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What May We Expect from Geneva Conference?

THE recent Geneva Conference certainly I created world - wide interest to millions of people in every land in the world, as the leaders of the greatest nations of the earth came together for consultations.

This conference was called the “summit conference,” and it was in great expectation that the people of the world looked forward to some lasting benefits being achieved by the highest men of each of the four leading nations of the earth meeting around the conference table for the first time since the ending of the Second World War.

We are well aware also, that as the time for this conference drew near, the religious leaders in many lands offered up special prayers for the success of these deliberations in Geneva, apparently feeling that if these political leaders failed to reach some kind of agreement then the outlook for world peace would be even more precarious than it has been during the past ten years of uneasy peace, since the close of the last global war.

No doubt many of our readers heard over the radio, or read some of the prayers which were offered to God with the object of seeking His blessing upon the assembly at Geneva. We know that these prayers, for the main part, would be sincere and well-meaning, but the impression they gave was, that these heads of the nations, meeting in Geneva, might well have the destiny of civilization in their hands, and surely God would bless their efforts, so that the human creation may be preserved, and not destroyed by another world war with weapons so tremendously powerful that nothing but ruin and desolation would result.

It seemed, therefore, that these prayers offered to God were presented from the standpoint that the world leaders had a plan for world peace, and the Lord was being implored to give His blessing to the conference so that this plan, devised by man, should not fail. There was nothing to indicate that those making these prayers to God had considered the possibility that God may also have a plan for world peace, and that God’s plan may even differ from that formulated by the leaders of the nations conferring together in Geneva.

Let us not be misunderstood. We call to mind our Lord’s words in Matt. 5:9—’’Blessed are the peace makers ; for they shall be called the children of God.” While our Lord, no doubt, referred in this verse to His true people who would be peace makers along the lines of His Word, yet anyone who seeks to

promote peace and not war, will in no wise lose a fitting reward. However, the fact that leaders of nations meet in conference to try to ease world tension, while commendable in itself, does not qualify them “to be called the children of God.”

We think of other peace makers. While the 1914-18 war was raging, Woodrow Wilson of U.S.A. chartered a ship and sailed to Europe with the object of seeking to bring peace to the nations. Reading a newspaper article on that peace mission recently, it revealed that disagreement broke out on the voyage between the would-be peace makers before they reached the war area, and Mr. Woodrow Wilson returned to America a sad and disillusioned man. However, his good desires and efforts will not be lost ultimately; he shall receive his reward in the kingdom as the Lord sees fit. Even the development of a peace-loving character will be some important reward.

Now, looking back over the last few weeks, we can certainly be glad that the Geneva Conference seems to have lessened the tense feeling between the Western nations and Soviet Russia, but this does not mean that the world is now due for an era of peace which will usher in the Millennium of happiness, for which Christians have prayed for the past nearly two thousand years—”Thy kingdom come ; thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.” No, indeed ; the words of our Lord’s prayer could never be fulfilled while present conditions exist in the world, even if there were no more war. And yet, the Geneva Conference was arranged and the prayers of church leaders the world over were offered with the hope that God would answer those prayers to continue existing conditions in the world, without war.

Someone may ask : If there were no wars on earth, would that not produce happiness ? And would not the Lord’s kingdom come, and God’s will be done here, as in heaven? We answer by asking: Do we think God’s will would be done by establishing a kingdom amongst dying subjects; and could there ever be real and lasting happiness in the world with generation after generation going down into death? No, indeed. However, let us note the words of the Psalmist —”God looked down from the height of his sanctuary ; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth ; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death.” (Psa. 102:19, 20. See also Rom. 8:22, 19). This is surely a wonderful assurance from God, and it may be asked: How do the various conferences and plans of mankind fit into the wonderful Plan of God to release the “groaning creation” from death?

Briefly reviewing world events over the past fifty years, it is well known that the claim was made in the early part of this century that mankind was becoming too civilized to go to war. When, however, the 1914-18 war was raging, it was described as “a war to end war.” Many nations greatly disarmed after that war, and this apparently inspired others to grasp the opportunity to try and gain world domination. This ambition led to the 1939-45 World War, as we well know.

