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“Awake ! Arise ! and Christ shall Give thee Light.”

“Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light!” (Eph. 5:14.)

THE world in general is asleep. In one sense of the word it is dead. As we know, the death sentence passed upon all men because of Adam’s sin. (Rom. 5:12.) Since that time all of the human family have been going into the tomb; and even those still having a measure of life are spoken of in the Scriptures as “dead in trespasses and sins.” (Eph. 2:1.) But this death sentence resting upon all mankind has been transmuted by the Lord to be a sentence of a period of sleep, to be followed by an awakening. God had this arrangement in His glorious Purpose from the beginning, from before mankind came into existence. For this reason the Bible refers to the death state as a “sleep.” God purposed the redemption and restitution of mankind, and so in the Divine programme our Lord Jesus was the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world.

When God spoke to Moses at the burning bush, He called Himself the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, although these men had long been dead. Our Lord Jesus referred to this statement, and declared that the fact that God so spoke of them when they were dead proved that there is to be a RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD. (Luke 20:37. 38; Exod. 3:6.) He did not say that this proved that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were not dead, but alive in some other world, but that it proved that they were to be raised from the dead; “for all live unto Him” [God]. In other words, it is God’s purpose that all shall yet live (John 5:28, 29); and He can properly speak from the standpoint of His predetermined purpose. In both Old and New Testaments death is spoken of as a sleep, because of the redemption and the deliverance from the Adamic death penalty purposed through Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross.

An understanding of the Plan of the Ages given in the Scriptures reveals the fact that all mankind will be awakened from the Adamic death state, in order that they may “come to a knowledge of the Truth,” which will be made plain to all during the Messianic Reign of our Lord. (I Tim. 2:3-6.) This will be the individual enlightenment then brought to all mankind; and the attitude of each towards God’s revealed provision for all will determine his case, whether he shall have life everlasting or shall be cast into the death state again. This will be the Second Death—eternal destruction. In the Bible the Second Death is never spoken of as a “sleep.” This term is applied only to the Adamic death.

“Awake, Thou that Sleepest!”

Our text applies especially to those who, although still having an existence, are dead in trespass and sins,

who are sleeping so far as the highest interests of their souls, their being, are concerned, those who are under the benumbing influence of the power administered by the great Adversary. (2 Cor. 4:4.) Since our Lord's death as the great Sacrifice for sin, the call has gone out in a general way to all who have heard the Gospel Message that they should repent of: sin, should arise from their dormant condition, and, live in accordance with the purpose for which they were created. To those who heed this Message comes the special Call of the Gospel Age.

The majority of the human family seem to be passing through life in a sort of maze. They are not (I awake; they seem to be in a dream. As a rule, they are not thinking about the more important things of life, but of the trivialities—what they shall eat, what they shall drink, wherewithal shall they be clothed, where they shall find pleasure or amusement, how they can multiply their money. These matters are indeed very trifling compared to the weighty question—“Why am I living? What was the purpose of my creation? What are my responsibilities to my ..

God and my fellowmen? What is to be my eternal destiny?”—Matt. 6:31-33.

In the experience of practically all who have come to the Lord there has been first a soul awakening. Their coming to Him has been preceded by an awakening of their inmost being, their nobler self, a dissatisfaction with the things of this world, and a yearning for something that will satisfy, a hungering and thirsting for God. To the one who is beginning to experience this soul-stirring, the words of our text should be especially effective: “Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light !” First must come the awakening, the realisation of our need, the hungering for God. Then the light will come, as the heart comes into the right attitude to receive it.

An Important Crisis in Life.

This thought of the need of an awakening should give us sympathy for those who have never yet heard the voice of the Lord. They need our sympathy. “Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear,” said our Lord to His disciples. (Matt. 13:16, 17). This benediction is for the disciples of Jesus to-day as well as for those to whom the words were directly spoken. These have had the soul awakening; they see and hear things unknown before— things of incomparable value. A very large number of the poor world of mankind are steeped in sin and degradation. They are living merely for the things of time and sense. They seem to do very little profitable thinking. Although they have heard of God and of Heaven, yet what they heard seemingly has made but little impression upon them.

