



Volume XXV1. No. 11 MELBOURNE, 1st NOVEMBER, 1943 Price—Threepence

Noah's Ark a Figure of Christian Baptism

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.-1 Pet. 3:21.

A short article from the U.S.A. periodical "Prophecy Monthly" on the apparent discovery of Noah's Ark appeared in our January and May issues of "Peoples Paper" this year, and quite an amount of interest has been created in this matter. No further information is to hand, and while recognising the value of such a discovery as a witness to the truth of God's Word, especially in the Kingdom Age, the Lord's people see a higher and deeper lesson in the whole incident of Noah's Ark, as presented by St. Peter, and explained in the following article, which should prove helpful to all sincere Christians.

WE see from the context that the Apostle Peter has in mind the great Deluge. He reminds his readers that all mankind perished in the Flood save eight souls, who were preserved from a watery grave by means of the Ark which God provided them. That Ark, though submerged in water, was their salvation. St. Peter declares that this is a "like figure to baptism." We are to notice that those who were saved in the Deluge were not saved from eternal torment, and that a like figure of salvation would not indicate that the Church is saved from eternal torment by their baptism into Christ. Noah and his family were saved from death; and the Church of Christ are likewise saved from death through their baptism.

As the whole world perished in the great Flood, so the entire world of mankind now is a dead world, a perishing world. The Church class were of that world until they got out of it through Christ. As Noah and his family were saved from death by coming into the Ark in obedience to God, so the Church of Christ are saved from Adamic death by obedience to God, by accepting His offer of salvation (John 17:16; 15:19). Noah's Ark represented Christ. Whoever comes into Christ comes into safety and salvation, out of danger and destruction. All who come into this relationship to God in Christ are said to have "passed from death unto life."—John 5:24.

Only a very limited number come into Christ and fulfil this picture. It does not include those who merely say, "I wish to live a better life." To do this is commendable; but it does not constitute a coming into Christ; for as the Apostle says, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Just how much is comprehended in the words, "a new creature," even true Christians come to see only gradually. A new creature is one who has died to his human nature, who has new hopes, new ambitions, new affections, who has the precious promises of God and the prospect of a spiritual existence in the future instead of a human existence. He is an exception to others in that he has been begotten of the holy spirit. From the Divine standpoint, he is no longer a human being; a new life has begun in him.

This new creature is at first a babe, and must take spiritual nourishment and grow up into Christ more and more.

God has provided the “exceeding great and precious promises” of His Word, that this class might be stimulated, strengthened, developed, thereby becoming more firm and for righteousness and in opposition to whatever is sinful. The Church is indeed a new creation, as the Apostle says.

Two Like Figures of Church’s Salvation.

We notice that St. Peter says, “The like figure whereunto baptism doth now save us.” Salvation through the Ark was one figure of the salvation of the Church through baptism into Christ; baptism in water is another. There is a correspondence between these two figures. Noah and his family were submerged in literal water. Candidates for baptism are also submerged in literal water. But in neither case was it the water that saved. It is not the outward baptism that saves us, except in a figure. It represents the real. But the figure is not in washing away the filth of the flesh (the body) in water. And the filth of our flesh as new creatures can be washed away only by the grace of God in Christ, “by the washing of water by the Word”; it is a gradual process after we become new creatures. So neither of these is what is pre-figured in water baptism.

Our text is pointing out to us a peculiar baptism, not a baptism that washes the flesh clean, either literally or figuratively, but “the answer (the response) of a good conscience toward God.” What has God said to which we should respond? We reply that our Heavenly Father has called us, invited us, to a wonderful heavenly inheritance, and we respond by accepting His proposition. He has invited us to be a separate people. Just exactly as God said to Noah and his family that they should be saved by gathering into the Ark, so He says to all who are invited during this Gospel Age, “Gather My saints together unto Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.” —Psalm 50:5.

Let us notice to whom we are to be gathered. Serious mistakes have been made here. Some have thought that we were to be gathered to Luther; some to Calvin; some to Wesley, etc. Not so! “Gather My saints together unto ME,” saith Jehovah. He did not tell us to gather together into the Church of Rome, into the Church of England, into the Lutheran Church, into the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Baptist, or any other man-made organisation. Millions are gathered into these various denominations whose lives manifest that they know not God.