Then, during the Second World War a charter was drawn up, which, to put it briefly, sought to guarantee for the future that all people of the earth should be able to die in bed, instead of being bombed to death from the sky. And this is what the world leaders at the Geneva Conference hope they may accomplish also ; they hope that they have greatly lessened the risk of war, and possibly they have, for the time being. And when this hope can be more firmly established, the claim of “peace and safety” for the human race will no doubt be acclaimed. As an illustration of what we may expect in the days ahead, we remember the sincere, yet pathetic utterance of Mr. Chamberlain, the then Prime Minister of Britain, on his return from the Munich Conference with Hitler in 1939, claiming—”we have preserved peace for our time.” Within a few months the greatest war of all time was raging; yet, the peace-loving desires of Mr. Chamberlain will be rewarded in the kingdom, despite the fact that they were taken for weakness by the dictator, Hitler, at that time.

Mr. Chamberlain’s proclamation of “peace” was just one of numerous similar claims over the last forty years, and well reminds us of Jeremiah’s prophecy concerning Israel: “Moreover thou shalt say unto

them, Thus saith the Lord, Shall they fall, and not arise ? shall he turn away, and not return? Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast to deceit, they refuse to return . . . Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times ; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord .. . The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken ; lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord ; and what wisdom is in them? . . . For every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace ; when there is no peace . . . We looked for peace, but no good came ; and for a time of health, and behold trouble !" (Jer. 8:4, 5, 7, 9-11, 15. See also Isa. 57:20, 21.)

The Apostle Paul, in his prophecy concerning the days in which we are living, declared—"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety ; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child ; and they shall not escape." (1 Thes. 5:2, 3.) The Greek word translated "sudden" contains the thought rather of "unexpected." When they feel that they have secured a condition of peace and safety in the world, then unexpected destruction cometh upon them. The same Greek word is translated "unawares" in Luke 21.34—"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares (unexpected). For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." In verse 33 of this chapter our Lord had declared that "heaven and earth shall pass away." That is, the religious heavens, and the earthly order of society ; therefore — "that day shall come unawares."

What may we expect, then, from the recent Geneva Conference? We must expect the unexpected, if we are alert Christians — the brethren to whom Paul wrote—"Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." (1 Thes. 5:4.) We remember also our Lord's words in Matt. 24:37-39. In the days of Noah they "knew not" until the flood came and took them all away—the unexpected happened—"so shall also the presence of the Son of man be."

Let us note also in 1 Thes. 5:3 that the "sudden (unexpected) destruction" of the symbolic heavens and earth, is to come "as travail upon a woman with child." The Apostle undoubtedly wished to convey the thought that the destruction would develop in spasms, with periods of easement between. Who cannot see that we have had various spasms of world distress, particularly since 1914, with periods of easing tension, when there have been the proclamations of "peace, peace," when there is no peace ?

It may be suggested that perhaps some nations may escape the destruction foretold in the Scriptures. We think of the little country of Switzerland where the Geneva Conference was held ; it was not involved in either of the two World Wars, and might this indicate that it may be spared again? Then there are some who claim that Britain and U.S.A. will be spared in the unexpected destruction. The prophet Jeremiah was used to present the truth on this matter, as follows—"For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me ; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. Then took I the cup at the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to drink. . . And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth; and the king of Sheshach (Babylon, Christendom) shall drink after them. Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take thy cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts ; Ye shall certainly drink." (Jer. 25:15-17, 26-28, etc.) ,

Also in Jer. 30 we have a description of the "unexpected destruction" upon Israel in particular, verses 4-11 being especially significant. We read in verse 7—"Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is

even the time of Jacob's trouble ; but he shall be saved out of it."

From Zeph. 3:8 we also read—''Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I shall rise up to the prey ; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." Thus, we see from the various prophecies, that no nation of the earth is to be exempt from the unexpected destruction; all need the cleansing and purifying effects of the fiery time of trouble, to prepare the way for Christ's Kingdom.

Just as with Israel,—"he shall be saved out of it,"—so also with the nations ; for following the "devouring of the earth"—earthly order of things—we read—"Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." (Zeph. 3:9.) Thus we see that the Lord's blessings follow the complete humbling of the human race, so that they then may, desire God's will to be done, for their everlasting happiness. Then, there shall be true and lasting peace throughout the world, as mankind progress in obedience to the laws of Christ's Kingdom. The Psalmist was given an insight into that glad time to come, when he wrote—"Give unto the king thy judgments, 0 God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. The mountains (kingdoms) shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. . . He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth." (Psa. 72:1-3. 6.) What a beautiful picture of blessing and refreshment in the new age, as the influences from Christ and the church in glory descend to lift up a wilted but repentant humanity. Then, in due course, will follow the resurrection of earth's multitudes to also enjoy the favours of Christ's Kingdom if they will, during the "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:20-23.)

