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Take My Yoke upon You and Learn of me

“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”—Matt. 11:28-30.

WHEN our Lord spoke these words, we would understand He was addressing those to whom He was especially sent—the children of Israel—with the one desire of finding those with burden of heart and sin-weariness which all true Israelites must have felt if they were honest with themselves.

For generations these Israelites had been under the Law Covenant given by God through Moses at Sinai. We are told by the Apostle that this Covenant was added to the Abrahamic Covenant “because of transgressions, till the Seed should come,” and so, while serving a good purpose during the centuries intended for it, on the other hand it was really a burdensome arrangement for all who were striving to keep its just requirements and gain everlasting life.

It is unnecessary to go into the matter fully as to how the finest of the Jewish race could never keep God’s law perfectly, strive as they would, as it was the measure of a perfect man’s ability. This was demonstrated by the fact that our Lord, the only perfect man since Adam’s transgression, was the only one able to fulfil the demands of the Law Covenant. How true it is, that when our Lord came to Israel they were under the yoke and burden of the Law, which, while promising life under certain conditions, was really found to be unto death for the reason before mentioned. “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.”

So, we may suppose, that amongst the Jews at that time, while the majority were professing to be holy, law-keepers who did no sin, there were some who honestly admitted that they did not, could not keep the Law perfectly, and who, therefore, felt burdened and wearied with their fruitless endeavours. Such felt their need of a Burden-bearer, such felt their soul-sickness and need of the good Physician, and to such Jesus addressed the words of our text, inviting them to come to Him and receive rest.

What a relief, then, it must have been to those sincere Israelites who, trusting in the God of Abraham and looking for the promised Messiah, heard these words of Jesus: “Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden . . . Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me and ye shall, find rest unto your souls.”

The time had come for all sincere Israelites’ to be transferred from Moses into Christ. This is so beautifully shown in John’s Gospel, where John the Baptist, in carrying out his mission of introducing the Bridegroom to his own disciples, declared, “Behold the Lamb of God,” and the disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus. In the same first chapter of John, the call of Nathaniel, which is also a beautiful incident, is a further indication of the change of dispensation, when those in right heart condition could, receive the true One, sent of God. See John 1:45-47-- “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” And so the Lord would reveal to them’ the true and only possible way of gaining justification in the sight of God, leading them out from the yoke and bondage of the Law where there is no rest, and: inviting them to take a very different yoke upon them, “His yoke,” which would bring rest unto their souls.

This, then, would be the position of those whom our Lord addressed directly at that time; but it may be asked how these words of our Lord would apply down the Gospel Age, to our own day, to us, who have never been under the Law of Moses. The fact of our living at a time when the Jewish Age has long closed does not relieve us of contact

with worldly yokes of various kinds, and from one or another of these, all who have any standing before God have been graciously called by the same Master, that we also may enter into rest. "For we which have believed do enter into rest."

This coming to Christ for rest is the first step toward a Christian life; it is justification, the acceptance of Him as the satisfaction for our sins, and from the time we thus accept Him, as the Apostle declares, we have joy and peace through believing. But having been thus received and blessed, there is something more for us to do, namely, to learn that there is another burden and another yoke which we should take upon us, voluntarily, even as did the Israelites indeed in our Lord's day.

A yoke is a symbol of servitude and so our Lord implies that those who are set free (either from the yoke of the Law Covenant, as were the believing Jews, or from the yoke of Satan, as were the believing Gentiles) should become His servants, should take His yoke, should learn to do His will. A yoke generally is arranged for two, and our Lord speaks of it as His yoke, by which we are to understand that He also is a servant. Having come to do the Father's will and having put on the yoke of servitude, He invites us to become true yoke-fellows with Himself in the doing of the Father's will, co-labourers together with Him in the great work of the world's deliverance from sin and death.

