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God's Solution for the Formosa Problem

VERY great prominence has been given in the world's press and radio broadcasts to the Formosa problem. So important a trouble-spot has this locality become, that the greatest of the world's statesmen, representing the biggest and most powerful of the nations today, are engaged in conferences and deliberations of various kinds to try and find a peaceful solution to this problem which is readily acknowledged as a grave menace to world peace, and obviously, to earnest thinkers, world civilization.

It is not necessary to go into details of how the Formosa problem developed ; anyone who takes a passing interest in the headlines of the press knows that the Chinese Communists, who control the mainland of China today, have vowed that they will conquer Formosa, the last stronghold of the former Nationalist Government of China. On the other hand, the United States of America in particular, and other nations as well, feel that the Communists have already swallowed up far too many countries and brought the inhabitants of those lands under strict control. Therefore, the President of the United States and the government of that great nation behind him, say—So far and no farther, to the Communists on the mainland of China. From the standpoint of natural, worldly men, we can well understand the policy of the United States, when the leaders of that country feel they are standing for the freedom of other nations as well as themselves, in their decision to defend Formosa.

If the Communists of the China mainland persist in their vow to conquer Formosa, all thinking people well know that a major conflict could result in a very short time, and which could develop into another global war, which the statesmen of the world are rightly seeking to avoid with all the diplomacy at their command.

However, looking at the Formosa problem from another angle, all observant people know that this is just one of a continuous string of world incidents which flare up from time to time in various parts of the earth. Following the close of the Second World War, Berlin was the main danger spot, and it seemed impossible for the powers to avoid a conflict there ; then, of course, Korea was the centre of an actual conflict for years and which was limited in its scope only by the slightest margin; more recently, Indo-China was the trouble-spot and which was relieved by a compromise on the part of the anti-communist governments and now the problem area is Formosa.

Any of these trouble-spots could have produced a major conflict but for one important thing. Many onlookers have recognised the able administration and careful tolerance of various leaders in the troubled areas and have given them the credit of preserving peace, or mainly peace. Men of ability who have assisted in this way are to be appreciated and commended, but the one important thing that has enabled a conflict between the great powers to be avoided, in recent years, is the fact that in God's Plan of the Ages, His time for such an upheaval has not arrived.

Some people may say, The main cause of the First World War was the aggression of the German Kaiser, and that which produced the Second World War was the ambition of Hitler for world power. While this is true to a certain extent, yet the main reason that there have been two World Wars, is because God's Plan can be carried forward by their permission, and men like the German Kaiser, Hitler, Mussolini and others are allowed to use their ambitions, even in aggressive wars, when God sees that such conflicts will serve His purposes and ultimately bring honour to His name.

In Psalm 76:10 we read—"The wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." How comforting and consoling it is to those who love the Lord and His Word to know that any conflict of the nations can take place only by the Lord's permission; and when God does permit such things, even the wrath of men will work out His plans, and He will restrain that which cannot be turned to good account.

It is helpful, also, to remember that the present generation is not responsible for all that takes place in the world today. We read in Jeremiah 31:29—”The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.” From Numbers 14:18 we also read--”The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.” So we have in the world today the accumulation, so to speak, of generations of “sowing to the wind,” and the Formosa problem is an example of the complications which arise amongst those who are to “reap the whirlwind.”

What, then, is the solution, God’s solution, for this trouble-spot of Formosa ? Is it that the American 7th Fleet is the answer—to protect this island from invasion? God could, and may use that fleet to work out His purpose, but we could not agree that any armed force, however great, is the solution for any of earth’s problems. God’s solution for the Formosa problem is the same as His solution for every other international, and national, problem, and that is the Kingdom of Christ.

But how will Christ’s Kingdom solve earth’s problems? It will solve them by taking over earth’s management ! We often see a notice in business premises — “Under New Management”—and the New Management of earth’s affairs is certainly God’s solution, the only solution, for man’s mismanagement of this world’s affairs for the past pearly 6,000 years.