The Covenant of Sacrifice.

Only a very few have made this covenant of sacrifice with God, have presented their bodies a living sacrifice with Christ, in response to God’s special call during the Gospel Age. God is not trying to attract the world now. He tells us that they are blind and deaf. As Jesus said, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” Again, He said to His disciples, “Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear” (Matthew 11:15; 13:16). We thank God on behalf of those who have the seeing eye and the hearing ear. It is a great privilege to see and hear.

The Apostle Paul tells us why the great majority of mankind cannot hear the glorious Gospel Message. He says,

“The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not” (2 Corinthians 5:4). Satan is this god. He is in violent opposition to every feature of God’s great Plan. He has been God’s adversary ever since his deflection from righteousness. He does all in his power to thwart Jehovah’s arrangements. He knows that if men could see the light of God’s goodness and hear the glad Message of God’s grace, it

would have such an attraction that the great majority would surely respond. Hence he tries to keep them from seeing and hearing. He has multitudinous devices .for blinding men. Fair earthly prospects, ambitions to be some great one, selfish schemes for gaining advantage over their fellows—all these and many other things of like nature are held up to keep them blinded to the things of real and lasting value.

Those who are hungering for God Satan endeavours to draw away into various reform movements, such as socialism, prohibition of the liquor traffic, etc. This he does to keep them from hearing God's special Call. These are all, perhaps, good for the worldly. These movements are probably more or less awakening thought and developing sentiment along lines of restitution for the next Age. But none of these is the work for the saints of God on this side of the veil. Satan would delight to deceive these, however, and entice them into some of these movements to prevent them from seeing and doing the real work of the Church of Christ, and thus to prevent them from making their calling and election sure.

The real Gospel is the most wonderful story in all the world! There is nothing like it—that God is now inviting a certain class to become heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, “to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in Heaven” for the Lord's faithful, an inheritance “that fadeth not away” (Rom. 8:17; 1 Peter 1:4). Truly “Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him.”-1 Corinthians 2:9.

“The Answer of a Good Conscience”

Our surrender to the Lord was “the answer of a good conscience toward God.” When God invited us to become living sacrifices through Christ, to be saints and follow Jesus, the answer of our conscience was, “Lord, we respond, we accept Thy gracious invitation.” Was not that the answer of a good conscience? It was indeed. What could a good conscience toward God say except to be glad to do the Heavenly Father's will? He made a most wonderful proposition to us, providing a Redeemer to open up the way to all this glory and honour with Christ. The only answer of a good conscience could be, “Here, Lord, I give my little all to Thee!” That is what baptism means; and it is surely our “reasonable service,” as the Apostle says (Romans 12:1). It is the most reasonable thing that could be imagined. Therefore we should carry out our covenant of consecration even unto death.

If our Lord Jesus, after He had made this Covenant of Sacrifice with God and had begun the work of carrying it out, had said, “Father, I know that I came to earth to do Your will; but I find that so many of the people misunderstand Me and speak evil of Me that I cannot go on in this way. They misrepresent all the good I try to do; and I cannot accomplish anything.” What would the Father have replied? His answer would have been, “If You prefer the approval of man to My approval, take Your choice. I cannot give You the glorious reward which I have offered to You unless You meet the conditions. You must love My will more than all else or I cannot accept You and use You.”

So it is with the followers of Jesus. We receive the same tests that He did. The Father does not permit the trials to press us too hard, and He supplies His grace for every time of need; but we must have a heart that fully responds to the will of God, or we cannot be acceptable; we shall lose the prize, and be accounted unfaithful servants. We are to be willing that loyalty to God shall cost us something, yea, even the loss of earthly friendships and earthly prospects.

The heart-attitude that says, “So long as right is as easy as wrong I will choose the right, but if wrong is easier than right I will choose the easier way,” is disloyal to God. Such a heart would be unworthy of the glorious high calling. Indeed, it would make even an unworthy human being. We are to be loyal to the very core, or God will reject us. The Lord Jesus puts the matter in just this light when He says “Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this sinful and adulterous generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels”

(Mark 8:38). Jesus would be ashamed to have such an one in His Kingdom.