The secret of the ability to wear this yoke and to have companionship with Christ in His service, and to have as a result a great blessing in our own hearts, a rest unto our souls, lies, He explains, in our learning to be meek and lowly of heart as He was. "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." It will be impossible for those who are proud, haughty, self-willed, ambitious and worldly-wise to labour in the same yoke with Jesus, or to find true rest of soul which we properly seek. But if we are meek, teachable, humble-minded, ready to know and to do the Lord's will at any cost, then, indeed, we shall find rest to our soul's satisfaction--"the peace of God which passeth all understanding" will rule in our hearts.

We do well to consider the difference between the two "rests" of verses 28 and 29. Of the first, it is said that the Lord will give it to him who comes to Him in faith. Of the second, it is said that he finds this rest to his soul through becoming a yoke-fellow with Jesus. And so it is; there are two blessings; the first blessing is that of justification--the joy of having our sins forgiven, realising ourselves no longer strangers and foreigners from our Heavenly Father, but brought nigh by the blood of Christ. The second is the joy which comes more gradually, a fruitage, a grace, a development in the heart, the growing and abiding peace and joy of the holy spirit. This second blessing, however, is attained by very few; the majority of nominal Christians know nothing of it, and yet it is the very object of the calling of this Gospel Age. Those who fail to come to the Lord, and to take His yoke, learning of 'Him in the fullest sense, to become thus "copies of God's dear Son," will fail utterly of the special purpose and call of this Gospel Age and will have neither part nor lot in the spiritual kingdom. The blessing of justification by faith is merely to fit and prepare us to take the yoke-complete consecration—and to become a co-labourer with the Lord in the Father's service.

This yoke which Jesus invites us to conic under with Him is a very formidable affair from the standpoint of the world. To them it seems to be a most unreasonable yoke, a most 'terrible burden to consecrate life, time, means, everything to the service of God; but from the standpoint of those who have come unto Jesus and to whom He has spoken peace and rest through justification, the matter is very different. To such it must seem a "reasonable service," that since the Lord has graciously redeemed our lives, our all, we should use what remains of that life to His praise and glory. After we have fastened the yoke upon ourselves, we find that it is an easy one, and that with it any duty, any trial, any difficulty, any vexation of spirit, any burden of any kind, that could come to us, should be light indeed because of this yoke. Every burden is light, because our yoke is appreciated, and is so easy, so reasonable; and additionally it is so light, because the Lord is with us in this yoke. He is the great Burden-bearer, and will not suffer us to be tempted or to be pressed with more of the burdens of life than we should be able to endure. He is watching out for the interests of all those who take His yoke upon them; their burdens are His burdens, their trials are His trials, their interests are His interests; yea, all things shall work for good to them because they love Him.

And now, the important question is: Is this so with us? Since we have taken the Lord's yoke upon us and sought to learn of Him, have we found rest unto our souls? Have we found His yoke easy, and His burden light, or have we at times been restless, upset and disturbed with one or another experience? Probably all of us will admit that we have not always been as restful in spirit as we should have been, considering the One whose yoke we have taken upon us. Often, we have perhaps been taken unawares and a hasty word is spoken, or a little or greater resentment comes into the heart under this or that trial, and it is even worse in some cases, for these hindrances are apparently allowed to remain and then come very sad experiences upon the members of the Lord's household. Upon examination, it will be seen that the reason for this unsettled condition within is that such have not yet learned of the Lord sufficiently, and so lack the true rest of soul which comes only from a complete and abiding knowledge in the fullest sense of Him who was meek and lowly of heart.

So, may we realise what a work there is in each and all of us, after taking the Lord's yoke upon us, in becoming copies of Him in spirit and truth. However, if we, as members in the pilgrim way, are endeavouring to give heed to these words of the Master—"and learn of Me"—and such efforts are backed up by a constant waiting upon the Lord in prayer and supplication, and supported by a constant meditation upon His Word, it surely will be only a matter of time when the periods in which we find rest unto our souls will increase more and more until it will be "all my days and all my hours."