Reviewing the history of the human race, we see how mankind, in the persons of our first parents, took themselves out of God’s care and protection, when they disobeyed their Creator. God, in His wisdom, allowed mankind to taste the fruits of their own action, their own disobedience ; as though He said, See how you can manage the world in your own way, and for about 6,000 years generation after generation has been learning the hard way, that “the wages of sin is death.” What we see in the world, with the Formosa and other great international problems on hand, is the result of man’s mismanagement.

How different it would have been had the human family remained obedient to God—with His protection and guidance over all of earth’s affairs, and every member of the human race living on in perfect health forever. There would have been no Formosan problem, or any other problems to mar the perfect harmony arid peace amongst the human family.

Does it surprise us. however, to know that God purposes to restore the human race to what might have been, if sin and death had not entered in? The Apostle Paul explains this in Hebrews 2. Paul is here quoting from Psalm 8:4-6 where the original perfection of man in the Garden of Eden is described,—”Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him.” Then, coming down to his own day and looking upon the fallen state of man, the Apostle continues in Heb. 2:8—”But now we see not yet all things put under him (under man).” No, indeed ; man is not yet fit to have control of earth’s affairs ; he is fallen, and under sentence of death. But, says Paul, what we do see, or behold in God’s plan, is—”We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels (the same nature as Adam in the beginning) for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour ; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

This is the most important turning point, so to sneak, in the history of mankind; this is God’s solution for the unsatisfactory state of , fallen man, because, “Jesus, by the grace of God tasted death for every man,” so that all the human family may be fully redeemed from death and the power of death, in due time, if they obey the laws of Christ’s Kingdom.

However, how do we understand the statement from the Psalmist—”The wrath of man shall praise thee”? Many people may say, How could such a terrible thing as war, the outcome of the wrath of man, praise God? We can think of many ways in which good may come to people, who, humiliated and suffering as a result of war. may learn the full lesson that of themselves they can do nothing, and must turn to God for help and lasting salvation. Also for those who have died as the result of war, whether soldiers or civilians, the resurrection to so much better conditions — to peace and happiness in the Kingdom—in contrast to the strife and tumult of man’s inhumanity to man, will indeed bring lasting praise to God. And mankind, looking back upon the chaos and ruin that the wrath of man produced (the memory of such an unhappy state), will no doubt provoke such a dislike for the sinfulness of sin, that the majority of mankind will never wish to taste the sour grape again. How encouraging are the words of Jer. 31:29, when the Kingdom blessings are benefiting all mankind ”They shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.” No, things will be different then.

How many people today have their teeth set on edge, not only by inheriting life’s effects of the sour grape eaten by their forefathers, but also by the wrong-doing, or wilfulness of children and others, and also by their own personal shortcomings. Even the Lord’s people to some extent have their teeth set on edge at times ; they feel the weights and pressure of this “present evil world,” but how favoured they are in comparison with the world at large. They know the solution for all earth’s problems is bound up in the Kingdom to come, and better still, they know and feel assured that

all their personal problems and difficulties are solved as they commit their way, their whole lives, into the hands of their Lord now, in full faith and trust.

How beautifully the Apostle states the matter in Heb. 6:18—"We have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." This, then, is the solution for all the trying experiences of God's people—fleeing to the Lord for His refuge—for all things that would "set their teeth on edge." In Psa. 91:1, 2 we have

this happy condition of the Lord's people shown also,—"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress ; my God ; in him will I trust."

We note also, from Heb. 6, that those who have fled to the Lord for refuge at this time, also "lay hold upon the hope set before them," Which is the heavenly hope of joint-heirship with Christ, as Paul goes on to declare—"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the fore-rnnner is for us entered even Jesus."