To some who have lived thus for years there comes a time of awakening. Suddenly, through the experiences of life, they are aroused from their lethargy to a realisation that there is something to live for beyond what they have heretofore seen. They come to realise that they are sinners needing a Saviour, that they are helpless and need a Helper. Perhaps they get the right view—that the sentence resting upon fallen man is death. (Gen. 3: to.) More likely they get the wrong view—that it is eternal torment. But from the moment of their awakening they faced a crisis in their lives. How would they respond? Would they come near to God and receive a blessing? Or would they turn from Him and the voice of conscience, and wander off into greater darkness, greater sin, and thereafter be more difficult to reach than ever before?

In the case of others, however, it was not an awakening to a realisation of sin; for from childhood they had been children of the Lord, accustomed to the Bible, the hearing of prayer, and the singing of hymns. They were Christians: yet their soul was not really awake. They were going through the form of singing hymns, of reading the Bible, and of offering prayer, without thinking seriously what the words meant. They were asleep, in a sort of somnambulistic condition, as it were, going around in a stupid way, having a form of godliness with little or none of its power.

Then, in the Lord's providence, they were brought to a sudden standstill. They received a mental shock which shook them out of their torpid condition. They were brought face to face with a crisis in their lives. They saw in just what condition they were. They heard the Call to a higher, nobler life.

Suggestions to Parents and Teachers.

This time of soul-awakening is an important period in the life of the young. About this time there seems to be a great change in human nature. It is the -age when conditions of thoughtfulness are reached, the time when the forces making for spirituality have the most favourable effect upon the youthful mind. This is a thought which parents, guardians and teachers of youth do well to have before them. By this we do not mean, however, that no special attempt should be made to bring the child to the Lord previous to this time. Quite to the contrary, from birth the child should be trained in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

In speaking of the importance of the period of life at the age of fifteen years or thereabouts, it would seem that at about that time the child's mind is sufficiently developed to begin to reach out as never before to wonder, to question, to see things in a new light, to look beyond the trivial things of the present time, to lose interest in previous childish diversions. Parents and teachers should use much wisdom in dealing with children at this crucial age. They should neither reprove nor seek to check these first stirrings of the mind toward higher, more important things.

It seems somewhat remarkable that at this age children reason with a great deal of accuracy, about as accurately, perhaps, as they will ever reason; but experience seems to show that this is true. It is afterward that their minds frequently become perverted by false reasoning, and their brain power becomes so confused that they do not know how to think or what to think. From their elders they learn deceit, and get improper views of life and its responsibilities. They imbibe erroneous teachings, which are often difficult to unlearn.

Parental Responsibility Very Great.

Strange to say, there are parents—and some of them professedly Christian—who say, "All children must sow their wild oats." How surprising that any parent could so reason! Whosoever sows wild oats will reap in kind. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7.) There is no escape from this inexorable law of • nature.

From the first dawn of its understanding the child should be kept very near to the Divine standard. The parents should be able to express to the child in sympathetic terms those qualities of nobility and righteousness which the opening mind is so ready to receive, just as a sponge sucks up water. The child mind is ready to absorb very fully the thoughts which are given to it by sincere parents or by anyone in whom it has confidence. But children soon lose confidence in one whom they find to be deceitful, one who tells them untruths.

Children are very quick to note whether the parent is untruthful or unjust. Thus their confidence is destroyed; and in time they learn to deceive others, to practise falsehood and injustice. We regret to say that there are parents who seemingly think it wise and proper to teach their children to be shrewd and "thrifty," as they call it—to take advantage of others, and to fib a little. We are sure that all who come to a real knowledge of Divine Truth, and who have imbibed its spirit, will have no such sentiments. Having learned the right way themselves, they will be very desirous that their children and all whom they can influence shall take the same Godlike viewpoint as themselves.

After Awakening, Remain Awake.