On the other hand, let us not be discouraged if after repeated effort there be still some failure on our part. We cannot hope to have so much accomplished in us without some failures and these should just draw us nearer the source of our strength, even to the Lord Himself. And how different it is living under the Lord's yoke, in comparison with all the yokes of bondage in the world. If this fact be kept uppermost in mind, we shall find that it will help greatly towards that complete rest in Christ. We should, then, always be mindful of our privileges, with grateful appreciation of our Heavenly Father in lifting us out of the bondage of corruption and setting our feet upon a rock.

Let us view, now, as well as we are able, the life of Him to whom we have become yoked and of whom we are learning as pupils in the school of Christ, of Him who was "meek and lowly of heart." The very entrance of our Lord upon the earthly mission could not have been more lowly and meek, than as the little babe of Bethlehem, and right throughout His course in life the most pronounced feature in delighting to do His Father's will, was this adoring grace of meekness and humility, coupled with fervent zeal in pouring out His soul unto death.

How strange it seemed to the Jewish people as a whole for their promised Messiah to come as the lowly Nazarene. They were looking for one to come in power and great glory and so they stumbled at that "stumbling stone." As a nation their minds had become so absorbed with the spirit of the world, even though they were God's chosen people for generations, that the One clothed in humility was overlooked, despised and rejected of men. See Isaiah 53: 1-3.

And so "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin 'of the world'" was thought to be of no importance because He was meek and lowly in heart. "He made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant and being found in fashion as a man. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:7, 8.)

When we thus view the life and conduct of our Master in enduring the contradiction of sinners against Himself, do we not realise more than ever what is required of us, who have taken His yoke upon us to learn of Him. Are we likewise prepared to be of no reputation in the eyes of the majority of mankind, and especially those in Christendom to-day? We remember how it was foretold that our Lord would be a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, 'and what wonder, then, that the Lord's people should find themselves out of accord with so many at this time, corresponding to those in our Lord's day who were not able to learn of Him. If this is our condition as we press along as pilgrims and strangers, then we are coming more and more to atonement with our Lord, in learning of Him, and we shall find such rest to our souls that we shall never want any other way.

On the other hand, how sad it is when some who had apparently taken the Lord's yoke upon them in past times, have failed to learn of Him sufficiently, and so are turned aside by one cause or another. We call to mind the words of our Master: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood ye have no life in you . . . For My flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me and I in him.

As the living Father hath sent me and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me." How these words continually remind us of our participation with our Lord in the likeness of His death, if so be that we may be also in the likeness of His resurrection, and especially emphasised in our Memorial and Baptism Services. When our Lord spoke these words, indicating the true significance of taking up the cross to follow Him, taking His yoke upon them, many of His disciples said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" "And from that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him." In other words, they were unable to learn of Him who is "the way, the truth and the life." And so it has happened down to our own day. How many there have been who seemed to rejoice in "present truth"—the presence of our Lord and features of the harvest work for the consummation of their sacrifice—who have now "gone back," so to speak, "and walk no more with Him."

We remember how Daniel has told us that at a certain time there would be brought to light such truths as would bring a great blessing to those able to receive them. "Blessed is he that waiteth. and cometh to the thousand, three hundred and five and thirty days." From our studies, we are conversant with these "days of Daniel," and know that they were fulfilled following on the presence of our Lord, during the "time of the end," the harvest of this Gospel Age. So it has been that each one coming to the Lord in the right heart condition, and having the eyes of their understanding

enlightened, 'have partaken of this blessedness of harvest truths due, especially over the past half century. It would seem that for any to have appreciated the presents truth in the first place, there must have been a meekness and humility of heart, so we realise that there must be a falling away from this -condition by all who fail to continue in the Word and be disciples indeed.