Likewise, in Heb. 2:10, 11, after explaining the wonderful hope for the world of mankind returning to the control of the earth, when "all things are put under man," the Apostle Paul goes on to explain the greater and more excellent glory to which the "many sons" of the Gospel Age are called. It seems that Paul could not refrain from leading on to this highest of all subjects of the high calling, almost every time he dealt with the hope for the world at large. "For it became him (God), for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

Surely the knowledge of God's wonderful plan for the whole world, now "groaning and travailing in pain," with their "teeth set on edge," is intended to have the same effect upon us as it had upon the Apostle—to draw us fully and whole-heartedly to the Lord, that we may delight to serve Him now, yielding ourselves fully to His service, if haply we may prove faithful unto death, by the Lord's grace. Then will follow, in association with Christ, the glorious Kingdom work of lifting mankind up to perfection on the restored earth, when—"They shall say no more, The fathers have eaten the sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge."

What a privilege it is for God's people to know assuredly, that God's solution for the Formosa problem, and every other problem of earth, will be fully adequate, and highly satisfactory for the lasting peace and happiness of the human family, or as many of mankind as will gladly co-operate in the Kingdom laws for their eternal welfare.

The island of Formosa may, or may not be invaded ; the 7th Fleet of America may, or may not come into action, but God's Plan for the deliverance of mankind from their fallen state does not take into account the insignificant proposals of men; God will use even the wrath of man to praise Him, to work out His purposes, and the remainder of the wrath He will restrain. There must be a complete overthrow of all man's plans and governments, to make way for the establishment of Christ's Kingdom. How clearly did the Psalmist describe the Lord's hand in world affairs to accomplish His purposes—"The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved ; he uttered his voice, the earth melted. Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth ; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder ; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still and know that I am God ; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." (Psa. 46:6, 8-10.)

Also from the prophet Haggai we read in symbolic terms of the passing of this present order, and the setting up of Christ's Kingdom —"For thus saith the Lord of hosts ; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land ; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." (Hag. 2:6, 7.) What a blessing to know "the desire of all nations shall come," and all mankind worthy of life will praise and thank the Lord for the great redemption and salvation from the curse of sin and death, all made possible through the sacrifice of God's dear Son. What a joy it will be for the faithful followers of Christ to be associated in the grand work of the kingdom, because they willingly walk in the steps of the Master during the present life.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The friends of the Adelaide Class wish to announce that their usual Easter Convention is to be held this year, D.V., commencing on Good Friday, 8th April, and continuing till Easter Monday evening, 11th April. The assemblies will be held in the Builders and Contractors' Rooms, Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and a cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to attend this Convention. Further information is obtainable from the secretary — Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, South Australia.

Notes on the Melbourne Christmas Convention have been compiled by one of our brethren, and copies are available free from this office.

Passover Memorial, 1955.

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death falls this year on the evening of Tuesday, 5th of April; after sundown on this date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord's Supper by the true followers of the Master.

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

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7.30 p.m., at Stow Hall, Flinders Street, Adelaide.

Perth.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7.45 p.m., at Literary Institute (upstairs), 547 Hay Street, Perth.

Sydney.—Tuesday, 5th April, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

"Our Most Holy Faith."--This is a splendid volume of most helpful articles and sermons by the author of Studies in the Scriptures, published by the brethren of "The Dawn" in U.S.A, Containing 719 pages, including Index, and well bound, with silver lettering, it is priced at 20/- post paid.

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While it is our intention that these column 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.

Study on Rom. 5:12-21

THE difficulty which some have in understanding this Scripture may probably arise from the fact that they have failed to notice that verses 13-17 are parenthetic, and that the main line of the Apostle's argument passes from verse 12 to verse 18, irrespective of the parentheses, which is introduced to offset a misapprehension on the part of the Jews to the effect that their law covenant conflicted with the gospel of Christ, of which Paul was a minister. It was difficult for the Jews to accept the fact that there was now no difference between Jew and Gentile, but that "the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him."—Rom. 10:12.