Those who have experienced an awakening of soul should be very watchful lest they fall asleep again—drift back into the old worldly ways. After one has awakened in the morning, and his senses have become fully aroused, it is possible for him to turn over and fall asleep once more. Upon a second awakening, however, the energies are sluggish, and the mind is more or less dull and stupid. Upon first awakening after a refreshing sleep, there is a freshness of mind which seems to be lost if one permits himself to doze off again; and perhaps after his second awakening there is a languor or torpidity of feeling for the entire day.

So it is with those that fall asleep again after having been awakened to a realisation of the higher and nobler aspirations and enjoyments. Such may be awakened a second time; but if they are, the perceptions of the soul are likely to be less acute, the conscience less sensitive. For this reason we should encourage those who have awakened to arise at once from the dead world, and to be separate from those around them who are still asleep.

After one has awakened and begun to arise from the dead world, the soul is in the attitude to receive the light of Heaven. “Christ shall give thee light.” “Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.”

(Psa. 97: t.) Those who are arising from the dead world are approaching this condition of uprightness. The dead are represented as being prostrate. (1 John 5:19.) Arising to a standing position represents an entire change of sentiment.

The awakened one should at once seek to know what the Lord desires him to do. He should begin to study the Word of God. There he finds that the Way to God is Christ—the only way. The path that leads to God is by way of the Cross of Calvary. The soul must lay hold upon Jesus, by acceptance of the merit of His sacrificial death and by a complete surrender to God through Christ Jesus as the great Advocate. When he has taken this step, the light will begin to dawn upon him. Heavenly things can now for the first time be grasped by the soul. Light, increasing light, is his portion; for each step of obedience brings greater knowledge. “The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” (Prov. 4:18.)

In the past many of us made the great mistake of supposing that we became Christians when first we awakened, when first we arose from the dead world about us. But we were merely looking toward Christianity, merely awakening to the fact that there is such a thing as harmony with God, and an escape from the condemnation that is upon the world because of sin.

There is still condemnation upon all except those who are in Christ. The apostle truly says, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” (Rom. 8:1.) From the moment we come into Christ we are counted members of His Body, and we lose all condemnation of Adamic death. His sacrificial merit has been imputed to cover all our imperfections, as well as the sins of the past. Arising from the dead, in this sense of the expression, means that we are living the resurrection life, that the new life in Christ is begun in us. (Rom. 6:4.) This life will, if we continue in the good way, be completed when we receive our glorious spiritual bodies in the First Resurrection.

On Trial for Life or Death.

From the time that we lose the condemnation of death that came upon mankind through Adam's disobedience, by taking the steps of faith in Jesus as our Redeemer, and of full consecration to God through Him, we are again placed on trial for life. The first trial for life was given to Father Adam: and when he failed, condemnation came upon all his posterity. But no one can be tried twice for a capital offence unless in the meantime he has been cleared of the previous condemnation. Therefore no one can have a second trial until he gets from under the condemnation that came through Adam.

Only the Church of Christ is now on trial for life eternal. They are reckoned as having passed from death unto life, but this is a salvation only by hope. They have yet to be proved, to be developed as New Creatures in Christ. They are now on probation. They have entered the School of Christ, to be perfected in character, to be made copies of God's dear Son, who is their great instructor. They must be prepared for their future work in the Kingdom; for, if they prove faithful even unto death, they will become the teachers of the next Age—instructing, uplifting, encouraging, blessing, the whole world of mankind, who died in Adam and who are to be awakened and dealt with during the incoming Dispensation.

When spiritual comfort is given thee from God, receive it with thankfulness; but understand it is the gift of God, not any desert of thine. —Thomas A 'Kempis.

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Palestine Old and New.

To Emmaus by Motor Car.

THE following account of conditions in the Holy Land, by Albert Peel, D.Litt., is quoted from "The Christian World." " 'I am sorry you are going to Palestine; you will certainly be disappointed.' How many times were those words said to me--so many that I began to think they might be true, and that there would be no thrill in a visit to' the Holy Land.

