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Christ, Our Passover Lamb.

IN 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 which God had instructed Israel to keep in order to effect their release from Egyptian bondage, and then to observe, 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 ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. 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 thy sons for ever." (Exod. 12:25-27, 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 firstborns 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 His observing the Passover ceremony with His disciples on the three anniversaries prior to His sacrifice, as these would not be of special interest, but 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 astounding 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," etc. How influential should the Apostle's words have been when we realise 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 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 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.)

"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; 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 is to 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 to our Lord's memorial, and implies all true Christians participating 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 is 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. (1) 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 forth 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

¹The booklet entitled—"Why We Observe the Lord's Supper Annually"—contains an explanation of texts relating to "breaking of bread" in Acts, and is supplied at 6d. per copy, post paid.

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 Paul was not seeking to discourage any sincere ones, but rather sought to encourage all the Lord’s called ones to celebrate the Lord’s Supper in spirit and in truth—”discerning the Lord’s body”, 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.”

Are Mass Conversions Included in God’s Plan of Salvation for Today?

(Contributed Article)

THIS subject seems a very timely one, in view of the wide publicity and the apparent success of what some term evangelistic crusades, missions to the nation, etc. It seems good to look into these things, particularly as they come closer to us at this time.

We would like to emphasize this point, it is not our intention to decry or voice down any movement whereby people are assisted to live better lives. When efforts are made to take people out of darkness and the drab and dreary existence in which many find themselves, particularly in congested cities like Melbourne and Sydney and other places, any little ray of sunshine that can bring them happiness is worthwhile. If people can give them something to live for, to bring them out of that darkness and dreariness, that is very good. Any movement, wherever it comes from, if it brings sunshine, joy, peace, happiness, love and goodwill, surely must do good. On the other side of the scales are the drab experiences that people find to their sorrow when they, seek fellowship and excitement in the many questionable places all too easily found especially by the young folk in these days. So we are not going to cry down and speak ill of these efforts. Our complaint is not against the sunbeams but against the shadows. Why mix truth with error? Why not open the windows of understanding, too long clouded with ignorance, superstition and darkness, and let in the full sunshine of God’s love and plan?

Our purpose is solely to examine the Scriptural authority of any who claim to come in the name of the Lord. By the same token as we claim this privilege, we invite and plead and pray that each one of you will do the same with what we present to you. You should do the same with us as we propose to do with those who make these pretentious claims.

This is what we invite you to do—”try the spirits,” that is to say, test the teachings. In 1 John 4:1 we read,

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” Our Lord said, “Many shall come in my name, and shall deceive many” — Matt. 24:5. Many also would claim His affection and blessing because of the great works accomplished in His name. Unfortunately for them, Jesus refuses to acknowledge them as His Bride. He says, “Depart from Me.” (Luke 13:25-27.)

But how, or by what means, may we be able to distinguish between true and false? Many religious movements over the years have come and gone. Like comets in the heavens, they shine with great brilliance, but soon the novelty and excitement is finished. Many of us can remember such movements. Not long afterwards we are back in the same ruts and grooves, same old frustrations and depressions. Mighty works have been claimed to be done in the name of the Lord, but there has been no continuity.

You may well ask, how can we test the teachings of great religious leaders? Doctors of religion, doctors of law, men of letters, how can we question their authority? We assure you there is a way, and it is not only your privilege, but your responsibility to prove all things for yourself, so you may be fully persuaded in your own mind that you have the truth.

If we recommended to you a certain man to do a building job for you, you may be disposed to accept our recommendation. You might act on that advice. You would, up to a point, approve of our recommendation, but would you not very soon check for yourself his progress with the blueprints, as he proceeded with the job? Even before that you would have checked the foundations, which are important in any building; but so are the details. At certain stages of construction you would check up, would you not, on this man’s work. You know what you would do if he was not

building according to your specifications.