In verses 12, 18-21, the Apostle is showing that by one man sin entered the world, and death as the penalty for sin; and that this sentence of death passed upon all men, because all had sinned—not all individually, but as represented in Adam, in whose loins we all were. "Therefore," he adds, verse 18, "as by the offence of one (Adam) sentence came upon all men by condemnation; even so (by the same law of heredity) by the righteousness of one (of one who gave His life a ransom), the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life; for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many (all of the race who will accept it) be made righteous.

In other words, Adam, the head or progenitor of the entire human race, could only bequeath to his posterity the remainder of the ever declining inheritance which he himself possessed, namely, a spark of life under condemnation to death ; but our Lord Jesus, by the payment of the penalty upon Adam, thereby gained the legal right to restore him to life, and in so doing gained the right also to restore all his posterity. And when the "appointed time" for thus restoring life to all the race has come, He, instead of Adam, will be the father, life-giver, or head of the new race, as it is written, "He shall be called the everlasting Father." (Isa. 9 ;6.) And the birthright of the race under this head, Christ, unlike that under the first head, Adam, will be life instead of death. And that birthright can never be taken away unless forfeited by individual, wilful transgression against the known righteous law of God, with full ability to keep it.

Thus we see that the Apostle's argument is to prove that by the law of legal heredity the race which, by the working of this law, inherited death from its first head, Adam, will by the same law inherit life from its second head or regenerator, Christ, and that the remedy is co-extensive with the curse. This being the substance of his argument, it is, of course, presumable that his parenthetic remarks are not in opposition to, but in harmony with it. Thus we read:

Verse 13: "For until (previous to) the law (of Moses and the law covenant with Israel) sin was in the world ; but sin is not imputed when there is no law." Consequently there must have been a law, and a covenant based upon that law, previous to the law of Moses. What law was that? It was the law of God originally inscribed, not upon tables of stone, but upon the heart of the first perfect man, and which was gradually more or less effaced in his posterity, because they did not like to retain a knowledge of it. (Rom. 1:28.) That law, whether ignored or recognised, has always been in the world, and sin against that law has always been imputed to men.

Verse 14: "Nevertheless (although the Mosaic law had not yet come, to revive in the Jews the knowledge of God), death reigned from Adam to Moses (just the same), even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression (i.e., to a degree wilfully ; for it reigned over infants as well as over those capable of personal sin), who is the figure (type) of him that was to come (of Christ, the second head of the race)." Thus it is manifest that all mankind were born under original law, the authority of which was never disannulled, and under which all were condemned representatively in Adam, the first head of the race, but who, thank God, in this office of headship was a type of a second head, through which our deliverance should come.

Verse 15: "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. (The results of the offence and the free gift are entirely different.) For if through the offence of one (Adam), many be dead (under the condemnation of death) much more the grace of God, and the gift (of life) by grace (divine favour), hath abounded unto many." From the one head we inherit death ; from the other, the regenerator, we shall inherit life.

Verse 16: "And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift ; for the sentence was by one (offence) to condemnation, but the free gift is (the forgiveness) of many offences, unto justification." Note the contrast of the one and the many here, the object of which is to increase our estimation of the value of the free gift.

Verse 17: "For if by one man's offence death reigned by (that) one (Adam), much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness (the righteousness of Christ imputed to us by faith) shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

Thus by these parenthetic remarks, which are seen to be in perfect harmony with the main argument, the Jews were shown that their law covenant did not in the least interfere with the original sentence of death of the entire race (all in Adam), nor with the consequent gracious provision of life for all mankind, through Christ, and not for the Jews alone.

Love As Brethren.

LOVE for the brethren is set forth in the Scriptures as one of the indisputable evidences of our having attained membership in the body of Christ. This love may be of varying degrees, but it must be ours in some degree if we are the Lord's for "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom. 8:9.)

But this flame of sacred love for the brethren kindled in our hearts is not sufficient ; it must blaze, burn, and produce in us not merely a warmth of love, but a consuming love — love which will not only overlook various weaknesses and imperfections in the brotherhood, and will carefully note every good quality, but love which is ready to lay down life on behalf of the brethren because they belong to Christ, because they are of His consecrated ones, however much they may need to strive against sin and weaknesses.