* * *

"We approached Haifa in the early hours of the morning, and I made my way on deck in a dressing gown to get my first glimpse of Mount Carmel. As the morning wore on I soon concluded that While there may be disillusionment in some places, the thrill would certainly be there. To descend on to the Plain of Esdraelon, across which armies had marched through the centuries, to pick Palestine's flowers for the first time, to look across to 'cities' with familiar names like Nain and Endor—I. wondered in those first hours if the Holy Land would mean a lump in the throat all the time. That feeling passed away, and at times there was resentment at the sight of conflicting creeds and superstitions, and at the monstrosities under which some of the most sacred places have been buried. There was, too, continually the consciousness of the fact that the country is honeycombed with history, and that it is remunerative to make sites significant.,

"When all that has been said, however, the Holy Land remained a Holy Land. The Bible began to live afresh as one saw a city set on a hill, or the lilies of the field, or the road on which the traveller from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves. There was no longer doubt about the meaning of the camel] and the needle's eye as one saw laden camels passing along the narrow streets of Jerusalem.

* * *

"But it may be said, 'Do not the crowds of tourists altogether destroy the atmosphere?' The tourists can be escaped; not many of them are to be found in the Garden of Gethsemane, or on the Mount of Olives, or on the hill above Nazareth in the early dawn, easily the best time of the day in which to see Palestine; and there are places altogether off villages, if one is to get the real feel of the land as it was twenty centuries ago.

the beaten track where one gets back to the time when the Master walked the streets and hills. I was determined to walk to Emmaus: that proved to be impossible for lack of time, and a visit to Emmaus is not in the average tourist's programme. My visit, however, was one of the unforgettable experiences of my life. St. Luke speaks of Emmaus as sixty furlongs from Jerusalem. Without looking at a road map I chartered a car with a ride of about eight miles in mind. Four friends joined me, and all agreed that afternoon was one of the most memorable experiences. For the first two miles we passed through the 'New Jerusalem,' about which the less said the better; then for six miles or so on the fine main road to Jaffa. Then we turned along a road on the like of which I have never ridden before. No car, I should have thought, could have stood it, but ruts. a^ foot deep, and the hefty stones, seemed to make no difference to car or driver, and after eleven miles we arrived at Emmaus.

* * *

"We did not spend long in the village or in the Franciscan church, but made our way to the Hospice, now kept by three Sisters. They gave us tea in the garden made there a generation or two ago, and a place of more perfect peace I have never known. There were magnificent views across the valleys to Mizpah and

other places with familiar names, and one desired nothing better than to remain for a long time for meditation and quiet. Once upon a time the Hospice was largely used by pilgrims travelling on foot to Jerusalem; now it is rarely visited. It remains in my mind as one of the gems of unspoiled Palestine, to which I should recommend every visitor to go. Another is Tabgha, the site of the ancient Bethsaida, where it is possible to stay for a few- days in the monastery under the charge of Father Tapper. Its garden spreads along the Sea of Galilee, and either in the garden or on the lake one can experience that communion with nature and with God which Jesus Himself knew.

* * *

“One of the strongest impressions the visitor receives is the amalgam of East and West, ancient and modern. I made my way on one occasion to a Bedouin encampment not far from Jordan and Jericho. Anything more primitive seen from a distance could scarcely be imagined, but as one drew near to it the noise of a gramophone came floating over the air. The main roads are equal to those in any country in the world, and the skill of the Arab drivers is beyond all praise. The motor has certainly enabled the visitor to see Palestine in a way impossible a few years ago. One must, however, get away from these main roads on to the hills, away from Zionist colonies and into Arab

“And here I must say something about the political situation, for the mandate which Britain holds entails great responsibility. The Balfour Declaration, with its support of the’ Zionist Movement, has placed us in an invidious and unfortunate position. The Jews are pouring into the country, and the money which backs them enables them to buy land from Arab owners, with the result that the Arabs employed on the land find their way into the cities and towns with a bitterness in their hearts that increases as the process is continued. At Tiberias I saw something of a counter Moslem movement. Hundreds of Arabs were crowded together to welcome a Moslem leader, whose purpose in haranguing them was to persuade them to sell their lands ‘to the Mosque’ instead of to Jews, that is, to an organisation parallel on the Moslem side to the Zionist Society of the Jews. It was when one got into familiar conversation with the educated Arab that one realised the tension underlying the superficial calm. I dined one night with one who had had peculiar opportunities for estimating the whole situation, and his emphatic and unqualified view was that if Britain were to give up the mandate the Arabs, pouring in across Jordan would massacre all the Jews within twenty-four hours.”