We would like to emphasise this point—he could be an excellent builder and a very well-meaning, sincere, honest and god-fearing man in every respect. As a man he could be everything you would desire. But if he presented you with something entirely out of harmony with your plans, what would you do? Now that is the precise position in regard to God's Church. Let us read 1 Cor. 3:10-15—Paul says, “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”

They are very strong words. So friends, it is important how this building is designed and proceeded with in its various stages of construction. We have it in the words of the Psalmist, “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it.” God is interested in the human efforts folk make to build His Church. Is it unreasonable to think that God will reject results out of harmony with His will, any more than you as a designer of your house would reject something a builder prepared out of harmony with your design? As these various winds of doctrine blow around the world, you must be assured in your own mind, of your faith. At the close of this article you answer the question, Are mass conversions included in God's plan of salvation for today?

A plan, did you say? Just as in any plan, much detail is given in God's plan of salvation. Supposing the outline is all right, and the detail wrong. Supposing the foundation is all right, and the superstructure wrong. There is confusion. Something is out of harmony. God does take an interest in His building. “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it.” In every work of God there is plan and design, from the butterfly's wings to a snowflake, from the ocean's depths to the top of Everest. From the jellyfish to the highest form of life on earth, Man, there is planning.

We may be so foolish as to refuse to admit the Plan and the Planner. Many do this. But you will not read very far in the New Testament without discovering that there is to be a Church, and as in all other arrangements, there is a plan of its structure. But in fact, it is a mysterious building. (Read Eph. 3:3-11.)

Now read Eph. 2:13-22, where Paul is speaking to those Gentile believers who have come into the faith of Jesus Christ. Looking particularly at the last three verses, we have “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

Yes, God is interested in a certain building, and this building has for its foundation the prophets and apostles, and Jesus Christ Himself is the apex. God is particularly interested in this building, since He is going to abide in it. It is going to be His habitation. So we may be sure that God is very interested in any movement that claims to be building His Church.

In our city (Melbourne) at the moment we have activity that has for its object mass conversions. Since 1954 this particular movement claims for itself stupendous success in drawing crowds — 25,000 here, 50,000 there, 70,000 somewhere else. In one centre there were 180,000 in one single day. If you have heard and read a little of this movement, you will discern how its gatherings are “sold” to the people. Firstly, the publicity and the initial support—thus success is guaranteed—that is if numbers are any criterion. This publicity is highly organised, with newspaper articles, pictures, T.V., radio and other avenues in which publicity goes before it. Then there is lovely music and singing, the more enhanced because of the way it catches on. It is really delectable.

A man may also use a lovely personality and cultivate talents and develop them to capture the imagination and enthusiasm of other folk. It is interesting to note here that Jesus, the Saviour of mankind, as such, had no personality. Read Isa. 53:1-3. This is the man Jesus Christ, whom we delight to talk about. “He had no comeliness, that we should desire Him.” He must have been a beautiful creature, crowned with the glory and honour of perfect manhood. Sin blurs our vision, while the author of sin complicates it still further by putting light for darkness, darkness for light, sweet for bitter, and bitter for sweet. The repentance we preach is more than something akin to a new year resolution.

It is a discernment not only of sin in ourselves, but that Jesus, in His great humiliation, carried those sins. He bore our grief, carried our sorrows and shame, and the peace of God will be absent from our hearts until we see our healing in His stripes, smitten of God and afflicted for our transgressions.

As to the Apostle Paul, one of those “foundation stones,” he must have had a dynamic personality in one way, yet in another way he had no personality outwardly. They said of him, “Yes, his letters are weighty, but his bodily presence is weak.” There was no publicity for him, nothing to attract the fleshly mind.

Paul gives us a lead as to what we should look for in a preacher. He says, “Who is Paul, and who is Apollos? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” The message is the thing that counts, not the man behind it. The Apostles themselves could see that message in detail, the detail of God’s building. It is a message with a man behind it—and that man is Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 3:4-8) .