The Gospel message fails to attract many of the noblest, least-fallen members of the race because they have a self-satisfied feeling, and do not realise their need of a Saviour, but think of Him as necessary only to the more degraded of the race. On the contrary, the less known, more depraved, realising to some extent their miserable condition, are more likely than others to respond to the invitation—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy lad and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.) The sin-sick and heavy-laden, therefore, constitute the majority of true believers. And in harmony with this we have the words of the Scripture that not many wise, not many noble, not many learned, not many great according to the flesh have been called of God to the privileges of His Church, the elect class. Consequently, when any of the more noble minded or better educated or more talented accept the Lord's grace, it becomes somewhat of a trial to them to find amongst those whom they must recognise as brethren (because of faith in Christ and desire for the higher things) some of the ignoble, whose company and fellowship, according to the flesh, they would have scorned. This is another reason why not many great, wise, learned, and noble will not make their calling and election sure— many such will allow their fleshly instincts to govern, and repudiating the humblest member of the body of Christ, they are to that extent repudiating the Head, who has accepted that member, and who demands of all who would be His members that they shall love one another as He loved them.

True, the Lord does not say that we should love all the brethren with the same degree or intensity of love ; on the contrary, He showed by His own conduct that we may indeed more highly esteem those who have most of His spirit, those whose hearts are most in accord with the divine will. Thus our Lord, while He loved all of His disciples, had some special favourites, Peter, James and John. His special love for these was doubtless because of their special interest and zeal for Him and for the cause He served. So, therefore, may we, followers in the footsteps of Jesus, have special love for all who are specially zealous and true hearted. But this love ignores wealth, education, earthly standing — ignores the flesh, and takes cognizance of the spirit, the will, the heart.

Tested by this love for the brethren, many who had a loving respect for the Lord as their Redeemer have apparently hindered their own spiritual development, slackened in their race for the prize—running the risk of losing the great reward because of their failure to come up to this divine requirement, "Love as brethren." The proper course for all such is to think of the matter soberly from the Scriptural standpoint, and to decide that the humility requisite to an acceptance of some of the naturally less noble is undoubtedly a necessary element of character for them to develop.

Amongst the fruits of the spirit, the Apostle names meekness. The proud are not in the condition of heart for the Kingdom and the higher stations of life, intellectually, morally and socially, are unfavourable to meekness, humility and long - suffering, with the weaknesses and failures of others. We see, then, that while the weaker brethren, the naturally more impaired, have more to struggle against, more to overcome in one sense of the word, the others of more noble birth and talents have a harder battle along other lines. Let both classes be encouraged, for although the lessons they must learn are considerably different, the results to be obtained are the same, and the instructor, the great Teacher, is the same. He is able to assist the ignoble to gradually overcome their natural meanness and depravity, and to war more and more a good warfare in His name and by His assistance, and He is likewise able to assist the more noble minded to exercise patience, sympathy, toward the less reputable. They have an illustration in Himself. He who was rich in every sense of the word and beyond all compare, perfect in every element of character, talented, noble — He for our sakes became poor, He humbled Himself on our behalf, He took the bondman's place, He suffered in our stead, He died the just for the unjust. He has therefore set us an example that we may walk in His steps, and the more nobility we may have, naturally the more readily we shall be able to do this, and to appreciate and exercise the fruits of the spirit, and grow up more and more accordingly, in sympathy, in likeness to Him.

Whatever we may do for any member of the body of Christ, for any consecrated believer, the Lord tells us He will esteem as though it were done unto Him. Hence, as it would be our duty and our privilege and our joy to lay down our lives in the service of the Lord, we must attain to such a love for the brethren, because they are His, that we will delight to lay down our lives for them as a means of demonstrating to the Lord our loyalty to Him and His cause.