“The meek will He guide in judgment and the meek will He teach His way.” Yes, indeed, but it will. not do if- such a condition is not preserved. One .would think that as the Lord’s followers progress .along the way, learning more and more of what He has .so graciously done for them, that this very fact would increase their humility and meekness in His sight. And so it does in all who are learning: of the Lord aright and appreciating to the full the privilege of taking His yoke upon them; but when the contrary spirit takes hold, however, small in the beginning, and is allowed to remain, the spiritual vision is beclouded, the beautiful, simple, Gospel truths become dimmed, and the.: very One who was overlooked at the first Advent is likewise set aside, now, and the words of John the • Baptist .are fulfilled again: “There standeth one among you whom ye know not.” The fact of .not knowing the Lord—of not learning of Him—is therefore the cause of all failure, for where there is not progress into more of oneness with Him, His light, His keeping power is unable to enter our hearts to the same degree as formerly, and the spirit so prevalent in the world for some-thing new, something entertaining and ambitious in the sight of man, thus finds entrance, with the result of .certain loss.

How, then, we need to guard well our “first love”; that love that prompted us to take the Lord’s yoke upon us and learn of Him and which has brought rest unto our souls. No matter how long ago we .first entered upon this life ,of being yoke-fellows with Christ, whether it be one, five, ten, twenty or more years, we shall be safe only as our first love is preserved and increased, as we continue to learn of our Lord, who was meek and lowly of -heart.

We shall also find the Lord’s ‘yoke easy and His burden light. The reason for this is evident only to those who experience this yoke. it is easy because the Lord is with us in the yoke, and He has promised neither to leave nor forsake all thus united to Him.

Only those who understand the consecrated way would say, in viewing the Apostle Paul’s experiences, that the yoke of Christ on his shoulders was an easy one, or that the burden of Christ’s work which he bore was a light one. The Apostle himself thought it was, for he counted it an inestimable privilege to endure hardness as a good soldier for Christ’s sake. He joyfully suffered the loss of all things, and counted them but dross that he might win Christ and be found in Him. He rejoiced to be made a partaker of His sufferings that he might also be made a partaker with Him of His glory and share with Him in the blessed work of His kingdom.

Stephen had the same rest and joy even while his. enemies were stoning him to death, and many more of God’s saints can testify to the same thing in the midst of poverty, sickness, affliction, temptation, and enemies on every hand, and even in the flames of violent persecution. And through all this there has been a rest of mind, and is still, for all truly abiding in the Lord. “Thou wilt keep him in, perfect peace whose •mind is stayed on Thee.”

May it be, then, that in all the days ahead, we shall realise what a privilege is ours in having been invited to participate in the^Lord’s -yoke, learning of Him, our Lord and Head, who, through His humility and meekness has been exalted to the Father’s right hand, and may the language of our hearts ever be in harmony with His. If this is so, we shall indeed find abiding rest unto our souls.

“I love Thy will, O God!
It is my joy, my rest;
It glorifies my common task,
It makes each trial blest.

“I love Thy will, O God!
The sunshine or the rain.
Some days are bright with praise,
and some Sweet with accepted pain.

“I love Thy will, O God!
O hear my earliest plea,
That as Thy will is done in heaven
It may be done in me.”

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord's Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used. either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

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Review of the New Covenant,

A correspondent has invited our views respecting some expressions in a letter to him bearing on the New Covenant. (Jer. 31:31.) It is said that it is -"the only covenant under which provision is made for the forgiveness of sins."

There is, however, no such statement in the Scriptures, but there appears much to the contrary. In fact, it seems only when speaking or writing to the Jews that there is any mention of the "New Covenant." it is only to those who had been under the old "Law Covenant" that the New Covenant is promised. In Romans, chapters 3 and 4, Paul speaks of a righteousness attained by faith—"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set to be a propitiation through faith in His blood," etc.—then goes on to show how Abraham was accounted righteous because of faith and also that David speaks of the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered," etc.