[This last reference is surely very significant and in confirmation of Bible prophecies—See Ezek. 38.]

Blindness Beginning to Pass.

THE Rev. I. Livingstone, speaking at the meeting of "The Fellowship of Faiths," said: "The Jews believe that Jesus was undoubtedly a Jew and held the faith of His fathers and founded no religion. Christianity, the Jews believe, was founded by Paul."

Thus the Jews appear already to realise that it was a great mistake to have crucified Jesus, but they have still a long way to go before recognising, as Paul did, their long promised Messiah in Jesus of Nazareth. What a compliment is unwittingly paid to Paul's zeal, in thus accrediting him with the founding of Christianity. They fail, however, to see that all that Paul taught is built upon the teachings of Jesus, who said that the old bottles could not contain the new wine, i.e., the Jewish teachings and system of religion would be burst by the new truths.

Again we have the Lord's instructions to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world, teaching all nations and baptising in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit." Then, too, when Peter declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus had said, "Upon this rock will build My Church." Paul loyally refers to this when he says, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1. Cor. 3: II.)

The Church was founded at Pentecost before ever Paul was converted and it must be completed before blindness will entirely pass away from Israel. (Rom.:25-27.) "They shall- look upon (perceive with understanding) me whom they have pierced and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth, for his only son and shall be in bitterness for him, as one • that is in bitterness for his firstborn." (Zech. 12:

“A Saviour and a Great One.”

“A ghastly sight shows in the shivering air
On Calvary’s brow;
The Saviour of mankind, in love, hangs there,
While followers bow
The head low on the breast and sadly sigh,
‘How can He be Messiah—if He die?’

“A jeering mob surrounds the cursed knoll,
And mocks the Lord;
Yet to His lips and from His stricken soul
Cometh no word
Of vengeance or reproach—ah, no; and when
In anguish came the final moment, then
“‘Tis finished!’ rings in triumph through the sky;
He bows His head;
And, while the querying soldiers mark the cry,
‘The Lord is dead.’

All anguish past, His triumph doth begin,
The world is saved, a death blow dealt to sin.
“Jerusalem, amazed, hears fishers tell,
With courage bold,
How Christ has vanquished Satan, death and hell,
As He foretold.

Humble disciples forcefully proclaim,
‘There is Salvation in no other name.’
“A Sabbath’s journey from the city gate,
With sorrow shod,
Two sad disciples bear their sorry weight
To their abode.

The Christ appears, while holden are their eyes,
And cloth expound wherefore Messiah dies.
“Emmaus reached, the Lord would further go;
They gently chide
‘Thou hast beguiled our grief and tears, and so
With us abide.’

He brake their bread—then vanished from their sight—
Their hearts did burn with holy joy that night.
“Still thus He comes; and though the faulty sight
Of clouded eyes
Perceives Him not; He makes the burden light,
And stills our cries;

For, like weaned babes, we mourn, the while
He would Our hearts sustain with stronger richer food.
“The tale is old but ever sweetly new,
Why Jesus died;
The nail prints, doubting one, He shows to you,
And in His side

A spear thrust gapes—a passage rent apart
For easy access to your Saviour’s heart.
“It was for you my brother,
that He shed His life so free;
For you, you, for me,
He bowed His godlike head
On Calvary’s .tree,

That trusting in the merit of His Name
We might be saved from sorrow, sin and shame.
“The past sufficeth, surely, to have spent
In sinful deeds.

Come, join our band; and be our footsteps bent
Where Jesus leads.

So, in His righteousness serenely dressed,
We’ll meet Him face to face among the blest.” —
Selected.

The Blessings of the Lord Maketh Rich

THE Bible declares that there are not many rich, not many wise, not many learned, who enjoy God's special favour, but chiefly the poor of this world, who are rich in faith. But whoever concludes from this that God is prejudiced against the rich, or that all the rich are iniquitous and have gained their wealth through fraud, errs grievously. What it does teach is that God is no respecter of persons. Whether one be rich or poor, learned or ignorant, God's estimation of him is from the standpoint of the heart. There are both good and bad rich men, just as there are both good and bad poor men.