The prophet Micah was also given an inspired picture of the great transformation in the kingdom age, when he wrote—"Many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain (kingdom) of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off ; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks ; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Mic. 4:2, 3.) "And the work of righteousness shall be peace ; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever," we read from Isaiah 32:17.

Our Lord gave very definite descriptions of the last days of the present age, as well as His prophets and apostles, and in Luke 21 revealed much information concerning the passing of the present order of things which He designated as "heaven and earth passing away," as we have seen. To His own disciples He gave a very comforting exhortation in verse 28— "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads ; for your redemption draweth nigh." Words of comfort and encouragement indeed, for all the Lord's dear people in these last days of the age. Surely, they who are able to take the Lord at His word, and look forward with confidence in His strength, fully appreciate and reciprocate the sentiments of the Psalmist—"Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments. Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them." (Psa. 119:164, 165.)

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne brethren wish to advise that their Annual Convention will be held over the Christmas period (D.V.) in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, Melbourne.

It is expected that the gatherings will be held on December 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th, but confirmation of these dates will be announced in the next month's "Peoples Paper."

A cordial invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these assemblies in Melbourne, and further information may be obtained from the secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 16 Kennedy Street, South Oakleigh, S.E,13, Victoria.

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Romans 7:7-25.

‘THE Apostle’s thought in Rom. 7:7-25 is this : At the time of Abraham, God said,“Abraham, I intend to bless the world, and I will tell you about it in advance. Through your posterity I will do it, for I have found you faithful as a servant.” St. Paul was one of those included in that promise (see Heb. 7:9-10). Abraham was not under sentence of the Law ; but he had the promise that a blessing would come to him and all others.

Several hundred years after this God entered into a special covenant with the nation of Israel. They bound themselves by the Law Covenant that they would do certain things ; and God promised that the reward would be eternal life. But they could not fulfil the conditions, and consequently they came under the sentence of death. Therefore, they were worse off in that respect than if they had never come under the Law Covenant, for they had already received, prospectively, the forgiveness of sins ; but now, being unable to keep the Law Covenant, they came again under condemnation to death.

The remainder of the world of mankind was condemned once. God had said that He would bless all those who kept the Law ; and the Jews had their opportunity, but failed because of inherent weakness. So the Law, St. Paul states, brought them death instead of blessing. How did this awaken in them what He says here? “I had not known sin but by the Law.” Suppose that before the Law was given, a man did not know it was wrong to steal or kill. Not knowing it, and not having come under any law telling about it, he had not sinned against the law. Before that Law Covenant came, says the Apostle, not having the Law specified to me, I was not under it. But now I know; and sin came upon me because I could not keep what I saw and what I agreed to do.

Sin lives. What sin? Original sin, Adamic sin, which passed from Adam through heredity upon all his children. God said to Abraham, I intend to bless all the families of the earth. I intend to remove the curse. Those who failed to keep the Law had come under the curse of the Law, as well as under Adam’s curse, so that in addition to the curse that came upon all of Adam’s children, the Jew came under the curse of the Law. That which the Jew thought to be unto life, he found to be unto death. The Law Covenant promised that if the Jew would do these things he would live. But he could not do them, and the Covenant brought condemnation and death upon him. The Apostle does not say that the Law Covenant was just and good, but that the Law was just, the Law was good, not the Covenant. God’s Law is always the same, but He will make a better Covenant ; for finding fault with the Law Covenant, He said: “I will make a new Covenant.” If God was not finding fault with the Old Covenant, why make a new one ? (Heb. 8:8-13.) The unsatisfactory feature of the Covenant was that it could not give life to Israel. God knew this beforehand, but they did not. God wished them to learn this great lesson that because of their own deficiency they needed the merit of the sacrifice of the Redeemer. This lesson must also be learned by the whole world, when in due time all the blind eyes will be opened and the deaf ears unstopped, and all understand the condition of God’s arrangements and the provision He has made.

Greeting Cards.

One of our brethren in the printing trade has kindly produced some Greeting Cards and sent them along with the request that the proceeds from the sale of them be donated to the General Tract Fund to assist in the work of the Institute. This is very much appreciated, in the service of the Lord.

These cards are quite nice and are suitable for general greetings, but they are not Christmas Cards.

If Thy Light Become Darkness.

Matthew 6:23.

