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Feasts of the Lord's Table.

(Convention Address).

“Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?” (Psa. 78:19.)

“Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.” (Psa. 23:5.)

THE great Creator is a gracious God, “plenteous in mercy,” and has made bountiful provision for all His creatures. Even in the present sinful condition of mankind how plenteously does the earth yield its increase.

There is abundance of food, materials for clothing, and shelter for all earth's millions, the difficulty being how to make proper distribution of it. That is because man has so fallen from the likeness of God, and instead of being kind and unselfish, instead of having a care for others as for himself, he has imbibed the spirit of Satan—the prince of this world. This, so soon, was evidenced in the expression of Cain, who slew his brother—“Am, I my brother's keeper?” The earth was cursed for man's sake; that is, that it should produce pests and weeds — thorns and thistles, etc.— which should prevent it yielding its fruitage too easily. That was a blessing in disguise, for it has kept man busy; kept him with an object in view. Idleness is a great source of evil; the idle rich are a curse to humanity. It was idleness and fullness of bread that led the Sodomites to wickedness and destruction.

When mankind has been brought back to the image of God--when the spirit of the Adversary has been eliminated and God's spirit is poured upon all flesh so that peace and good-will prevail, the curse will have been removed. “The earth shall yield her increase.” “Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle. For ye shall go forth with joy and he led forth with peace: the mountains and hills shall break forth before you into singing and all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands.” (Isa. 55:13, 12.)

Man will then know how to profitably occupy his time, and there will be no more long weary hours of labor with sweat of face. No longer will there be the cruel sweating of women and children and men, for everyone will seek each other's welfare in justice and love, and gladly share the bounties of the Lord's good table.

How beautiful was the provision made for Adam and Eve. The Garden already prepared, and a lovely table spread with all that they could need in that paradise. How terrible were the consequences of their disobedience; what a history of wretchedness and woe was then begun. The poor groaning creation having lost the Divine providence and protection has been ever degenerating and getting further away from God, multiplying wickedness, craft, lust and strife through selfishness, ambition and cruelty, leading to wars and carnage and rushing on towards the inevitable consequence—a time of trouble such as never has been since there was a nation; and history records some very terrible times.

The great Creator's table has been ignored, for there has always been a table for those who would seek God and His righteousness. But the experiences so soon to reach the climax will bring man to his senses and they will “turn to the Lord with one consent” (Zeph. 3:8, 9), and will find that He has prepared “a feast of fat things” for all the willing and obedient. (Isa. 25.)

While man runs his own course “at enmity with God through wicked works” the Lord has provided good things for those who have turned to Him and sought to do His will. How He rewarded the faith of the Ancient Worthies and blessed Abraham, Jacob, Joseph and Moses, and provided such blessings and favors for His people under the Law Covenant.

Jesus likens Israel under the Law Covenant to the rich man in the parable; and Paul tells us that Israel was rich

indeed—”To whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the service of God and the promises.”—Rom. 9:4. (See also Psa. 147:19, 20; Deut. 28:1-12; Psa. 78:19-25.) The Lord surely dealt bountifully with Israel. What blessings and privileges were theirs; had they remained faithful they would have been powerful above all nations and never wanted for any good thing, but they were weak and sinful and lost the great blessings.

To Israel, according to promise, was the adoption. Messiah came to them, and to them only was offered the privilege of becoming “sons of God” and “joint heirs with Christ.” “To as many as received Him to them gave He power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” (John 1:12; Matt. 15:24.) “If sons, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.” (Rom 8:17.)

There were many faithful during that age, and these enjoyed rich blessings from the Lord’s table. Thus the Psalmist sings: “O taste and see that the Lord is good . . . They that fear the Lord shall not want any good thing.” (Psa. 34:8-10.) Again (Psa. 31:19), “O how great is Thy goodness which Thou has laid up for them that fear Thee.” David realised the Lord’s good providence and protection when he sang: “Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies . . . my cup runneth over” (Psa. 23:5).

All who in any age have sought to come into line with God’s will have found that He graciously provides for their best interests. Yet the good things provided under that ancient dispensation--the Law Covenant -- were only shadows of the “better things” promised to the followers of Christ in this age, during which the spiritual seed of Abraham is being selected.