The Father and the Son are watching to see how true we are. If we are faithful under present unfavourable conditions, when loyalty to the Truth brings much reproach, when people point the finger of scorn at us, then the Lord will say, "These are the ones that shall reign in My Kingdom. Those who so delight in My love and approval as to serve Me through evil report, misunderstandings, persecutions and sufferings, will be true when exalted to positions of glory, when the sun of prosperity will shine upon them."

Death with Christ the Gate to Glory

Such faithful children of God "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." To these the Lord Jesus will say, "I take pleasure in saying to you, Sit down with Me in My throne" (Revelation 2:26, 27; 3:12, 21). In Romans 6:3 the Apostle says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ (into the Body of which Christ is the Head) were baptised into His death?" These become with Jesus The Christ of God, The Anointed of God; for the word Christ means The Anointed. God has never counted any in as members of the Church of Christ except those who have fully surrendered their wills to Him and become dead to the world.

This is our baptism into death as human beings and into life as spiritual beings. Our spirit nature is only begotten as yet, but we shall be born spirit beings at our "change" in the First Resurrection. We are now raised, as new creatures, "to walk in newness of life," but not yet raised in the complete sense. We have not yet received our new bodies. Our new mind is in process of development. We have said that we gave ALL to God. If we continue in this attitude and fulfil our covenant faithfully, we shall abide in His love, and in due time be associates of His Son in glory. The giving up of our will in consecration is only the beginning of the matter. Day by day, week by week, month by month, we are to carry out the terms of our covenant. We are to have no thought of turning back. Having put our hands to the plough, we are not even to look back. "He that looketh back is not fit for the Kingdom of God."—Luke 9:62.

When Jesus was here in the flesh, on a certain occasion He made some very strong statements (John 6:50-69); and it is written, "From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him." They said, "This is a hard saying. Who can hear it? Then said Jesus to the Twelve, "Will ye also go away?" Simon Peter—impulsive, noble Peter—answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

There is no other Message of eternal life open during the present Age than the call to joint-heirship with Christ, suffering unto death with Him that we may share His glory hereafter. This is the only way by which we can get into the Ark and be preserved from the general death all around us. Jesus is our Ark of safety. "By the resurrection of Jesus Christ" our baptism is made possible, as our text declares.

It is this same Simon Peter who tells us in our text that the Ark of Noah was a symbol of saving power, a likenessor figure of our being saved now through baptism into Christ. What a refuge is this Ark of Safety—As Noah and his family were in the world, but not of the world, and were carried in safety through the engulfing waters in which the whole world were dying, so it is with those who are in Christ. Everybody around us is in death, as the Bible says: "The whole world lieth in the Wicked One" (1 John 5:19, Diaglott). The Church alone have escaped the condemnation which is upon the world.

We who were children of wrath even as others, were sentenced to death with the rest of the world. But the Lord our God has graciously brought us into the relationship of sons, through our faith in Christ and obedience to the Divine arrangement in Him. And as Noah and his family, after their deliverance, started the world afresh, so Christ and His Bride will by and by give life anew to all of the race of mankind, who will accept the gracious provision for them in Christ.

The dead world are soon to have a resuscitation, with the opportunity to fully live again. Christ is to be the Everlasting Father of the race (Isaiah 9:6, 7); and the Church will be the mother. Grand and glorious as are the blessings in reservation for the world of mankind when they shall have learned their lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, far greater and grander still will be the reward of the faithful Church, who so love the Lord as to be willing and glad to obey and follow Jesus under the trying and painful conditions of the present time.

Hope.

“What though the blossom fall and die?
The flower is not the root;

The Sun of love may ripen yet
The Master’s pleasant fruit.”

“What though by many a wayward fall
Thy garment is defiled?

A Saviour’s blood can cleanse them all ;
Fear not ! thou art His child.”

“Arise! and leaning on His strength,
Thy weakness shall be strong;

And He will teach thy heart at length
A new perpetual song.”