This does not necessarily mean the laying down of physical strength and health and life in the physical services and ministries to the brethren, though these may be and are, in many instances, very profitable. It is not according to the flesh that the Lord's followers are brethren, but according to the spirit, and hence the injunction to lay down our lives for the brethren would more particularly signify the laying down of our physical health, knowledge, talents, and means in the service of the spiritual interests of the Lord's people. As, for instance, in the preaching of the Truth, if there be sacrifices or self-denials, loss of strength, etc., in connection with this service, it is the laying down of that much of one's life for the brethren, for the fellow-members of the body of Christ.

These brethren for whom we are to lay down our lives are not merely those who are with us in fellowship of spirit, in the enjoyment of Present Truth. Perhaps we may have fewer opportunities for laying down our lives for such than for other brethren. For instance, there are brethren, true believers in the Lord, truly consecrated to Him, who are yet in Babylon—in bondage, in darkness. These especially need that we should devote some of our time or influence or means for their aid, for their deliverance. True, the Lord Himself could deliver them, because all things are in His power, including all the gold and silver and the cattle upon a thousand hills. But He has graciously left opportunities for us, that we may use the time, talents and means put within our control, and which we have consecrated to His service. How much it would be to our disadvantage were we so situated that we had no opportunities for exercising these talents in the service of our King; how much we would miss of the spiritual exercise and the growth which this exercise assures. God, therefore, has left open before us doors of opportunity for service to the brethren, and the degree of our love for the brethren is measured in His sight by the zeal which we endeavour to use the talents in our control.- Let this thought of our love, zeal and devotion for the brethren, which testify to the Lord our love and zeal for Himself, nerve us to greater energy and faithfulness in His joyful service.

As we grow in grace and knowledge—as the love that is of God, that is inspired by His spirit, grows in our hearts and fills us, being "shed abroad in our hearts" (Rom. 5:5)—we are led to still wider love—beyond the household of faith, for whom we delight to lay down our lives. We learn to love all mankind, yea, even those who misunderstand us, and are therefore our enemies — we learn to love all these as brethren. Not as brethren in Christ --that is a very special, very dear relationship—but we learn to love them as brethren, of the one family of Adam, redeemed by Jesus, and hence by purchase the family of the second Adam.

As we grow in grace and knowledge, we are able more clearly day by day, year by year, to appreciate the fact that the whole world was born under sin and are children of wrath, blinded by ignorance and superstition, mentally and physically unbalanced through the fall, and really in a terrible state, as the Apostle declares, a "groaning creation."

In proportion as we are able to take God's standpoint in looking at the poor, fallen world, we are able to sympathise with them, even as the Scriptures declare that God looked down, and heard the groans of the prisoners —prisoners of sin, in capitivity to death, going down to the tomb. (Psa. 102:19, 20.) We realise that they were born in sin, shapen in iniquity, that in sin their mother conceived them; that, in addition to this, their associations with evil have all tended to drag them downward, and that, furthermore, Satan, the great adversary, a wily foe to our race, is continually exerting his powers to blind the minds of their understanding and to misrepresent the divine character and plan.

With all this before our minds, what sympathy it gives us for our brothers according to the flesh, sinners, strangers, aliens, foreigners, yet redeemed, and in God's gracious plan en route for the glorious blessings of the Millennial Age. We say to ourselves, if God so loved these, if Christ died for them as well as for us, why should not we be very merciful, very compassionate, very sympathetic with them, and do all in our power to assist them out of darkness into God's marvellous light, out of the ways of sin into the ways of righteousness, out of bondage to Satan into the liberty wherewith God has made us free—the liberty of the sons of God, which He has promised shall be available to all peoples, kindreds, nations, and tongues in the sweet by-and by.

The Glad New Time.

There are coming changes great
In the glad new time;

Trust in God, and watch and wait
For the glad new time;

Mountain fears shall prostrate lie,
Vales of hope be lifted high,
Trembling earth embrace the sky,
In the glad new time.