Those under the Law had a feast of Passover—the slaying of the lamb by which the firstborns were saved and subsequently the whole nation was delivered from the bondage of Pharaoh in Egypt —but this was but a shadow of the slaying of Christ our Passover by which the Church of Firstborns is saved from sin and death, and the power of Satan. The next day foreshadowed the leading of the whole poor, groaning creation — all the willing and obedient — across the sea of death safely to eternal human life under the greater mediator than. Moses, delivered from all bondage and oppression, as the hymn expresses it

“He comes to break oppression
And set the captives free.
To take away transgression
And rule in equity.”

In that day they had their wonderful Tabernacle, in which the Psalmist so much delighted as the House of the Lord, but that was only a shadow of the real tabernacle of God. Their Temple also being a figure of the Temple of God, as Paul says: “Ye are the temple of God,” and again: “An holy temple in the Lord in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God.” (I Cor-. 3:16; Eph. 2:21, 22.).

In the typical Tabernacle was the “shew bread” but we feast upon the real “bread of life that came down from heaven.” There was also the candlestick for light in the Holy, but we have “the light of the world,” and the holy spirit to illumine the Word of God and show light on our pathway in the holy condition of consecration as under priests, with Christ as “the High-priest of our profession.” There was the Golden Altar of Incense, without which sacrifices could not be acceptable, but we have the sweet incense of our Lord’s perfect life, as it were, arising continually before God on our behalf, making our prayers and offerings of ourselves acceptable to God.—(Rom. 12:1).

Jesus at one time had been invited to a dinner and it appears that:as they lounged around the table, in the manner of that time, He took the opportunity of instructing the_ host and others. One listening to His words of grace and truth gave utterance to the expression, “Blessed is_he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God,” and this brought from Jesus the parable of the great supper which a man made and invited many. Jesus here intimated that the Kingdom, of heaven was then opening up. The invitation was indeed going out to the house of Israel, and was the most wonderful privilege that had ever been offered any of God’s creature> angels or men.

It came first to Israel in fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham, and none but the descendants of the faithful Patriarch through. Jacob were at first invited to this Gospel Feast. Only a remnant of that nation was found to be in heart condition able to recognise the Messiah and to respond to the invitation. Israel as a nation rejected the very favor which they thought to obtain. “Israel hath not obtained that which lie seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded,” —because of unbelief. Their table became “a snare and a trap and a stumbling block . . . and through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles.” —(Rom.).

So- it was that Israel generally was too much engrossed in earthly aims and pursuits, to be attracted to the spiritual

feast. The invitations to the great supper then went out into the highways and hedges—to the Gentiles. What a wonderful spread of the exceeding great and precious promises was revealed to the faithful, when, after Pentecost, the riches of heavenly grace began to be perceived. The mystery which had been hid from ages was now made manifest, that God was selecting a “little flock” to be the Bride of Christ—to be joint-heirs with Christ—to sit with Him in His throne, to be spirit beings changed into the likeness of the glorified Saviour, so that they might be joined with Him as the Abrahamic seed and thus be used to “bless all ‘the families of the earth,” in the coming age. —(Gal. 3:16, 29)

Only “such as the Lord would call,” were invited to this table of the Lord. Under Moses, manna had been supplied to Israel in the wilderness, but Jesus said, “My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven . . . I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst. Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life; . . . 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.”—(John 6:32, 33, 35, 53-56). This table (antitype of the Passover) was a stumbling block to Israel. Israel had failed to note the sufferings of Christ which were to precede His Kingship.

The table of the Lord during this Gospel Age indicates suffering, sacrifices of natural privileges and human life and earthly hopes. “He that will be My disciple, let him take up his cross and follow Me. ‘Ye shall indeed be baptised with My baptism and drink of My cup.’— (Matt. 16:24; 20:23). Only if we suffer with Christ can we hope to reign with Him. Our Lord was perfected by suffering and it was no easy way by which He gained His crown.—All who shall share the riches of His grace must walk the same narrow way—cut off from the world, going against its stream, for: “by much tribulation shall we enter the Kingdom.”