“Arise ! to follow in His track
Each holy footprint clear,

And on an upward course look back
With every brightening year.”

“Arise! and on thy future way
His blessing with thee be !

His presence be thy staff and stay
Till thou His glory see.”

F. R. Havergal.

Christmas Convention.

It is expected (D.V.) that the usual Convention will be held in Melbourne this year over the holiday season, and all friends able to arrange travel to be present, will be very welcome. Further particulars will appear in December issue, which it is hoped will be printed early this year.

“Ten Camels” Ready Soon

The helpful Bible Stories for children entitled “The Ten Camels” will be ready again shortly, as another print is well on the way. The extra cost of materials this time will make the book dearer than formerly, and particulars will appear in next month’s issue. Those friends desiring copies can place orders to be filled as soon as the book is ready.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, 19 Ermington Place, Kew, E4, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.
(Monthly) 3 - (70 cents) per annum, post paid.

Extension of Radio Witness.

DURING last month enquiries were continued respecting the possibility of extending the broadcasting of the Frank and Ernest Biblical Dialogues to South Australia, with the result that 5AD (Adelaide) and 5PI (Port Pirie) were procured for our sessions at 9.30 a.m. on Sunday mornings.

For some time the brethren in South Australia have desired the witness by radio in their locality, and it is felt that this opportunity is the Lord’s answer to prayer for His guidance in this matter. Already a number of responses are to hand from South Australian friends indicating their pleasure in the prospect of hearing the message of truth throughout their state, with the added privilege of being able to commend these sessions to others by means of the advertising slips, etc.

The South Australian time of 9.30 a.m. enabled a linkup to be made with the 10 o’clock sessions in Victoria from 3GL, and as the relay to both 3SH and 2WG has been working with excellent results, the same procedure is being used to Adelaide and Port Pink, for the present at least. The opening session on this new link-up took place on Sunday, 24th October, with the subject “God’s New Order.”

As mentioned last month, the friends in Perth, W.A., have also been active in their desire to use the Frank and Ernest Dialogues in their locality, and it is a pleasure to report that a start was made through stations 6PM (Perth) and 6AM (Northam) on Sunday, 17th October, the time of broadcast being 5.15 p.m. each Sunday.

It is very pleasing to announce that quite a number of earnest responses to the radio witness was received during October, and the expressions of sincere appreciation of the help received indicates that the Lord is blessing His truth to those with ears to hear.

The possibilities of the radio witness are great indeed, and all the friends can assist in some way by making known these sessions in their own localities. Advertising slips are available in quantities, and samples of the Dialogues are also provided for passing on where good may be done. Some friends are using their local papers for advertising the Frank and Ernest sessions as seems good, and all efforts are a great help in this work.

The financial assistance from the friends generally by voluntary donation enables this work to continue, by the Lord's overruling providence, and is most encouraging. A balance sheet of the Radio Fund will appear in next month's issue of "Peoples Paper" showing the financial position, covering the past six months. The continued prayers of the brethren are requested for the Lord's guidance and blessing upon the message of truth in these days, for never before has Australia had the opportunity of such a witness as is now being given through the seven radio stations operating in four states.

The following subjects are listed for the weeks ahead, except in West Australia, where these topics will be used one week earlier in each case.

November 7th.—"The Truth on Hell."

November 14th—''Freedom from Fear."

November 21st—"The Thief and Paradise."

November 28th—"The Messianic Theocracy."

December 5th—"The War of Survival."

December 12th—"Where are the Dead?"

The Dialogue following is one that was much appreciated by many listeners and copies in leaflet form are available in limited quantities.

Many Mansions.

ERNEST: Frank, before we get started on another subject, I have a passage here in the Bible I would like to read.

It's the 2nd and 3rd verses of the 14th chapter of John. Jesus is speaking, and says: "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto Myself: and that where I am there ye may be also."

FRANK: That's a wonderful promise, isn't it?

ERNEST: Yes, but how does it harmonise with your idea of an earthly paradise? I'm just wondering if you haven't misinterpreted the Bible in trying to make it prove that God's plan for humanity is to restore them to life upon the earth. Jesus said, "In My Father's house are many mansions," and He also said, "I go to prepare a place for you." Why should He say that if mankind is to remain on the earth? The earth was already prepared wasn't it?