While Jesus said, "This is my blood of the New Testament," He was speaking to Israelites, who, being in bondage of the Law Covenant, needed to be redeemed so that in due time the New Covenant may be established, and it will be through the operation of the New Covenant that salvation will come first to restore Israel and then through them to the whole world.

During the Gospel Age, however, God is taking out the full number for the Church from Gentiles, and these are not dealt with in the way of a collective covenant, but each needs to enter into a personal consecration—a covenant by sacrifice—and so they become members in Christ. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:16, 29.) They thus come into the "blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness," under the original Abrahamic Promise (to which the Law was added but did not disannul). See Heb. 6:13-19; Gal. 3:3-8, 17, 18; Acts 3:25; Gal. 4.

It would seem • strange if the New Covenant had been established and by it only could sins be forgiven, that the Apostles should have so omitted mention of it in their preaching either to Jews or Gentiles. Note Paul's noble address before Agrippa, yet no mention is made of any New Covenant. Acts 26 (vide verse 18.) Jer. 31:31, 32 distinctly states that it is to the house of Israel and the house of Judah, who were under the old Law Covenant, that the New Covenant is promised. How foolish, then, is the statement that is made, "If it (the New Covenant) did not go into operation at Calvary, then no one's sins have been forgiven."

Another expression is that Paul tells us that "Jesus set aside the first old Law Covenant that He might establish the second," inferring, here, that the New Covenant must be at once in operation. What the Apostle appears to have in mind in this verse is, that Jesus was the great antitype of the Aaronic priest, and that the typical arrangement had now passed away and the antitype was being established. The antitypical sacrifices had begun. Christ, as typified by the bullock, was slain, and the Church, as typified by the Lord's goat, was following "in His steps." See Heb. 13:12, 13, which sacrifice must be offered in the spirit of praise as indicated in the sweet incense that burned on the typical altar. So says the Apostle, Rom. 8:36, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long" (all down the Gospel Day). "This is the day of salvation, this is the acceptable time" (for such offerings). So the Body of Christ must be complete and each member be conformed to the great Head, "filling up that which is behind of the affliction of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake." (Col. 1:24.)

We are referred to 2 Cor. 3:6, "Who hath made us able ministers of 'the New Testament,'" and it is suggested that this means that the New Covenant is being operated by these able ministers. The failure to understand this expression seems to be in regard to the largeness of the antitype in comparison with the type. The type is spoken of as a shadow compared to the reality. The selecting and anointing of the Aaronic priesthood occupied a very brief time, but it shadowed or typified the Gospel Age of nearly 2000 years. The ministers of the New Covenant are being chosen;

Paul was one, and others have been selected all down the age, but not until they are ready will the New Covenant be established with Israel and the blessing of all the families of the earth begin.

It would be indeed a sad thing to think of the New Covenant as having been in operation all down the age, for under it everyone is to be personally responsible, and if he dies, he will die for his own sin (not Adam's), and there would be no resurrection for any who had died apart from Christ during the past 1900 years.

When the "prophet like unto Moses" (Acts 3:22) begins His work, He will rewrite God's Law in the inward parts and write it in their hearts. That is, all mankind will be led up the highway, and taught not only to do, but to love righteousness, so that it will become their nature to do right, and to abhor that which is evil.

With the Church it is different; while we learn to love righteousness and to hate iniquity, yet our human nature is not led up to perfection. It still remains, as says the Apostle, “in my flesh dwelleth no good thing.” We are granted the holy Spirit to help our infirmities and have to continually keep our bodies under restraint. We do not have God’s law written in these fleshly hearts, but we received new mind—the mind of Christ--and have to conquer all the tendencies of the human nature that would hinder our progress as new creatures.

There will not be that continual, personal fight under the New Covenant, when all difficulties will be removed.