Yet, though we travel through an enemy’s land surrounded by foes, “oft in danger, oft in woes,” still, we can rejoice and sing, “Thou preparest a table before Me in the presence of mine enemies; my cup runneth over.” So that while we, sometimes, like our Master, taste the bitterness of the cup, yet the joys far exceed the tribulations, as Paul has said, and he had a big share of the hard experiences —”These light afflictions which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”—(2 Cor. 4:17)

What a favor it is to be invited to such a table—”To a station we could ne’er by merit win.” Even angels are not invited, and not all mankind either, only “such as the Lord our God shall call.” “No man cometh unto the Son except the Father draw (Invite) him.” and “many are called but few are chosen.” No wonder, then, as the Apostles came to understand the wondrous “high calling of God in Christ Jesus,” that their letters to the churches are full of exhortations to faithfulness, so as to make our calling and election sure.

Then there is also the promise of the particular feast at the end of the age—the times in which we are now living. “Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the end of the 1335 days.”—(Dan. 12:12) These 1335 days appear to have been reached in 1874, and we enquire, was there any particular blessing that came to the Lord’s people at that time? Perhaps this can better be answered in the words of one who experienced the joy then:—”Oh the blessedness of this favored time! Oh the harmony, the beauty, the grandeur of the Divine Plan as it began to unfold when the 1335 days were touched. It is to express as far as lies within our power this blessedness and fuller unfolding of ‘the Divine Plan now due to be understood by all the ‘holy people’ now living, that this Scripture Studies Series is being published.

This message concerning Michael’s Kingdom gradually opening from 1829. onward is symbolically represented in the book of Revelation 10:2, 8-10, as a little book which the wise of the holy people represented by St. John,” are instructed to eat.”

It was there in 1874, at the end of the 1335 days, the Lord fulfilled His promise that at His second presence, He would gird Himself and prepare a table, a feast for the watchers—the faithful servants. The same promise is intimated to John at Patmos, in the message to the church of Laodicea (Rev. 3:20.) “Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with Me.” How happy are they who have heard the knock and have opened their hearts in the spirit of the little hymn--”O come to my heart Lord Jesus; there is room in my heart for Thee.”

But so many have their hearts full of sectarian pride—full of their own thoughts and theories--full of churchianity and respect for human doctrines and ceremonies and dogmas, and they do not hear the knock. Those who have heard and opened their hearts, have indeed entered upon a feast of good things, and can say with the Psalmist —”Thou hast put a new song in my mouth even the loving kindness of our God.” The wideness of God’s mercy was revealed and wonderful truths respecting the presence of Christ, the object and manner of His return, also concerning the harvest work and closing features of this age, the glorification of the Church, the day of preparation for the Kingdom of Christ and the restoration of Israel, etc.

Soon now the wilderness journey of the Church will be all over and the antitypical Canaan be entered and then the Messianic Kingdom will be established to bring righteousness and peace to the troubled world.

The knock of the present Lord is not heard by Christendom's leaders any more than the message of Messiah's presence was heard by the leaders in Israel at His first advent. Their hearts are too fully centred in their own and sectarian interests, too full of pride and confidence in their much venerated dogmas, creeds and ceremonies which were mostly formulated in the dark ages, and so are satisfied with such a table. The condition is pictured in Isa. 28:7, 8; also Rev. 18:2-4.

That joy will include the happy work of serving life on earth, without aches or pains, calamities or out another feast to all the willing and obedient, death, but there will be a feast of knowledge of for, while only those invited by the Father could God and His great purposes. The Gospel truth come to the Great Supper, when the Bride is come will be made so plain that a "wayfaring man need complete and with Her Lord, then, "the Spirit and the not err therein." All will receive a clear under Bride will say, come and whosoever will, let him standing of the principles of God's throne; all the come and take of the water of life freely." (Rev. willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land 22:17) and will rejoice to comprehend the breadth and

Of that time Isa. 25:6-9, speaks in beautiful pictorial language— length and height and depth of Divine love, and "The Lord of Hosts shall make the "depth of the riches both of the wisdom and unto all people a feast of fat things, of wines on knowledge of God."

God the Provider.

"My God shall supply all your need, according to
His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."
Who shall tell our untold need,
Deeply felt, though scarcely known!
Who the hungering soul can feed,
Guard, and guide, but God alone?