Abraham, though the youngest son of the family, at the death of his father, Terah, doubtless inherited all that remained of his possessions, including the share of Sarah, his wife, who was his half-sister. The chronology of the narrative agrees with this; but some have erred in the study of it. Abraham is mentioned first amongst his brethren because of his greater prominence, and not because he was the elder.

Added to Abraham's rich inheritance was the blessing of the Lord upon him. After he had accepted the Divine call and left his homeland to become a wandering shepherd and herdsman in Canaan, his flocks and herds increased greatly. He was, under God's blessing, very rich. Others also of God's servants in the past were greatly blessed with riches--for instance, Job. We are not, however, to apply the lesson in this way at the present time. The blessing of the Lord very rarely makes wealthy His saintly people during this Gospel Age. Jesus and the Apostles and the specially saintly all clown through the Age and to-day are poor in this world's goods.

It may be asked, Why this change in God's dealings? The reply of the Scriptures is, that in the past, up to the time of Christ, God's blessings were to men as men; but since the time of Christ, God's saints are "New Creatures in Christ." The terms of discipleship are that they exchange all earthly favours, riches and blessings, and sacrifice their claims to these in order that they may become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, their Lord, to the Heavenly inheritance—and share in the Messianic Kingdom and its glory, honour and immortality.

God dealt with Abraham as a friend and gave him earthly blessings and promised him earthly blessing in the future life. Jesus and His followers God accepts not as friends, but as sons. His promises to these are not earthly, but Heavenly, spiritual privileges and hopes in the present life, and spiritual glory and immortality — far above angels — in the life to come. God's favour to this House of Sons, of whom Jesus is the Head (Hebrews 3:6), is manifested often in the trials, difficulties, chastisements and earthly losses and afflictions which they experience, all of which are designed to work out for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The beauty and harmony of the Bible can be understood only by those who thus "rightly divide the Word of Truth" and differentiate between the blessings and promises to the Ancient Worthies as distinct from those which appertain to the followers of Jesus.

Abraham's Friends Not Joint-heirs.

Lot was a man of nearly Abraham's age, his nephew, the son of his brother, Haran. They were friends and companions. God did not call Lot, nor any other of Abraham's relatives, but merely himself, to be the recipient of the promises—the channel through whom they would be fulfilled. This did not hinder Lot from being with his uncle, but indeed permitted him to share the blessings of Divine Providence, which guided Abraham's affairs. God's Covenant and promises were not made with Lot, but with Abraham only. Similarly, the spiritual children of Abraham alone are the heirs of the Abrahamic promise, and not their friends or relatives, although the latter may share a reflex blessing of spiritual influence through association with them.

These spiritual children of Abraham, Christ and His consecrated followers, are particularly specified as the heirs of the Abrahamic promise by St. Paul (Galatians 3:29). They all have a faith similar to that of Abraham, and a spirit of obedience similar to his. Jesus is their Head, Captain and Leader, as well as their Redeemer, and they become His disciples by a covenant of sacrifice similar to His own. His promise to them is, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne"—the Kingdom which is to fulfil all the gracious promises which God made to Abraham— to Jews and Gentiles.

Riches Often Bring Troubles.

God's blessing upon Abraham, shared by Lot, led on to more or less of ambition and strife, not between the two men themselves, but between their servants. Abraham loved peace, and perceived that it would be wise that the two families should part company. Lot assented. Abraham gave him his choice as to the section of country; and Lot chose the most fertile—the plain of Sodom, in the Valley of Jordan, and the Plain of Sodom, afterward devastated as a judgment from the Lord; is now the Valley of the Dead Sea.

Lot made his home in Sodom, while his herds and flocks were pastured in the fertile regions surrounding. Doubtless Lot's wife had to do with the choice. She loved a beautiful home.. To her the surroundings of Sodom were very attractive. The family lived there three years, although the riches of the country had a debasing effect upon the people. Lot's righteous soul was vexed, more than offsetting the charm of the country, which his wife so loved. Looking back with longing heart at the time of its destruction, she was overtaken in the catastrophe which her husband and daughters escaped.