ALL who are truly God's people have come to value and love the Word that God hag given to us. We love it because it is His Word, and His Word is truth. Men seek and value knowledge ; at great cost they pursue light on many subjects. The Christian places greatest value on God's truth ; for it is of the greatest importance, emanates from the highest authority,, and is of eternal value. But this greatest of all truth is little sought by men, and no doubt this lack of desire and appreciation is caused by the theory that the Scriptures cannot really be understood nor explained. Satan's business is to suppress light; he is the prince of darkness. His kingdom survives through the darkness of men's minds and hearts. The god of this world hath blinded them. On the contrary, "God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all." We may not always understand Jehovah's ways ; but "God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain."

Light never comes from Satan ; though we are warned, he is, in his efforts to deceive, ready even to put darkness for light, and light for darkness.

Christians to-day enjoy a great measure of light; a measure which continually increases, leads on and satisfies. As we behold the darkness on every hand, we greatly appreciate this light, for it is as true now as in Jesus' day that these things have been hidden "from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes" (Matt. 11:25). We are glad to have just that simple, complete faith in God and His Word; and in the eyes of many to be foolish, credulous and old-fashioned. As Peter expresses it (1 Pet. 2:9), "God has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light"; yes, called us out, blessed and gifted us. Let us never forget the favour of the light, but rather ask ourselves—"Why this favour to me? Am I walking worthy of it? Is the Divine purpose for which I was enlightened being fulfilled?

We remind ourselves again of the question—From whence did I get my light? Perhaps we may reply—"from a friend of mine, or a certain book, or some special meeting." It may be that one of these instruments has been used; but, further, we must be able to say, "I received my truth from the Word of God; I have come to know it as His truth ; it is my solid foundation, and therein I can give you a reason for my hopes and beliefs." Our thought is that while God uses agencies to dispense His truth, yet we really do not have the truth as our own, to trust in and adhere to inseparably, till we have seen it, proved it, and understood it for ourselves. We are then rooted and immovable. Even the great Paul said (1 Cor. 3:5-7), "Who then, is Paul, and who is Apollos but ministers by whom ye believed; even as the Lord gave to every man." Let us be supported by the Word and not by the instrument.

Because Satan is the prince of darkness of a kingdom of darkness, selfishness, and death, he hates to see anyone enlightened. He will, where possible, prevent anyone from obtaining the light, but if unsuccessful in this, he does not cease his evil work ; he will endeavour to rob such a one of their light, to draw away, to make the light become darkness. Because the light so commends itself to us, we would not want to let it slip; hence Satan's working along the lines of deception.

Let us take for a moment a retrospective view of the Church's history. She started off as depicted by the Revelator, the conquering warrior on the pure white horse, in purity and truth. But Satan was busy early ; the true light had come, and was now to make progress. He would war against it, and it was just as though he laid his plan, and said, "I will counterfeit it all. I must get my darkness in amongst this light and extinguish it; I will sow my tares and deceive men, and aim to capture these leaders of the people to really serve me and my cause of darkness and bondage." He met with success early. In his day Paul said, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." The Gospel Age has seen throughout its centuries a conflict between light and darkness, between Christ and Satan. The light has oft shone forth but feebly, particularly in the dark period of Papacy's power, when God's Word prophesied, "clothed in sackcloth."

But we rejoice that brave champions of light and liberty hath stood forth to declare and defend the truth; but Satan never flagged, and these noble efforts seem to have been obstructed by the wily adversary. Time and again there has been a falling away, and Satan seems to have captured each movement, and held up progress. He is no less busy and clever today; hence we remind ourselves of a few of the stirring exhortations to hold fast to the truth. (See 2 Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 4:3-4; Col. 2:6, 8, etc.).

In our day, there has been a great awakening and an unfolding of the truth ; a searching after and a feasting on things "both new and old." The Bible has been studied and understood, and darkness and mystery have been dispelled.

How does Satan behold all this ? Is he, do we not think, still anxious to retain the movement, check the progress, and the increase of truth ? Yes, indeed, and succeeding in robbing many of their liberty and beclouding their light.

From the earliest history Satan, the one through whom the great enemy death has come, has endeavoured to blind men regarding it. To our first parents it came, "Ye shall not surely die." All men have grasped the lie ; preachers have preached it ; "man has an immortal soul." Poets have written it—"Call it not death, 'tis but transition." In a new form, but still deceptive and misleading, the same old story, "Ye shall not surely die," is being still loudly proclaimed. Satan's snares grow more and more wily ; for the brighter the light the more subtle and, like the truth, the snare needs to be.