No lion will be in the path, the stones (of temptation) will be taken out of the way, and everything made easy. All environments will encourage righteousness, which will have its happy, rewards of health and prosperity. Evil and its consequences will gradually be blotted out and the human hearts of the obedient will be brought into happy accord with likeness to God. The law of God will have then rewritten in the heart of the human family.

Know of the Doctrine.

“If any man willed, to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself.”--John 7:17.

WE are living in a day when the very word doctrine seems to be offensive to the majority of Christian people. Each denomination realises that its own system of doctrines is imperfect, unsatisfactory, undependable. And the same is believed in respect of all other doctrines. Hence, by mutual consent Christian people seem disposed to henceforth and forever ignore doctrines; for they believe that, if after nineteen centuries they are thus confused, the matter never was clear and never will be clear to anybody.

All this is a great mistake; the doctrines of Christ, as presented by the Great Teacher and His Apostles, was a great message, of which none of them were ashamed. The difficulty with the Lord's people to-day is that we gradually fell away from those doctrines—we gradually put darkness for light and light for darkness, and thus gradually got into the spirit of Babylon, and into the spirit of bondage to human traditions and creeds. Instead of shunning doctrines, we should realise that they are the very things needed to cause the scattering of our darkness and superstitions, and to draw all of God's people nearer together.

The doctrines of Christ and the Apostles are what we need to inspire us to break down all our creed fences, which so long have separated us as God's people, the one from the other, in various denominational folds, all which are contrary to the Divine arrangement; for God hits but the one fold for all His “Sheep” of this Age, as He will have another fold for the Restitution “sheep” of the next Age—the Messianic Kingdom Age.

“One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism.”

Can we doubt that if as God's people we put away sectarianism and the creed spectacles of our forefathers, and if we go with pure, sincere hearts to the Lord and His Word, we will there find again the “one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father over all, and one Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,” and “one Church of the First-Born, whose names are written in heaven”? (Eph. 4:5,

Heb. 12:23). Let us hearken to the words: “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which bath great recompense of reward,” “But remember the former days, in which ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly whilst ye were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and by afflictions; and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.” “For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.” (Heb. 10:35, 32, 33, 36).

The time seems long to all of us, even though we remember that “a day with the Lord is as a thousand years.” When we think of the fact that it is thirty-nine hundred years since God's promise to Abraham, that his Seed should bless all the families of the earth—when we think of the fact that Israel (lid not receive that great privilege of being the spiritual Seed from which primarily that blessing should go forth, and that the “elect” are receiving it; when we think of the fact that God has been nearly nineteen centuries in selecting the “elect” from Israel and from all nations, it is enough to stagger our faith unless we hold firmly to the Divine promise and remember that God confirmed it with an Oath. By these two immutable, unchangeable things, the Divine Word and the Divine Oath, we know that the Seed of Abraham is to be developed, and that eventually it is to bless all the families of the earth. It is the Divine will that we allow our faith in this great promise of God to be “an anchor to our souls, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil.”— Heb. 6: to.

The Doctrines of Christ.

-What we all need as God's people is to put away human theories and other gospels and take hold afresh on the Gospel of Christ. These other gospels are other messages of hope, aside from the one which the Bible presents. For instance, Theosophy is one of these; Evolution is another; New Theology is another. These all hold out a different gospel from that which Jesus and the Apostles presented; the one that was given to us for our sanctification, and through the holding fast of which, and the obedience to The Faith, we are to be saved and given a share with Messiah in His glorious Empire of the world.

The doctrines of Christ mean those doctrines presented in the Bible by Jesus and His mouthpieces, the Apostles. These doctrines relate to the Church and to the world, and God's blessing for each; these doctrines relate to sin and its forgiveness; the terms of that forgiveness, the basis of that forgiveness—the death of Jesus—and the hope of that forgiveness, release from Divine condemnation, fellowship with God, and everlasting life obtained through resurrection of the dead.

A Prerequisite to Knowledge.