Blessed promise! while we see
Earthly friends must powerless be,
Earthly fountains quickly dry:
"God" shall all your need supply.
He hath said it! so we know
Nothing less can we receive.

Oh, that' thankful love may glow
While we restfully believe—
Ask not how, but trust Him stilt;
Ask not when, but wait His will.
Simply on His word rely,
God "shall" all your need supply.

Through the whole of life's long way,
Outward, inward need we trace;
Need arising day by day,
Patience, wisdom, strength and grace.
Needing Jesus most of all,
Full of need, on Him we call;
Then how gracious His reply,
God shall "all" your need supply.

Great our need, but greater far
Is our Father's loving power;
He upholds each mighty star,
He unfolds each tiny flower.
He who numbers every hair,
Earnest of His faithful care,
Gave His Son for us to die;
God shall all "your" need supply.

Yet we often vainly plead
For a fancied good denied,
What we deemed a pressing need
Still remaining unsupplied.
Yet from dangers all concealed,
Thus our wisest Friend doth shield;
No good thing will He deny,
God shall all your "need" supply.

Can we count redemption's treasure,
Scan the glory of God's love?
Such shall be the boundless measure
Of His blessings from above.
All we ask or think, and more,
He will give in bounteous store,
He can fill and satisfy,
God shall all your need "supply."

One the channel, deep and broad,
From the Fountain of the Throne,
Christ the Saviour, Son of God,
Blessings flow through Him alone.
He, the Faithful and the True,
Brings us mercies ever new;
Till we reach His home on high,
"God shall all your need supply."

Times of Refreshing and Christ's Reign.

The booklet bearing the above title, which took the place of last month's "People's Paper," is being printed in further good quantities, as it is thought well to use it rather extensively amongst the interested.

All our friends desiring to co-operate in this distribution may do so by ordering supplies or forwarding us lists of names and addresses where they would like copies sent. None need feel diffident about sending long lists, and the smallest will also have our best attention.

The Tract Fund will provide for this work in a general way, but those wishing to meet the cost of their supplies may do so at the rate of 3d. per copy, or 2/- per dozen, posted. Let no one fail to assist in this work because of lack of means.

Passover Memorial. 1937.

This year the Jewish date of Passover corresponds with Easter, the 14th of Nisan being Good Friday, commencing at sundown on the previous evening. Thursday evening March 25th, after sundown, would be the anniversary of the Memorial, and the appropriate time to celebrate by the followers of Christ.

Swedish Periodical—"Dagningen"

Again we wish to remind our readers that we have copies of the above paper available, should they know of any Swedish people who may be helped with the truth message. Some may like to place a copy or so in any of the Swedish Clubs or Libraries where they live. Subscriptions for "Dagningen" may be sent through this office

PEOPLES PAPER.

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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.

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

Christmas Convention.

IT is a pleasure to report a most helpful and refreshing season on the occasion of the recent Christmas Convention held by the Melbourne Class in this city, over the four days—December 25th to 28th inclusive.

Our heartfelt praise ascends to the Lord for all rich blessings bestowed, and it appeared that these were appreciated to the full by all in attendance. The presence of visiting brethren added greatly to the encouragement of the local friends, and from the expressions of the visitors we were assured that the effort and zeal manifest, as well as the expense entailed in coming long distances, were much more than compensated by the spiritual good things from the presence of the Lord.

Each day of the Convention was opened with Praise and Prayer, followed by a Bible Study, Fellowship Meeting and Addresses, tea also being served by the local Sisters, which was appreciated and during which there was the opportunity of more informal fellowship amongst the friends.

The passages of Scripture taken for the Bible studies are as follows—Col. 1:21-29; 2 Cor. 4:1-11; Heb. 12:18-24; and 2 Tim. 4:1-8; and our readers will understand the amount of valuable instruction and encouragement received from these beautiful portions of God's Word. Each day one of these. Studies engaged the attention of the assembly for an hour and a half with much benefit to all in attendance. One of these Studies, at least, will be given in some detail in a later issue.