FRANK: Quite true. The mansions mentioned by Jesus were also already in existence; and besides, He did'nt promise those mansions to His disciples.

ERNEST: Just a moment, now; let's keep the record straight. Jesus said He was going away to prepare many mansions.

FRANK: Pardon me, Ernest, but that isn't what Jesus said. Look at your Bible again and you will find that Jesus is merely saying that mansions already existed in His Father's house—"In My Father's house are many mansions"—that

is, they already exist. Then He continues, saying, "I go to prepare a place for you." This indicates that the place to be prepared by Jesus was something different from the "many mansions" that already existed.

ERNEST: "In my Father's house are many mansions," "I go to prepare a place for you." You're right, Frank. Well, well, I never noticed that before. Isn't it strange how we often read the Bible without paying attention to what it really says. My general impression has been that Jesus promised that all good people would be given a heavenly mansion in which to live; but apparently He didn't promise these mansions to His followers at all. What does it mean, anyway?

FRANK: I think the most reasonable view of the matter is that the "many mansions" referred to, are simply dwelling places, or conditions of life in which God's intelligent creatures live. The "Father's house" in which these mansions exist, is evidently the whole universe. No doubt the earth itself, with man created in the image of God upon it, is one of the many mansions. What I have in mind is well illustrated in the various species of animal life with which we are acquainted here on the earth. Starting with the lowest form of shellfish life, there are various planes of existence all the way up to and including man, who is the highest form of life in this material realm. It is reasonable to suppose, and the Bible bears us out in this reasoning, that above the human plane of life, there are other, and higher planes of life—that is, other mansions.

ERNEST: Did you say that the Bible hints at something like that?

FRANK: Yes. In the 8th Psalm we are told that God created man a “little lower than the angels.” This indicates that the angelic plane of existence is above that of the human. The Apostle Paul tells us about the resurrection of Jesus, and says that at that time He was highly exalted above “angels, principalities, and powers, and every name that is named.” These angels, principalities, and powers might well be descriptive of various planes of being, all of which are higher than that of the human. These, it seems to me, are the “many mansions” to which Jesus refers. They were already in existence when Jesus made this promise to His disciples; and they are still in existence to-day.

ERNEST: But Frank, isn’t a Christian justified in entertaining the hope of some day becoming an angel?^

FRANK: The Bible doesn’t say that Christians will ever become angels. The Scriptures do encourage Christians to “set their affections on things above.”

ERNEST: What does that mean?

FRANK: The Apostle adds that we should set our affections where Christ “sitteth at the right hand of God.” Christians are promised that if faithful they will be exalted with Christ and reign with Him in His coming Kingdom, which is to bring peace and happiness to mankind.

ERNEST: Frank, a moment ago you quoted a text which indicates that Jesus, at the time of His resurrection, was exalted above the angels.

FRANK: That’s right, and the Apostle John says that true Christians “shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” This indicates that the Christian’s hope is a higher one than that of becoming angels.

ERNEST: Is that what Jesus meant when He said, “I go to prepare a place for you”?

FRANK: Exactly! The angelic plane, or mansion, was created even before the human, and of course, already existed in Jesus’ day; but the church, according to the Scriptures, was to become a new creation. Jesus was the first to be exalted to this new and highest-of-all position in the universe. The Scriptures say that He then “appeared in the presence of God,” for His church. This prepared the way for His followers to be exalted with Him. When Jesus was raised from the dead He was made the express image of His Father’s person. St. Peter says that there are “given unto us exceeding great and precious promises that by these we may be partakers of the divine nature.” Because of these promises the Christian may entertain the hope of partaking of the “glory of God.” This was Jesus’ hope, and all Christians become partakers of the same hope. It has required the entire age to prepare this new creation, the church.

ERNEST: But after all, Frank, isn’t that just another way of saying that the hope of all good people is that they shall some day go to heaven? And doesn’t it also prove that because man has become a sinner he is to forever lose his earthly home?

