do so, as they knew their God in heaven was the only God worthy of worship. The law of God specifically said — “I am the LORD thy

God . . . Thou shalt have no other gods before me . . . Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image . . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them" — Exod. 20:2-5.

When Nebuchadnezzar was informed that these three men did not obey his orders he was very angry to think that anyone would disobey his command, but he offered to give them another chance, as they were men of authority in his kingdom. Their answer showed their faith in God — "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" — Dan. 3:16-18. Nebuchadnezzar commanded that they be cast into the furnace. This was done, but the fire had no power over them. To Nebuchadnezzar's amazement there was a fourth person seen with them in the fire — one like unto the Son of God. He called them out and not even a smell of fire was upon them. God was able to deliver them out of the furnace. Faith and loyalty to God were rewarded. God whom they served was able to deliver them from harm.

Daniel had a similar experience. In Daniel 6 we have the record of how a conspiracy was set up against Daniel. King Darius held Daniel in high esteem because of his integrity in the position he held as a president of the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. His fellow presidents had tricked the king into signing a decree that they knew Daniel would not obey. The penalty for disobedience was to be cast into a den of lions. When the king found out that he could not go back on his word and that Daniel would be cast to the lions he was very disturbed about the whole affair. Before Daniel was cast to the lions king Darius called to him and said — "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee" — Dan. 6:16. Next morning the king came to see what had happened to Daniel. He called to Daniel — "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt" — Dan. 6:20-22. God was able to deliver Daniel from the snare of his enemies.

In the New Testament we have the record of the Apostle Peter's release from prison by the

angel of the Lord. We have the details outlined in Acts 12:1-19. Here we read how Herod the king set out to persecute the Apostles because they were leaders of the Christian Church. He killed the Apostle James, and the next in line was the Apostle Peter. He put Peter in prison with the intention of taking his life, but this was held over with the approach of the Passover. Peter was bound with chains, and guarded by 16 soldiers. Peter apparently had faith in God's ability to release him from Herod if it was His will. That night he was asleep between two soldiers and a light shined in the prison, and the angel of the Lord woke Peter up and said — "Arise up quickly" — and his chains fell off from his hands. Then the angel led him out past the first and second guards, and when they came to the iron gate that led into the city it opened to them of its own accord. When the angel led him a short way into the city he departed from Peter. As the Apostle knew his way about the city he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where a number of the brethren were gathered together praying for him. Yes, God was able to deliver Peter from king Herod and from prison. It is helpful to note that the prayers of the brethren were answered, as well as great faith on the part of Peter.

On one occasion our Lord prayed for Peter that his faith fail not, and then declared — "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" — Luke 22:32. So in this deliverance from prison by the angel of the Lord, Peter was reunited with the brethren, to strengthen them in that time of persecution.

The Apostle Paul had many no less remarkable experiences and escapes from death when opposed by those who sought to take his life. Reading through the 11th chapter of 2nd Corinthians we would be amazed if anyone could go through what Paul did and not say, as he did, that God was able to deliver him, as He did others in the past. This should be a great source of comfort to us to know that God is with us in all our ways. "The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" — Psalms 34:7.

We, as followers of Jesus, who have committed our all unto the Lord may not have such remarkable deliverances as did those already mentioned, but they could be as equally real, in a different manner. The Scriptures which tell us of our Lord's willingness to deliver His people, as we have seen, should be a source of both inspiration and encouragement to us. Faith, prayer and confidence in the Lord's promises to us are necessary elements of Christian character.

As we look further into God's Word, we find there are many more promises that will reassure us of His watchcare over us. "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." It is possible for us not to appreciate the blessings and favours we receive from our Heavenly Father. Lack of faith is very often a great hindrance to our receiving His blessings and favours. God is able and willing but through lack of faith we may fail to receive that which He would bestow.

It was so with the children of Israel. After being miraculously delivered across the Red Sea from the hands of the Egyptians, they doubted God's ability to supply them with the necessities of life when on their wilderness journey. God is the One who bestows all benefits upon His people; He has promised all things for our needs as His new creation in Christ Jesus. Let us have sufficient faith to receive them.

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Church at Phillipi, says — "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it (margin says, finish it) until the day of Jesus Christ" — Phil. 1:6. It was God who began the good work of grace in our hearts. He drew us to Christ, and it is through Christ that we are justified. He has inspired us with His exceeding great and precious promises, — "that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature" — 2 Pet. 1:4. These promises encourage us to set our affections on things above. He has also made us His heirs and joint-heirs with Christ. God would not have called us and favoured us as He has if He thought we could not enter into the promised inheritance. But "God is faithful that promised" — Heb. 10:23.

The Apostle Paul informs us that even though God is working in us, we have our own part to play in attaining a place in the Kingdom. He wrote — "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" — Phil. 2:12, 13.

Along our Christian way each one of us comes up against many and varied experiences; whether these are happy and joyful, or dark and difficult trials, God permits them for our benefit. With the three Hebrews, God did not prevent them from being cast into the furnace of fire, but He did prevent the fire from scorching them and they came out the better for their experience. Daniel was in a very unenviable situation in the den of lions, and could have been

torn to pieces, but God shut the lions' mouths that they were unable to harm him. Peter was helpless, chained between two soldiers, and from a human standpoint there was nothing to save him from Herod's sword. But God sent His angel, opened the prison gate and set him free. What great faith was exercised by these servants of God who are held up as examples to us.

The Apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. 10:13, states — "No trial has assailed you except what belongs to man; and God is faithful who will not permit you to be tried beyond your ability; but with the trial, will also direct the issue, that you may be able to bear it" — Diaglott translation.

So may we continue to be encouraged by God's wonderful assurances to His people, as expressed in Jude 24, 25 — "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever."

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### What Shall I Render?

What shall I render, Lord, to Thee,  
For all Thy benefits toward me?  
The Cup Thy hand of love hath poured,  
I'll humbly take, most precious Lord,  
And call upon Thy holy name  
To help me Thy great Plan proclaim;  
I'll spend my days in ceaseless praise,  
And tell abroad Thy wondrous ways!

"Salvation's Cup" — of suffering too —  
Of suffering with God's chosen few,  
Dear Lord, I'll drink of this, Thy Cup,  
And smiling through my tears, look up —  
A mingled Cup of grief and joy,  
Of blessedness without alloy,  
Of love and fellowship divine,  
A foretaste of the Kingdom-wine.

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### Passover Memorial, 1984

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 15th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "in remembrance of Christ."

#### Memorial Services

**Melbourne**—Sunday, 15th April, at 6 p.m., at Glenferrie State School, Manningtree Rd., Hawthorn—Wattle Rd. building.

**Adelaide**—Sunday, 15th April, at 6.15 p.m., at M.U. Hall (2nd floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

#### Melbourne Class New Address

The Melbourne Class now meets at Glenferrie State School, Manningtree Rd., Hawthorn, in building near Wattle Rd. Sunday services are at 11.30 a.m., and 2.30 p.m., to which all interested people are invited for Udenominational study of the Bible.