What, we ask, leads to a loss of light and truth ? If we look back over the Church's history we will see that Satan's mode has been to stifle the individual searching and proving of truth. It has been the method of exalting human teachers and leaders. It was thus in Paul's day, for Paul warmly combated the spirit of it, declaring emphatically that it was God to whom they should look, and give the glory.

So down the Reformation days, people have taken the name and message of their chosen leader, who has really become their "head." They have epitomised his doctrines, and formed their creed. They have said, "I like these views, and I like this form of worship. I accept this, and will try to live up to it. I will bring up my children in this belief. I have it all now ; there is no need for me to study ; those who are teaching have more talent and time to do so." Hence these have stood while the light has progressed. Satan today wants to stifle our individual searching and proving if possible, and if he can ensnare our leaders and teachers, he will thus have us all as his prey. And God permits testings ; He holds us responsible for what we accept, and why we believe it. Every teacher is responsible for what he proclaims ; but this does not relieve the hearer of his responsibility to "prove all things." Let us not today depart from the example of the "Noble Bereans," nor allow Satan to beguile us of our reward "in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels (messengers)" (Col. 2:18, 19). "Let no man glory in men" (1 Cor. 3:21).

Let us resolve not to be influenced by the opinions of others, no matter how they may appear to be, nor from whom they come. "Let the truth commend the man, never the man the truth." Do not, of course, let us despise the help of others ; God has provided helpers in the Church ; but do let us see that our whole

structure of knowledge and faith is seen by ourselves to be entirely Scriptural; for if Scriptural-immovable.

Again, we need also to remember that unless we are faithful to the light already given, we may not expect to receive any addition. Faithfulness to light received will lead to increasing light. The truth is something affecting both the heart and the head ; to possess the truth means to have a knowledge of God's Word ; but that is not all, nor is it the real thing. To really have the truth means the possession of its spirit, as well as the knowledge. "Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up." Again, we have it well expressed in 1 John 2:9, 10: "He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness, even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." Can we not see the thought and its reasonableness ? Have we merely knowledge and not the spirit of the truth Are we but as "sounding brass" ? Have we missed the real thing about the truth, that is, its sanctifying power ? God is rather pleased, we are sure, with the lesser knowledge, but abundance of love, than with the profusion of knowledge unaccompanied by its spirit. Yes, this is really the divine will and purpose, and unless we develop with our knowledge the spirit of the truth in the outworking of true Christian character, we are really unfaithful. Can we stand this test? Have we really imbibed the spirit of the truth, or are we denying its purity and loveliness and God-likeness ?

And God does test this way, for see 2 Thes.2:11, 12, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Do not let us think this applies only to those who have never received the light ; it refers to those who have received the truth—but how? Do we really love what is behind the truth—the Divine will and principles of character? Do we really love these, and are we willing to sacrifice all to hold to these naked principles, to entirely merge self into Christ, and to prove our love and loyalty and usefullness? God will, as He here states, sold such strong delusions (the world does not need strong delusions ; it is those who have seen a measure of light), that all but those who love the truth for truth and righteousness sake will be sifted out. If it were possible even the very elect would be deceived. Let us aim more and more to see God in His truth, and let His Word dwell in us richly, that God may more and more be able to see Himself in us, and we shall show forth the "virtues of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light" (for that purpose).

Of course retrogression into darkness is not sudden, but gradual at first ; a little inattention to the only sure guide, a little allowing to grow of a wrong spirit, a little relinquishing of our right of individual judgment, but, while gradual at first, it is amazing how rapid grows the confusion and error once the path is fairly entered upon. "If the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness." Satan himself was once a prince of light and purity ; now he is altogether dark, the prince of darkness and the father of lies.

And we note, too, that a darkening of the knowledge will be followed by a certain effect on the heart. When the light of truth is lost, the spirit of truth will depart also. Error does not sanctify, and "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he." When the Christian enters into confusion of doctrine, unreason, there will be the confusion and unreasonableness in the words, deeds^ and entire life. Where "narrow" beliefs are accepted, the whole spirit and attitude will be "narrow," and so on.