Addresses by the brethren comprised a wide range of topics—"Character"; "John 14:27": "Signs of the Times"; "Watch ye, Stand fast, be Strong"; "Feasts of the Lord's Table"; and the Bible Characters of "Joseph," "David," "Moses," "St. Paul," "St. John," and "Timothy." The thoughts expressed were very encouraging indeed, each speaker bringing out in his own way many helpful lessons and exhortations. Two of these addresses appear in this issue and others will follow as space permits.

The Fellowship Meetings gave further opportunity for Praise and Testimony, also a Question Meeting, and on the closing day the session on "Helpful Thoughts from the Convention," enabled the brethren to give expression respecting the particular thoughts with which they had been most impressed. •

At the conclusion of the Closing Address, the brethren gathered round and partook of the Love Feast while singing "Blest be the tie that binds." Then came the parting hymn, "God be with you till we meet again," and the concluding prayer commended all the Lord's people present and in all parts of the world into the care of our loving heavenly Father, the Great Shepherd of the sheep.

"The Life and Teachings of our Lord, Jesus Christ"

THIS little book of 160 pages is published by the Oxford University Press, and gives the life and teachings of our Lord in the words of the four Gospels fitting in the various features into one connected whole.

It was brought to our attention by one of our brethren in England, who writes as follows:—"At our Sunday meetings we are having very precious times. In the morning for the last two years we have been studying 'The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ,' and the little book is now driving to a close. It has helped us wonderfully to follow as closely as possible chronologically our Lord's life on earth, and to see how beautifully He opened up His teachings as the disciples were able to receive them. I can never recall a study where our Saviour's life has been brought so intimately to my mind, and I think this has been the experience' of all."

Copies of this book will arrive from England early in March, and all orders placed will be filled as received. Those friends desiring copies should order now; the price will be about 2/6 or 2/9, posted.

Zionism in Prophecy.

The helpful series of articles entitled "Zionism in Prophecy" appearing in "The Dawn" of last year are now in booklet form. This is a very useful little book dealing with the ancient prophecies concerning Israel.

Some few copies are on hand, and a further supply will reach us later. We are not sure of the price at present, though it will be about 1/-, or little more, per copy. Those desiring the booklet may order right away.

Correspondence.

N.S. Wales, 20th Dec., 1936. Dear Brother,

Will you kindly send me a copy of "Daily Manna for the Church" if you have one left, and keep the few shillings over for the Tract Fund?

It was very kind of you to answer my letter of a month or so ago at such length. One gets very perplexed at times, and needs the help of the brethren to explain matters. I am more than sorry at the disagreement between the brethren in U.S.A., but can see that Bro. Hoskins is in the right. Some of the articles in the "Herald" still read very nicely, but I have read good sermons by ministers of all denominations, even Catholics.

Another year has almost gone, and it looks as if 1937 \V be the most eventful year yet. One cannot help but marvel at the rapidity with which the storm clouds are banking up, and the world in part so heedless, though the hearts of thinking people are indeed failing them for fear.

With kindest regards to all the brethren, and may the coming year still see us all standing firm in the one great hope.

Your Sister in Him.

4th December 1936. The Secretary, Berean Biblical Institute.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find postal notes to the value of 1/10/-. which I would like you to use to the best of your ability in the service of the Truth. A Believer.

[This good assistance to the work is much appreciated from our unknown friend. We are glad that the Lord knows all those who sacrifice in His service, and will reward even now with blessings, and in due time most fully in the Kingdom.] -

New Zealand. Dear Sir,

Having read your book, "Foregleams of the Golden Age," I would be much obliged if you would let me know of any other books by the same author.

I am sure it has been the means of bringing light to my soul on many matters; also I would like to get in touch with others who have been brought to a knowledge of the Truth.

Trusting God will bless the efforts you are making to spread His Word.

I am, Sincerely Yours. Berean Biblical Institute.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your communication of the 7th inst., also the booklet, "God and Reason" I am very interested in your doctrine. I am studying to enter the ministry of Christ, and am, therefore, anxious to leave no stone of enquiry unturned.

I hereby lodge an order for the "People's Paper" to be posted to me during the coming twelve months. I shall forward subscription fee of 2/6 at a later date. Again thanking you,

Yours in Christian Service.

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:—

Clyde House, 182 Collins Street, First Floor. Room 5, near Town Hall, Melbourne.