FRANK: All true Christians may entertain a heavenly hope, but not the world. In the first place, Jesus didn’t promise to prepare a place for the whole world, but merely for His followers. In Luke 12:32 Jesus said to these, “Fear not, little flock, it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.” This indicates that in all it will be only a little flock that will receive heavenly reward of joint-heirship with Jesus in His Kingdom. These are redeemed from mankind, but the purpose of their being exalted with Jesus is that they might reign with Him for the blessing of the remainder of mankind here on the earth. You see, this earthly mansion is in much need of repair, and for a thousand years Jesus and His church will be engaged in a work of rehabilitation, called in the Scriptures, “restitution.”—Acts 3:19-21.

ERNEST: Your thought, then, is that there are two groups of promises in the Bible; one earthly, to be

fulfilled in the restoration of mankind in general upon the earth; and the other heavenly, to be fulfilled by the exaltation of those who follow in Jesus' footsteps during the Gospel Age.

FRANK: Yes, that's a proper way of stating the matter. And, if we don't keep this fact in mind, we will find it very difficult to harmonise the Bible. A good example in point is the Scripture we have just been discussing. In it Jesus says that He was going away to prepare a place for His followers. Obviously this place could not then have been in existence. On the other hand, in the parable of the sheep and goats, the reward given to the sheep class is described thus, "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Here is a reference to a reward that was prepared long before Jesus' first advent—prepared from the foundation of the world.

It is plain that it couldn't be the same thing Jesus promised to prepare for His disciples.

ERNEST: What was the Kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world?

FRANK: That's outlined in the Genesis account of Creation. To our first parents the statement was made that they were to have dominion over the earth, and subdue it. The earth was their kingdom, prepared especially for man, who was created to possess and enjoy it. But man sinned and forfeited his right to rule over the earth. Instead of continuing to be a king, he became a slave to sin and death. But Jesus, the Redeemer, died in order to pay the penalty of death resting upon the fallen race, and this opens up a way to have the forfeited dominion restored. The parable of the sheep and goats is descriptive of the thousand-year judgment day work of Christ and the church; and those who prove to be "sheep" during this time, will have the lost paradise and lost dominion over the earth restored to them.

ERNEST: You know, Frank, I have often wondered about that parable of the sheep and goats. You said it will be fulfilled during the coming thousand-year reign of Christ. How do you know?

FRANK: Because Jesus introduces the parable by saying, "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and His holy angels with Him, then shall be gathered before Him all nations. This statement, you see, locates the parable beyond Christ's second coming.

ERNEST: But that doesn't prove that there will then be a thousands years of judgment, does it?

FRANK: It does, because in the third chapter of Peter's second epistle he shows that the judgment day which follows Christ's return will be a thousand years long. This will be the Millennial Age during which Christ and His church will reign upon the earth.

ERNEST: In that text you quoted a moment ago, Jesus speaks of angels who will be with Him when He comes in His glory. Who are these angels?

FRANK: In the Greek text it says "messengers." These messengers are the church who previously have all been gathered from the world, and glorified with Christ. The apostle says that then shall we appear with Him in glory.

ERNEST: Does that mean that the true church of Christ will share with Him in judging the world?

FRANK: Yes! Paul says, "Know ye not that the saints will judge the world?"

ERNEST: According to that, then, the sheep class of the parable are not the Christians of this age.

FRANK: That's right. Christians of this age become part of a "new creation," whereas the sheep class of

the parable have the lost dominion of earth restored to them. They will continue to be human beings, restored to perfection, living forever upon a perfected earth. The goat class of the parable, that is the wilfully disobedient ones of the kingdom age, will be destroyed in what the Scriptures designate as the “second death.”

ERNEST: Well, I’m certainly glad I brought up this subject. It’s going to make many things in the Bible more meaningful to me. It has always been a puzzle to know the meaning of the promise that “the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.” It didn’t seem reasonable to suppose that there were deserts in heaven. And it was still more difficult to understand about nations beating their swords into ploughshares. I could not imagine either swords or ploughshares in heaven. I remember reading another Old Testament promise which says that men shall build houses and inhabit them. Why would it be necessary if Jesus went away to prepare a place for everybody? But now it’s all clear. These are earthly promises, to be fulfilled in the restoration of man to his long-lost home upon the earth; when the earthly paradise represented in Eden will be restored and become world-wide. And, best of all, in entertaining this wonderful hope for a sin-sick and dying world, I can still rejoice in the spiritual promises made to those who truly follow Jesus in suffering and in death. After all, that place prepared by Jesus for His church will be a mansion, won’t it?