However, let us return to mass conversions. These happenings remind us that some even go so far as to say they are a second Pentecost. Incidentally, there is to be a second Pentecost (Acts 2:16-18). But this great movement that is going around the world since 1954 is likened by some to a second Pentecost. We want first to know what a second Pentecost will be, if we are not to be deceived. This movement reminds us, not of a second Pentecost, but as we look into the Word it reminds us of a harvest. As you know, each age has a harvest. Look back to the harvest of the Jewish Age. That great man, John the Baptist, was there. He had a message similar to the message these prophets have today—“Repent.” John, of course, had something to back it up. “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” Jesus was in attendance six months after John. He supported John, and John supported Him. People flocked in thousands to see and hear John. They trudged out to the place where he was baptizing. It was given to John to point out the Messiah. If John had his thousands, Jesus had His tens of thousands. It was deemed expedient by those in authority, because of this, that they should get rid of Him. “All wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.” This is the sad part of it—despite the great crowds, as He continued to reveal God’s plan and continued to point out some of the details of the building in which He was to be the Chief Corner-stone, His followers dwindled. They dwindled until at last there was just the twelve of them. You could hardly believe it. He said to His apostles,

“Will ye also go away?” But they could not leave Him. He had the words of eternal life.

When He sent His seventy disciples out, to winnow the grain from the chaff in the harvest of that age, He sent them not as a body to convert the thousands en masse, but in pairs; sent them to the individual households with a message of peace. The Scripture in this sense would be fulfilled,—“Ye shall be gathered one by one, O, ye house of Israel.”

(Isa. 27:12.) Isn’t that pertinent to our case today? Jesus said it would be similar at the end of the Gospel Age. We are comparing these movements to the time of the harvest. His parable of the wheat and tares is very definite in this respect. (Matt. 13.) He points out that at the end of the age there would be a great harvest, because the wheat and the tares would be separated.. This parable suggests that rather than mass conversions there would be mass declensions.

So does the Psalmist support the idea. “A thousand shall fall at thy side, ten thousand at thy right hand.” But the promise is, “it shall not come nigh thee”, provided we have taken the necessary precautions. The fields in the Gospel Age are like the fields in the Jewish Age, ripe to harvest, but the labourers are few.

The pages of history repeatedly tell of the struggle of the few, sometimes of the individual, against the minions of evil. The Lord’s people are not to be affrighted though the whole world be arraigned against them. “If God be for us who then can be against us?”

Earlier we showed that plan and design, law and order, is Heaven’s first law—morning and evening, summer and winter, springtime and harvest, sowing and reaping. What would you think of a farmer who brought out his plough and harrows rather than a thresher and binder? The Master mentioned a feast (the Apostle Paul calls it Present Truth), and said that there would be a great separation work. One would be taken from here, one would be taken from there, and one would be taken from another place (Luke. 26:37). It is much the same as it was at the end of the Jewish Age, when people were in expectation of they knew not what. This work of separation is *going* on, and rather than mass conversions, it is one here and there that is gathered. Many say, Here is Christ, accept this and everything will be all right. But is mass conversion what the Lord portrayed as taking place at the end of the age?

It is sometimes helpful to examine a movement or teaching by comparing it with other matters. Now let us open our Bibles, and keep them open. You often hear it expressed of those they term “hot gospellers” that they “have something.” Let us from the Scriptures show you some of the things they have, and on the other hand some of the things they do not have, and then make up your own mind.

They do have that infamous doctrine of hell fire. It makes one wonder regarding their reasoning when we open our Bibles and read Matt. 5:43-45. It is beyond comprehension how any man can teach hell fire in view of this. This is taken from the Sermon on the Mount, and held up as the perfect relationship of man to man. “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them

that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Friends, that means to say, Like. Father, like son. Particularly note the point that we are to be like God. But in the next breath these folk tell us that God does something different with His enemies. It is beyond comprehension. It makes God a hypocrite. He treats His enemies differently to what Jesus tells us we should treat ours. There is something wrong somewhere, is there not?

There is something else these “hot gossellers” have—the Trinity doctrine. Jesus, according to them, is God. How could anyone read John 17 and think Jesus and the Father are one and the same? The detail is all out of harmony with the foundation, if we build that way.

They could not very well teach hell-fire and the Trinity without teaching the old-age lie, “ye shall not surely die.” But they put on this deception a modern garb, give it a different dress and call it immortality of the soul. This cuts the ground from under the plain teaching of Jesus that there shall be a resurrection of the just and unjust. If you subscribe to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, you will have to clip from your Bible all the passages that speak of a resurrection. Then you must clip out all those parts that speak of a restitution of all things. (Read Acts 3:19-25).