Abraham, on the contrary, fixed his heart and hopes upon the gracious promises of God, which appertained less to the present and more to the future life. Sarah, his wife, was a real helpmate, who shared her husband's hopes and desired to co-labour with him faithfully for their accomplishment. In these two families, both well-intentioned, we see illustrated the difference between seeking chiefly the Divine approval and seeking chiefly earthly welfare and ease.

Many Christian people to-day make similar mistakes to that which Lot made. They allow conflicting earthly interests to separate them from the blessings of God's greater favour. They thus involve themselves and their families in the snare of the wicked, while at heart preferring righteousness.

The Master's advice should be remembered, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness." Do that which is in harmony with that aspiration and leave to God the oversight and care of earthly interests, that He may give you the lessons and experiences most helpful for you. Those who follow His advice find peace and joy which the world can neither give nor take away--"the peace of God, which passeth all understanding."

God's Blessing Makes Rich.

Whoever has the Lord's blessing is rich indeed, regardless of the amount of this world's goods which he possesses. Of what value is all the wealth of a Croesus if it bring not peace, joy and happiness? Wherever we go we find all—rich and poor —seeking pleasure, seeking the springs of joy; but how few of these seekers ever find it! Alas! it seems impossible for the world to understand the great fact that the blessing of the Lord. constitutes the true fund of riches and pleasures for evermore—more than the life that now is, and the coming one!

Those whom the Lord makes rich with His promises and His favour, His guidance and His blessing, have the joy which others are vainly seeking. These true riches during this Gospel Age are obtainable by all who have the "hearing ear," and who learn of God's favour in Christ. In Christ are hidden all the treasures of Divine Wisdom, Love and Power.

The only ones who obtain a share of these blessings at the present time are such as become followers of Jesus through faith and consecration of their lives to His service. Nevertheless, in Him are also restitution blessings for the world of mankind, which will be dispensed during the thousand years of His reign. -St. Peter tells us- of this, and points us to the fact that it has been “foretold by all the Holy Prophets since the world began.”--Acts 3:20, 21.

Early Morning Devotion..

THERE is no time like the early morning hour for feeding on the flesh of Christ by communion with Him, and pondering His words. Once lose that, and the charm is broken by the intrusion of many things, though it may be they are all useful and necessary. You cannot re-make the broken reflections of a lake swept by wind. How different is that day from all others, the early prime of which is surrendered to fellowship with Christ! Nor is it possible to live to-day on the gathered spoils of yesterday. Each man needs all that a new day can yield him of God's grace and comfort. It must be daily bread.

All true prayer has a transfiguring influence. It brings us into the immediate presence of God. The holy of holies in the ancient temple, where the Shekinah was no holier than where you bow every time you pray. You are looking up into the face of Christ, Himself. John was not nearer to Him, lying on His breast, than you are in your praying. One cannot thus look up into the face of Christ and not have some measure of transfiguration wrought in him.

Then prayer is the reaching up of the soul toward God. It lifts the life for the time into the highest, holiest frame. A prayerful spirit is full of aspirations for God. Its longings are pressing up Godward. It is the transfiguring of the spirit which purifies these dull earthly lives of ours, and changes them, little by little, into the Divine image.

Rise earlier to be more alone with Christ in the morning. Let neither the pressure of business, nor the allurements of pleasure, nor the tendencies of the flesh, nor the drowsiness of spirit, keep thee from thy morning interview and converse with the King of kings.—Selected.

Christmas Convention.

The Melbourne Class is now making arrangements for the forthcoming Christmas Convention. The gatherings will be held, D.V., on Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday the 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th of December, with afternoon and evening sessions, at the usual meeting rooms—“Towler House,” 18 Queen Street, Melbourne (near Flinders Street).

All friends able to attend this Convention may be assured of a very hearty welcome, and we trust may experience much blessing from the spiritual good things provided by the Lord, when His people assemble together in spirit and in truth on such occasions. As the programme is now in preparation, it would be nice to hear as soon as possible from all who expect to be in attendance. Accommodation can be secured as desired, and further information will be gladly supplied.