FRANK: The most wonderful mansion of all, Ernest. The invitation to share it with Jesus is called in the Bible a “high calling,” also a “heavenly calling.” Those who attain it, will not only be with Jesus and share His glory, but they will also have access to the presence of God; in fact, they will be partakers of the divine nature. It is to these that the Scriptural promises of glory, honour, and immortality are made. Paul explains in 1st Corinthians 15, that when the church is exalted to immortality, then will be fulfilled the promises to the world of mankind, that death will be destroyed. One of these earthly promises is that of Isaiah 25:6-9. Perhaps you would like to read it.

ERNEST: I would rather read the Bible than any other book in the world. Did you say Isaiah 25?

FRANK: That’s right, verses 6-9.

ERNEST: I have it, and the passage reads, “And in this mountain”—

FRANK: That word “mountain” symbolises the Lord’s kingdom.

ERNEST: Thanks, “And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.”

Correspondence.

New South Wales.

Berean Bible Institute.—Dear Brethren,—At last, very belatedly I am afraid, I am penning a few lines to thank you very much indeed for your continued sending of the “Peoples Paper” which we value and look for eagerly. The articles are very edifying and helpful and often have been the means of great comfort to me in my daily walk. It certainly is a means of Christian fellowship even, when one cannot meet face to face.

I am enclosing a small sum to cover cost of the “Paper” for the next twelve months and use the rest as you think best. It will be a glorious time when our Lord is reigning, and often think of those lovely words from Isaiah, “He shall stand and feed like a shepherd; He shall carry the lambs in His bosom and tenderly lead them that are with young.” How different from the rulers of this world to-day, who allow millions to die of want whilst the few live in luxury untold. Thank God He has set a time limit on man’s activities and those who believe the Promises may lift up their heads and rejoice.

God bless the truths you are spreading and give you strength to continue His vineyard work. With Christain good wishes from myself and husband. Yours sincerely.

Queensland.

Berean Bible Institute.—Dear Sir,—Having picked up a paper called “The Voice” I was wondering if I could have this paper sent to me regularly. I enjoyed reading same, and if you let me know what subscription is needed, I will forward a postal note for same. What other reading matter have you? A reply to this will be greatly appreciated. Your sister in Christ.

South Australia.

Berean Bible Institute.—Dear Sirs,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of pamphlets, etc., and many thanks. I find them very interesting and helpful when studying the Scripture. I will be pleased to have a copy of “Foregleams of the Golden Age” and enclose postal note 2/-. Thanking you in anticipation.

Victoria.

Berean Bible Institute.—Dear Sir,—I must thank you for the free literature you sent me. I enjoyed every line of it. I am enclosing 2/6 for “Foregleams of the Golden Age” and 2/6 for “Divine Plan of the Age” and also the book “The New Creation.” I would also like the pamphlet “An Answer to a Seventh Day Adventist.” Thanking you; yours faithfully.

New South Wales.

Dear Frank and Ernest,—I enjoy your talks over the air through 2WG. Will you please send me some booklets on Bible study, etc., and would like to understand God’s Holy Word better, and I know others, too, enjoy your discussions. I enclose stamps for postage and if it is not sufficient I will send along extra. Wishing you success and trusting you can carry on with your good work. Cheerio; yours sincerely.

Victoria.

Dear Brothers,—I have just listened to your broadcast concerning “Many Mansions.” I enjoyed it immensely, and have always held the view that man would eventually be in possession of the earth again; just as you put it, as he was in the Garden of Eden before sin entered in. What a glorious and loving Saviour is Christ, and a merciful Father is God. Could I have a copy of the discussion. Yours in Christ.