Here is sound advice. Repent. But what follows? “Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” If you believe the age-old lie of immortality of the soul, you will not only need to clip from the New Testament those portions speaking of restitution and resurrection. You will also have to cut out from your Bible all those lovely passages that speak of the restitution blessings to come through Abraham’s seed, who you know is Christ and His Church. There is to be a blessing for the world, not consignment to eternal torment. One thing leads to another. Then you would be obliged to eliminate any reference to Jerusalem as the capital of the earth. You would need to cut out such passages as Micah 4:1-4 (please read). But we trust you will retain that lovely promise, and particularly the latter portion, “They shall sit every man under his vine and under his *fig* tree, and none shall make them afraid.” That is quite different to what these “hot gossellers” preach. They are mixing things up. Security is what people want, and they are going to be assured of security under the reign of Jesus Christ. We must test these teachings.

Let us go on. You also, like those of the Jewish faith at the end of their day, would not know the day of your visitation, speaking generally. You would be well equipped to forecast the weather. But you would be unable to read the signs of the Lord’s presence. You would have a false sense of security. It would amount to what Jesus Christ describes as the blind leading the blind.

John Bunyan puts it this way.. When Christian was on his way to the Celestial City, he came to the forked roads, and both were identical. He did not know which way to go. He deliberated for a while which of these two roads he should take. A man came along and said, This is the way. Christian took this way, to his sorrow. For a while it was all right, but ,by and by it became worse. As deeper became the mire and morass and trouble, he had great difficulty in retracing his steps. (2 Pet. 3:16.) That is what is being done with the Scriptures. They are being disguised, and people are being lulled into a false sense of security.

Is mass conversion included in God’s plan of salvation for today? We answer, Conversion from what, and conversion to what? Since 1914, the beginning of the great time of trouble, the walls of faith are in the process of being demolished. They are being shaken as never before. Our Lord asked, when He comes shall He find faith? — implying, of course, there’ would be very little of the true faith as it pertains to His ransom sacrifice and the details of the house God is building, His Church.

Ye’s, since 1914 these things have been shaken, and the walls of faith have tumbled around men and they do not know their right hand from their left as far as the Word of -God is concerned. The ecclesiastical powers, the heavens, are greatly alarmed. These mass conversions seem to be attempts to rebuild the old bulwarks. They were unable to withstand the blast of God’s displeasure. “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it.”

Right down through the age there have been two voices, one from the true Shepherd and another from a stranger. Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice; but a stranger will they not follow.” The voice of the true Shepherd will open up the Bible, and as it opens up you will be led beside still waters and green pastures. You are compelled to ask yourself, If these great revivalists know these things, why don’t they tell the people? They know, as we know and have experienced, that if they tell the people these things, very little interest would be shown. There would be one here, one there. But it is just as our Lord said it would be, so why should we be perplexed? God has a plan, and a good plan, which involves not only the Church, but mankind in general. Every man will share the blessings of that plan, just as the Church has enjoyed the blessing of coming into Christ and being associated with Him in this temple God is building for His own habitation. There is one here and one there, and it was exactly the same in the days of the Apostles. A

short time after Jesus Himself had gone there was quite a company together on the day of Pentecost, but after that it was hard going. You do not have to read very far in the epistles of Paul and John to see that very few responded. There were twelve foundation stones, and it was as hard for them as it is for us. Very few responded, just one here, one there. Is it reasonable to suppose that if the twelve foundation stones of the Church could do so little as to mass conversions, that we, so far removed from the purer teachings of Jesus, are going to match and excel their efforts? No.