There shall meet the great and small
In the glad new time;

Love shall be the Lord of all
From the mountains shall descend
Hearts of old that could not bend,
And the poor shall have a friend
In the glad new time.

We shall lift oppressions' load
In the glad new time;

We shall bear the cross of God
In the glad new time;

We shall seek the valleys deep
Where the weary strive or sleep,
And convey them up the steep
To the grand new time.

There shall be a joy in heaven
In the glad new time;

And God's resting shall he given
In the glad new time;

For His Sabbath shall be found
When the skies have touch'd the ground,
And the valleys shall resound
With the glad new time.

These lines were by George Matheson, who, during his college career, suddenly became blind; he, however, studied on, and became a distinguished Scottish preacher. He also wrote the beautiful hymn "O love that will not let me go."

Question Box.

Question: Please explain Phil. 1:21-24. “To die is gain . . . to depart and to be with Christ which is far better,” if the Apostle did not expect to receive his reward at death.

Answer: The Apostle does not imply that he could be present with the Lord before the resurrection. He makes no dogmatic statement regarding the condition of those who have died in faith ; he only expresses his wish. In 2 Cor.

5:4 we read, “We that are in this body do groan, being burdened ; not for that we would be unclothed (in the state of death), but clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.” There were three possible conditions : (1) to remain in the earthly tabernacle, (2) to be unclothed, (3) to receive his heavenly garment. The last he could only receive in “that day”—the day of the Lord (2 Tim. 4:8).

We should remember that death is a profound sleep. The dead are unconscious of the lapse of time ; the moment of awaking will seem to be that which immediately succeeds death, although centuries intervene.

The word “depart” in. Phil. 1:21-24 is not a correct translation of the Greek. In Luke 12:36 the same word is rendered “return,” but neither does “return” express the meaning of analusai. The literal translation is “the loosing again.” St. Paul was in a strait betwixt two things—whether to live or to die. Both had advantages, and he did not know which he would rather choose but to be “loosed again” from the prison-house of death by the Lord at His second coming was indeed far better than either of these two things, and this is what the Apostle “earnestly desired” above all else.

Question: “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.”—Rom. 8:37. How is it possible for one to be “more than a conqueror” in the good fight of faith?

Answer: In the Divine arrangements there are two divisions of the one spiritual class in process of development throughout the Christian era, from the time of the Lord Jesus’ first advent down to the time of His second coming. These two divisions are mentioned in Rev. 7. One of these is represented as being “a great multitude, which no man could number,” and they are before the throne of God and the Lamb. The other division are the 144,000 that were sealed, and these are on the throne of God and the Lamb, as was promised by the Lord Jesus (Rev. 3:21, 22). Those who voluntarily sacrifice and cheerfully endure the hardships of the Christian course, as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, overcoming the foes of righteousness, are, indeed, “conquerors,” and not only so, in the sense of being victors, but also in the sense of being crowned as such. The great company before the Throne will be conquerors likewise, but they will not receive the crown of life, because they did not overcome in the way the 144,000 did. These, therefore, will be the servants who will minister before the Throne. The Kingly conquerors will be honoured more than the mere conquerors.

Question: Please explain Luke 22:31, 32. Are we to understand that Peter was not converted at this time ? If so, what was the significance of his having left all to follow the Lord?

Answer: Peter was one of the most prominent and active of the Apostles, and by his seal and energy he naturally became a leading one, as he himself probably realised in a measure, and the others doubtless conceded In the 24th verse of this chapter is set forth that the Apostles strove among themselves, as to which of them should be accounted the greatest. Peter, no doubt, took a leading part in this altercation. Because of this disposition of self-exaltation he was especially exposed to the attacks of the Adversary, and, therefore, the Lord Jesus prayed for him that he might be delivered from the snares of Satan. Knowing that His prayer would be answered, He could say to Peter: “When thou are converted (from this disposition of desiring prominence and exaltation over others of the Apostles, to a condition of humility and meekness, then) strengthen thy brethren.”