But if we keep right at heart and are living worthy of the truth, we will find our supply of light continually increasing, as the Psalmist says, "Light is sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart" (Psa. 97:11). God will continue to bestow His favour and blessing to all who love and serve Him supremely (John 7:17). "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." Our retention of the light is not, then, of our own wisdom and ability, but it is God's prolonged favour to us as we use it faithfully to His glory. He would have us "walk in the light" (1 John 1:7; 1 Thes. 5:5).

Furthermore, let us not only separate ourselves from the doctrines of darkness ; let us separate and dissociate ourselves from all works of darkness. The calling voice that bade us come out of Babylon that we might not be partakers of her sins, still bids us to be not partakers of other men's sins, but to keep ourselves pure. Let us preserve around us a pure atmosphere and fellowship, where there is fullest liberty and all is true and righteous.

Let us keep a conscience void of offence; separate ourselves from all works which we cannot approve, and be sure that all that we do ourselves or endorse in others is in line with truth and holiness.

Brethren, let us be in every way careful of all that we accept and believe ; let us hold fast to the truth, and demonstrate to God our unconquerable love of righteousness. Let us aim for God-likeness ; "God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all." Let us keep our hearts right before God, and ever guard our light and liberty to the end.

"Hold fast that thou hast," and Jesus has promised, "If ye continue in my words, then are ye my disciples indeed ; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-34).

Luther Finds the Bible.

LUTHER did not labour only to cultivate his intellect; he felt that he depended on God —a simple and penitent conviction, which is the source at once of deep humility and great deeds. Every morning he began the day with prayer; next he visited the church; then he betook himself to his studies, and lost not an instant through the whole course of the day.

The young student passed at the university library every moment he could snatch from his academic labours. One day, when he had been studying for two years at Erfurth, and was twenty years of age, he took down several books in the library, one after another, until he came to one that arrested his attention. He has never seen anything like it. He reads the title—it is a Bible ! He turns over the leaves with the liveliest interest, and, full of wonder and excitement, finds that the volume contains more than those fragments of the Gospels and Epistles which the Church had selected to be publicly read on every Sunday throughout the year. Till then he had supposed that these constituted the entire Word of God; but, behold, page after page, chapter after chapter, books upon books, of which he had not the slightest idea before ! His heart beat as he held in his hand all these divinely-inspired Scriptures. He devoured those heavensent pages, with feelings beyond description. The first that fixes his attention relates the history of Hannah and young Samuel. He reads, and can hardly contain his joy. The child whom his parents lend to Jehovah for all the days of his life ; Hannah's song; the young lad Samuel, who grows up in the temple in the presence of the Lord—all this history, all this revelation which he has discovered, made him feel as he never felt before. He returns home with his heart full. "Oh !" he thinks; "if God would give me such a book for my own!"

Luther did not yet know Greek or Hebrew. It was a Latin Bible that had so transported him with joy. He soon returned to the library in search of his precious treasure. He read and re-read it, and returned to read it again with astonishment and delight. Thus God put the Divine Word in his way. He had discovered the book of which he was one day to give his countrymen that admirable translation in which Germany, after the lapse of over three centuries, still reads the oracles of God. It was the first time, perhaps, that any hand had moved that precious volume from its place in the library of Erfurth. That book, put away on the untouched shelves of an obscure room, was to become the Book of Life to a whole people. The Reformation was hidden in that Bible. —D'Aubigne.

Kept by His Power.

“Kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.”-1 Pet. 1:5.

With kindest wish, and prayerful thought this morning
I offer thee these simple words of cheer;

Whete’er may meet thee, in life’s future dawning,
May they afford thee comfort year by year!

Kept by His power, no human arm upholding,
No human hand outstretched to point the way.

But God’s great love, His feeble child enfolding,
Is all-sufficient for thy need each day.

Be not afraid, for as each need arises,
With strong, absorbing, self-important claim

God it will meet, with His Divine surprises,
If thou but call upon His Holy Name.

“Kept” when the world for thee its smile is wreathing,
When Skies are fair, and life with roses spread;

“Kept” when its frowns to thee it is bequeathing,
And clouds are darkly massing overhead.

His power to keep is strong, and true for ever,
No length of years can e’er its force abate;

His will to keep can never fail, no never;
Whilst Mercy stands at Heaven’s wide open gate.

Then jour::ey on, leave fear, and anxious worry
To this who know rot that the Lord doth reign;

Keep step with Him; forgo impatient hurry;
Trust Him to make the rough, steep places plain. —Selected.

The true Christian is like the sun, which pursues his noiseless track, and everywhere leaves the effects of his beams in blessing upon the world around him. —Luther.