Our advice to you is to open your Bibles, look at the harvest message, the message appropriate to the time mentioned in Matt. 24. In this chapter, which is referred to as our Lord's great prophecy, you will see at the beginning Jesus had warned them about certain things which were to happen. This chapter is worth reading and pondering, because it provides the answer to all the problems that confront us today in our social world, in our religious world, and as we go among our friends and families. They are the words right from the Master •Himself. It is strikingly apparent that the harvest of these two ages, the Jewish and Gospel ages, are in many respects similar. He told them about the mighty works of that day—look at the great temple buildings, and all the glory and pomp and splendour— but He said not one stone would be left upon another. It was to be razed to the ground. The disciples were worried, and came to Jesus and asked Him at a convenient time as to what was meant. They said, "Tell us, when shall these things be?" You will notice there are three questions, "When shall these things be," i.e. about the great time of trouble that was to come at the end of the age. The next question is, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming"—how shall we be able to understand? They were speaking for the whole Church. The third question is, "And of the end of the age." Keep in mind in reading the following verses that Jesus is answering three questions, and you will *see* that some part of the discourse that follows is in regard to the first question, some parts in regard to the second and third questions.

Jesus had said' previously to Jerusalem, "Your house is left unto you desolate." He had wept over that glorious fortress of God. Later that city was razed to the ground, and truly not one stone was left upon another. The Temple must have been a magnificent piece of work. It was said that because of the amount of gold there, in the conflagration the gold was melted and ran down between the great stones. In their efforts to recover the treasure, the soldiers literally tore one stone from another until not one was left standing. How true the Lord's words became.

Then regarding the next question, the sign of His coming — He had been forewarning them about His departure.

He also said He would come again. "Where I am, there ye may be also." They were anxious to know what would be the sign of His second coming. They also were very anxious to know what would happen at the end of the age. That is what concerns IF. We would like you to read Mat. 24:31-45.

So there is going to come a time in the life span of one person when tremendous events are to be fulfilled before our eyes. We think they have begun. It began, we believe, in 1914. Every unsolved problem dates from then. 1939 was a repetition of 1914. The same troubles are there .to be solved today. Men will not face those problems, so these conditions our Lord says would arise are shortly coming to pass. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass." "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall the days of the Son of Man be." Before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the flood came and took them all away. These things are not in themselves evil. It is no sin to be married, to be eating and drinking and so on. But this is the trouble — men are so preoccupied with these things that they can think of nothing else. "Then shall two be in the field," etc. They are gathered to the spiritual food prepared for them. In another place it says, "Where, Lord ?" Our Lord says, "Where the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." It is a feast of truth. That is where we are today.

Can you in your imagination see that mass conversions are going to accomplish anything as far as God's building of the Church is concerned? It may have beneficial effects on young people. We would be unsympathetic not to wish anyone well in any good work. But we are merely concerned with the authority they claim in regard to the conversion of the world. Nothing could be further from the truth. God has a plan, and His plan envisages not only the Church, but also the whole world of mankind. It is the best news we ever heard in our lives. We should not be enticed away by these great gatherings. The truth is more precious and valuable than anything. It keeps us stable, and with a definite purpose in view.

The verses we have read, and the experiences of the Apostles and others, show us that rather than mass conversions, it will be mass declensions. We have to recognise our part in these things, then we will not be afraid. It may be that this will test us still further when we have to take our stand and speak in regard to the great and glorious details that go to make up God's plan. In it there will be an opportunity for everyone. There is no thought of mass conversion.

“Blessed Bible, precious Word,
Boon most sacred from the Lord—
Glory to His name be given
For this precious gift from heaven.

‘Tis a fountain, pouring forth
Streams of life to gladden earth,
Whence eternal blessings flow,
Antidote for human woe.

‘Tis a mine, aye deeper too
Than can mortal ever go;
Search we may for many years,
Still some new, fresh *gem* appears.”

Passover Memorial, 1959

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ’s death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 21st April. This date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the celebration in accord with our Lord’s request—”This do in remembrance of me.”

Friends desiring the unleavened bread and wine may procure these from this office. Early application should be made, preferably by early April, and please state the number of persons to be served.

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.30 p.m., at Church of Christ, 277 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. (Not far from Glenferrie Station; a few doors south of Burwood Road.)

Perth.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7.45 p.m., at 240 Shepparton Road, East Victoria Park, W.A.

Sydney.—Tuesday, 21st April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevard, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevard, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station).

Adelaide.—Sunday, 19th April, at 6.90 p.m., at Master Builders’ Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

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