Liverpool Buildings, Flinders Street Adelaide, South Aust.

The gatherings are quite unsectarian, and all desiring to attend will be very welcome.

South Aust., 10/1/37.

The Life of Joseph.

(Convention Address)

Who will not agree that this beautiful story of one of God's servants of the Jewish Age, is one that compares with any among the writings of nations?

The thoughtful reader, especially if he be a child of God, cannot fail to be touched with the simple pathos' of this story. Reading on from the 37th chapter to the end of the book of Genesis, we see the various stages of the life of Joseph, son of Jacob, who was destined to play an-important part in God's .dealings with the children of Israel.

Very -aptly we can apply to Joseph the text of I Sam.- 2.:30-”Them that honour me I will honour,” and do -we -not find throughout his whole life, the one great aim and object—the desire to please God and gain His righteous approval in all his doings?

The Apostle in the 11th chapter of Hebrews makes mention of Joseph's faith in God, in His promise and -in a future resurrection of the dead, and so we can see that Joseph realised that to be a friend of God and an heir to His promises, called for purity of heart and a life which God could approve. No doubt as he looked back he saw the influence of God's great promise upon the life of his great grandfather Abraham, upon his grandfather Isaac, and- upon his own father Jacob, and we. see that this same promise influenced and con- trolled him to his own great advantage.

So, we find Joseph a bright shepherd boy of 17 years,- the special favorite of his father (Gen. 37:2, 3)- who made him “a coat of many colours,” which proved later to have a special significance, being a ‘sign of special favor, or royalty. His brothers evidently looked upon it as an indication of their- father's purpose to bestow -the chief blessing upon him; This feature, along with Joseph's innocent, pure and guileless life before them seemed to engender within their hearts a spirit of jealous envy.

Later we read of Joseph's dream, (Gen. 37:5-8). His brothers, taking this as an indication that he . should at some future time have dominion over them, hated him the more. Then followed another dream, this time that the sun, moon and eleven stars made obeisance to him, and when he told it to his father and his brothers they rebuked him again, Jacob saying—”Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren bow ourselves down to thee?” It is recorded that Jacob observed this saying, but his brothers envied him. Ah, how little they knew of the experience God had in store for them and how that even their hatred of Joseph was playing a part in the working out of His purpose concerning them.

What a striking contrast we have in this picture! On the part of Joseph we see the spirit of love manifest in his every action, while on the other hand we see the spirit of jealous hatred and envy which his brothers allowed to control them to such an extent that they began to plot against his life. Here we are reminded of the words of Solomon 8:6, 7.—”Jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire which hath a most vehement flame.” On the other hand, love is strong as death—”Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.”

Now we read that an opportunity came for the jealous brothers to give vent to their bitter feelings toward Joseph. (See Gen. 37:12-20). They said—”Behold this dreamer cometh. Come therefore and let us slay him and cast him into some pit,” but Reuben persuaded them not to kill him but to cast him alive into some pit,. thinking to afterwards' rescue him secretly and deliver him to his father again. This suggestion they acted upon, until, seeing a company of Ishmelites travelling with spicery, balm and myrrh down into Egypt, Judah suggested selling him to them, which they did, for twenty pieces of silver, and so Joseph was taken down into Egypt. Later he was sold to Potiphar, one of

Pharaoh's officers, and thus became the forerunner of all Israel into the land of Egypt. How cunningly the brothers deceived their father to hide their wicked deed by taking Joseph's coat of many colors, dipping it in the blood of a goat, which suggested to Jacob that some wild beast had devoured his well beloved son.

What a severe trial for Jacob, for evidently Joseph was the one in whose line of descent he looked for the fulfilment of the divine covenant, being the eldest son of his beloved Rachel, and a child after his own heart, in whom was the reverence of God and a love of righteousness. The coat of many colors seemed to have been the expression of this hope. But, alas, now it seemed his hopes were shattered, yet he faithfully held to the promise of God and waited patiently for its fulfilment.