But some one will inquire, Why is it so difficult to understand the doctrines of Christ? Why are there so many different denominations of Christians? Why do they all so misunderstand the matter—that these different denominations have resulted from the differences of theory respecting the teachings of the Bible? The simple explanation is that, shortly after the death of the Apostles, when the Church began to be in a measure of prosperity, the Adversary came in and sowed the seeds of false doctrines, using human lips and human pens in his service, through pride and ambition. The darkness became so great that, looking back to-day, we speak of the period as the “Dark Ages.”

The various denominations of Christendom are evidences of honesty, perseverance and love of the Truth, because our forefathers, who made these creeds, were each trying to get more and more out of the dark and hack to the “True Light.” They all made the mistake, however, of holding too much to the creeds and theories of the past. Let us not make the same mistake; let us cut loose entirely from every authority outside the Word of God. Whoever can help us understand God’s Word—we should be glad to have his assistance; but we cannot acknowledge as inspired or authoritative the teachings of the “Fathers” of the early times, however conscientious they may have been, because we cannot recognise that there were any such authorised successors to the Apostles.

God, who foretold through the Prophets this long period of darkness, and who has blessed and guided His_ saintly children throughout it, without removing- all of their blindness, has promised that with the end of this Age will come a great blessing. and enlightenment upon His people, when the “wise virgins” will find their lamps burning brightly, and be able to understand and appreciate the deep things of God: “The wise shall understand, but none of the wicked shall understand.” In the end of this Age the curtain was to be drawn, and the “true light” was to shine forth, scattering all the darkness. We are in the close of this Age to-day, and therefore may see much more clearly than did our forefathers, the Divine character and Plan for human salvation.

Willeth To Do His Will.

Our text is a message from the Master’s Own lips. He gives us the key to a clear knowledge of His doctrines, namely, that the student must be fully consecrated to God and fully desirous of. knowing His Will and His Plan. In order to see light in God’s light--to see the Truth, from the Divine standpoint of the Divine revelation, we must draw near to God in the spirit of our Minds, consecrated in our heart. We must will to do His will.

But what does this mean? What is it to will to do His will? God’s will represents actual perfection of thought and word and deed, toward God, toward our fellows in the Body of Christ, and toward all mankind. This is the Divine Standard set up, but we are no more able to fulfil its demands than were the Jews. As St. Paul declares, “We. cannot do the things that we would.” Weakness of the flesh, frailty and imperfection, we all have with the world; the best that we can do is to will to (16 right, and to the best of our ability carry out that covenant with the Lord to do His will. At the very best all will come short of perfection.

But for those who have come into harmony with God, through Christ--for those who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice--for those who have Jesus for their Advocate, a provision has been made, whereby the willing, all desiring to do the Divine will, and manifesting endeavours so to do, are counted as righteous—as though they did the Divine will perfectly. This class, in the Scriptures, is known as the “saints”; they are the prospective members of the Body of Christ. It is to these that the promises of our text apply, that they shall know to do the Divine will, shall know whether Jesus merely made up these teachings of Himself, or whether He was the active agent of Jehovah in what He did and in what He taught. .

Shall we not, then, determine to give our hearts, our wills, fully to the Lord—determine in our wills to do God’s will? If so, following the instructions of the Word of God, we shall doubtless be blessed and enabled fully, to know, to, appreciate, to understand, the doctrines of Christ—the deep things of God, which are revealed to this class by the Spirit of God.

Justification by Faith.

IN Romans 5: 1, where the Apostle says, "Being justified by faith we have peace with God," his thought. is that our peace or harmony with God began with, our faith and led on to this condition of grace wherein we stand as sons of God, begotten of the. holy spirit and rejoicing in the hope of Kingdom glory, honour and immortality. Our justification by faith began with the first element of our faith; that is to say, when first we saw the Lord even imperfectly.