BIBLE STUDY MEETINGS.

Regular Class Meetings for Bible Study, etc., are held each Sunday afternoon and evening, also mid-week, in Melbourne and Adelaide, at the following addresses:--

“Towler House,” 18 Queen Street, (near Flinders Street),
Melbourne.

Liverpool Buildings, Flinders Street Adelaide, South Aust.

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

Convention Notes from Digby, Vic.

IT is with much praise and thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift that the Bible Class at Digby and Merino places on record its first little Convention. Having in mind the Apostle’s exhortation, Heb. 10:25—”Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching”—three days (Sept. 27th to 29th) were set apart for praise, study and fellowship, and every moment of the time was utilized to that end. Fourteen assembled, and as one Brother expressed it, it is indeed wonderful to think of the Lord so blessing a little isolated place like Digby, that fourteen people could thus gather.

Regrets were expressed that one Brother was absent on business, and much sympathy went out to a Sister who was kept away through sickness until the last sessions.

Seven visitors travelled many miles and at much expense to be with us, thus exemplifying the well proven fact—”It is more blessed to give than to receive”—and without doubt (and as expressed) receiving also the promised blessing, for “He that watereth shall be watered also himself.” Prov. 11:25. Our prayer is that the memory of the time spent together will be an impetus to each one of us to put up a better fight against our great foes, the world, the flesh and the devil, showing forth in a larger measure more of His spirit, who has called us from darkness into His marvellous light.

The closing exhortation was a brief resume of our studies from John’s Gospel, 15:1-14; 1 Cor. 3: it-16; a John 4:6-11; Psa. 97; I26 _and 23; and reminded us of the need of esteeming truth above every person, thing and consideration, realising that the knowledge is given to develop in us the fruits and graces of the holy spirit. The need also to remember that truth alone sanctifies was impressed, and so we should continue to put and keep on the armour provided, that we may be able to stand in these last days and ultimately say with the Apostle Paul, “I have kept the faith.” We were also reminded of the need of developing in large measure brotherly love, appreciating one another more and more, developing and maintaining His spirit in our hearts and showing it forth in our daily walk that others may benefit; appreciating, too, the feast provided in this harvest period, and so continue “proving all things and holding fast to that which is good.”

Greetings from other Classes, with their expressions of love, were appreciated, and which included hymns 219 and 282 in “Christian Hymns”; Psa. Too; 2 Tim. 3:13, 14; and Gal. 6:16, 18; the thoughts impressed being those of “walking” and “progress.” Rom. 15:13, Heb. 13:20, 21, and Prov. 3:6 were chosen by those assembled to go as messages of love to the Lord’s people meeting, or isolated elsewhere, and our elderly Sister asked that hymn 271, “Take time to be Holy,” be in-eluded. Many were heard expressing the hope that we would have more of such gatherings, one Brother remarking that never before had he realised the value of fellowship.

Bible Helps and Other helps in Stock

“Divine Plan of the Ages.”—Bound in blue cloth, with gold lettering. One of the finest Bible Helps available. Price, 2/6 per copy. Other editions at cheaper rates.

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“God and Reason.”—A helpful booklet of 124 pages. Posted to any address for 10d. per copy, paper cover; 2/- per copy, nicely bound in cloth. Reduction for three or more.

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Poem Books. — “Comforted of God” and “Call of the Bride”; two fine little books of helpful poems, 1/4 per copy.

Post Cards. New selections of cards with helpful Scriptural verses, etc., recently arrived from England, and are well recommended for Christmas and New Year greetings, or general use. Real hand-tinted photo postcards, assorted, 2/4 per dozen; 1/3 per half-dozen. Different variety, very nice also, with encouraging words, assorted, 1/4 per dozen; 9d. per half-dozen. Others on hand at 1/-per dozen, or 1d. each. When ordering, please state clearly which kind is desired.

Bookmarks.—Assorted bookmarks at 1d., 3d., 4d., etc. Also wall-texts, including “My Morning Resolve,” at 4d. each.

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