How severe also must this trial have been for Joseph. From being a favorite son, he was suddenly carried off as a slave into a foreign and heathen land. This bitter experience, along with the thought of the cruelty and hatred of his cold hearted brothers and his father's subsequent grief and loneliness, without any prospect of ever seeing him again, and no means of communication must have caused Joseph much grief, being of such tender years. Although he had left the scenes of all that was so dear to him on earth, he carried with him the staff of the divine promises, resolving to be loyal to God, and maintain his integrity under whatever circumstances he might be placed.

What a grand example for any young man to follow. Instead of yielding to the evil influence of his surroundings, we find that his being thrown more and more on his own resources and coming into contact with a new and at that time advanced civilisation, he received a new and valuable education which otherwise he could not have received and a discipline that developed manly strength, tact and firmness of character.

Reading on in the 39th chapter we find Joseph serving his master faithfully. Still trusting in God, he cheerfully carried out his duties, and this soon won him the confidence of his master, who, we read, saw that God was with him and made all that he did to prosper, and so in turn Potiphar made him overseer over all his house.

In this way Joseph spent some ten years, but now came to him even a worse experience; he was falsely accused by his mistress in such a subtle way that, because of his purity and innocence of such a sin, he was cast into prison. Here, too, he still remained, loyal to the principles of righteousness and made the best use of the situation: We find -(verse 21), "that the Lord was with him and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison," who, in turn, "committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison."

Surely, then, Joseph was one whose faithfulness in little things prepared him for larger fields of usefulness. He was rightly exercised by the experiences of life; kind to the thankful and the unthankful, and never allowing the injustice and harsh treatment which he received to harden his heart. Never was there a sign of distrust of God or of complaining against Him, but rather he trusted where he could not trace Him. "I would rather walk in the dark with God than go alone in the light" expresses Joseph's position very well.

Passing on into the 40th chapter, we find further instances of God's favor toward Joseph. It was given him to interpret the dreams of the king's chief baker and butler, who were also in prison, and in this Joseph thought he saw a possible way of being released—see verses 12 to 15. However, the ungrateful butler forgot his benefactor. Then the door of opportunity swung open, not only to freedom, but to honour and advancement. Gen. 41—Pharaoh had dreamed two dreams which troubled him, as there was not one among all his wise men who could give him the interpretation. Then the chief butler remembered how Joseph had rightly interpreted his dream, and made mention of him to the king, who had Joseph brought hastily out of the prison, that he might tell him his dreams. And so Joseph, being led of God, was able to explain to the king how that there would be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine, throughout all the land of Egypt, which would be very grievous.

Then followed Joseph's wise advice to Pharaoh, suggesting that he should set up a competent man over all the land, who in turn could appoint overseers to put by a great store of corn during the seven years of plenty, so that the land should not perish during the predicted famine. Pharaoh at once recognised that Joseph was led of the spirit of God, and had great faith in him, and realised that he could do no better than appoint Joseph as his prime minister, to be next to him on the throne of Egypt.

What an exaltation! What an honour was bestowed on this young Hebrew, now 30 years of age, who had risen suddenly from the prison house to the throne of Egypt. Yet he did not become puffed up with pride and lose his head, as many would have done. Even though, having reached such a high office, it was not the goal of his ambition, for, like his fathers, he looked for the long promised kingdom of God. There was his treasure, and there was his heart, and from thence he received the inspiration of his noble life, and now he only esteemed this position in the court of Egypt for its privileges of helpfulness to others.

We pass on now over the next period of about nine years to another interesting incident in Joseph's life. He had been next to Pharaoh on the throne, and the seven' years of plenty had ended, during which he had gone throughout the land laying by supplies of grain in every city. He had also married, and now had a happy home of his own, with a wife and two children. The great famine had now been in the land for two years, but we read in Gen. 41:54—"There was bread in all the land of Egypt."

We now come to the beautiful story of the reunion of Joseph with his brethren. The famine had reached far beyond Egypt, so that all the countries around came into Egypt to buy corn from Joseph. Jacob, too, away in the land of Canaan, had heard that there was corn in Egypt, and consequently sent his ten sons down to buy food, but little did they know that this great governor of the land was their young brother whom they had sold into slavery some 23 years before. What humiliating experiences were in store for them! We see how wisely Joseph dealt with them (42nd chap.). Treating them roughly at first and accusing them of coming as spies, they did not recognise him, and bowed.