From the time we first approached God we began to have a measure of peace, which continues with us as long as we are walking in the right direction, growing in knowledge and obedience. Those whose faith or obedience stops find their peace with God diminishing. If the faith and obedience extend to the point of full consecration and begetting of the holy spirit, it becomes the "Peace of God which passeth all understanding," ruling in our hearts. (Phil.4:7.) The latter text refers to the perfected peace imparted by the holy spirit, which results from a full consecration to the will of God.

After trust and obedience had increased to the point where we were willing to present our bodies living sacrifices to the Lord, then we entered into this fuller blessing, wherein we now stand. But in order to enter, we must first have our faith vitalised by the great High Priest, who imputes to us as much of the merit of His sacrifice as is necessary to perfect us; and. secondly, we must be accepted as sacrifices by our Heavenly Father, who indicates his acceptance by begetting us of the holy spirit to newness of life.

The vitalisation is that which makes justification complete and unchangeable. The person whose justification has been vitalised has received his full share in- the merit of Christ. To such there would remain no more an interest in the great atonement if he were to turn back, like the sow to the wallowing. If he fails to go on to perfection as a New Creature, the only thing for him would, be a "certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."— Heb. 10:27.

By way of illustration, let us consider a person not in harmony with God, but feeling after him. Typically he recognises the Divine Presence as represented in the Tabernacle. He draws near to God. As' he approaches the Tabernacle he finds but one gate for entrance from the Camp to the Court. After he enters that gate he beholds the brazen altar with its sacrifices, representing the Redeemer's meritorious sacrifice. Passing the altar implies faith in the redeeming work. From the time he enters the "court" condition of faith his faith. continues to increase with each onward step of obedience. Next the first veil is seen, representing consecration to death. If the stoop of full consecration to pass under the veil be made, the result is full or perfect peace, such as our Lord referred to when He said, "My peace give unto you."— John 14:27.

His faith is no longer merely a faith in the Redeemer's work; more than this, it has become "peace, the gift of God's love," the begetting of the holy spirit, which passeth all understanding, ruling in his heart. But if, after the first veil is reached and seen to represent the sacrifice of all earthly interests, that step is not taken, the result will be a lessening of the peace, and possibly a more or less retrograde movement toward the gate, toward the world.

The difference between the justification of those now justified through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and that of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the other Ancient Worthies who were said to be justified by faith. is this: The Ancient Worthies lived at a time when their faith could not be vitalised. Hence, nothing that they could do would give them more than the privilege of having the Divine approval and a better hope for the future, according to the amount of knowledge they enjoyed. They could never gain eternal life actually, except through the Redeemer. Hence they received only the promise of eternal life. Their full justification will come when the Redeemer shall have made application of His merit to the world.

During the Gospel Age matters are different. Whoever would be justified by faith and similarly approved of God now, must present his body la living sacrifice. Those who do so, in this "Acceptable Time," will be accepted, of the Lord and begotten of the holy spirit. Such then cease to be of the earthly, and get their reward with the heavenly class, with our Lord, on the spirit plane.

BIBLE STUDY MEETINGS. -

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

“Towler House,” 18 Queen St. (near Flinders St.), Melbourne.

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

“WATCH TOWER REPRINTS” (Prior to 1919).

Some volumes of the above “Reprints- are on hand for disposal; new and second-hand, and friends desiring them will be supplied with particulars. Complete sets of the “Reprints” will be available shortly, and these will probably be the last obtainable. The value of these fine volumes is well known amongst the truth brethren.

“PLAN OF GOD - IN BRIEF”

This booklet of 96 pages is very useful for making the plan of salvation available to others. Good stock now on hand at 6d. per copy.

CORRECTION.

In our last month's issue, on page 47, first column, the 8th line of the second paragraph is a repetition of the previous line. The sentence should have read:—”To realise its fulfilment will bring to us a power of strength, enabling us the better to run the narrow way—to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ,” etc.

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