Frank and Ernest.—Dear Sirs,—It may seem a little late to write and make this request, but a few weeks ago I was listening to 3GL when I heard your talk “Many Mansions.” It was most interesting (so well backed by the Scriptures), so I wonder if you would still happen to have a copy of it; if so, I would be delighted to have it.

What is your belief of life beyond the grave? Do you believe in eternal torment? There is a great deal of thought concerning life after death to-day because of the great slaughter of men in this conflict.

I hope you may be the means of bringing many to the Lord Jesus and will close this short note hoping and praying that God will bless you in your work. I remain your brother in Christ.

(An article on “Eternal Punishment” will appear in next month’s issue of “Peoples Paper.”—B.B.I.)

Frank and Ernest.—Dear Sirs,—We have enjoyed your talks on Sunday mornings and would like to have the free copy of the sermon of to-day and if possible every Sunday’s copy. We are very interested in these things and they indeed bring much blessing. May these messages be blessed in winning souls for Him. God bless you. Yours sincerely.

Dear Frank and Ernest,—I am still “listening in” to your helpful and interesting talks over the air. I haven’t time to write often as I’m so very busy. Am paralysed in the legs and not able to walk without crutches, but it is wonderful the strength God gives me each day for the heavy tasks He has set me to do. I can surely do “all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.”

Well, I wanted to tell you how pleased I am to receive each month your splendid “Peoples Paper,” and as you invite us to write for free literature, I am wondering if you could send me a few more copies of the October number, as I think the article “The Faithfulness of God” is beautiful, and I would like to distribute some to people to whom I feel this article will do much good. If possible I would send you a donation towards your wonderful work for God, but just now we are under heavy expenses and cannot manage it; you will understand I’m sure. Thanking you, and in the satisfying service of the Lord, I remain, yours in sincerity.

Frank and Ernest,—Bible Institute.—Dear Sirs,—It was with the greatest pleasure and interest that I heard your discussion this morning. I am rarely home on Sunday morning owing to the leadership of a Bible Class, so I rarely hear you, though I get reports of your discussions from mother who always listens.

After your kind invitation to write I decided to make a few enquiries . . . I would like a copy of the booklet “Hope Beyond the Grave,” and assure you that a copy of your Sunday morning discussions will always be welcome. Thanking you in anticipation. Sincerely yours.

Dear Bros. Frank and Ernest,—In searching round the dial of my wireless set this morning I found you having one of your discussions, which I have missed for some time. I listened attentively to you through 3GL and at the close an invitation to all listeners to send for the booklet “Hope Beyond the Grave” and the script of yesterday’s discussion. Enclosed stamped addressed envelope. With Christian regards, Yours in His glad service.

To Frank and Ernest.—Dear Sirs,—Just a few lines to say how very much we appreciate your explanations of the Bible every Sunday morning from Geelong and trust that you will be able to keep the good work going.

I am very desirous of learning more about my Bible and would you kindly send me the free literature, “Hope Beyond the Grave,” etc. I have a lot of loved ones, my own dearly loved son waiting over there for me. I am very interested in the hereafter. I surrendered my life to the Lord Jesus many years ago, and have a lot to thank God for, so I would be very grateful for any literature concerning the Scriptures. Thanking you, Yours in His service.

Frank and Ernest.—Dear Friends,—Your booklets “God and Reason,” “Parables of the Kingdom,” copies of broadcasts, “Peoples Paper” and letter to hand. Very many thanks to you; I am very interested in Scripture studies and look forward to your Sunday morning talks. We get our best reception through 3GL, though 2WG is also good. Enclose stamps, would you please send me booklet “Hope Beyond the Grave.” If you have any other literature to spare I’ll be glad to receive it and will send you subscription to “Peoples Paper” during the month. With kind regards and may you have success in your splendid work. From a sincere friend.

Frank and Ernest.—Dear Sirs,—Turning to 3GL, not knowing of your programme, I enjoyed very much the part which I heard. Your lesson was one for all and portrayed to me in the way we who believe often hear people speak. I thank you very much for your message through 3GL. If possible could I have two copies, one for myself and one for a relation in Queensland, of your free gift. I remain yours in His service.