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Signs of the Son of Man.

(Matthew, 24th chapter. Convention Address.)

AS our Lord's earthly ministry began to draw to a close, He seemed to endeavour to prepare His disciples gradually for the new dispensation. in the 24th chapter of Matthew's gospel we have recorded our Lord's great prophecy. This prophecy of our Lord's is of great value and importance to the followers of Christ because it throws much light on the closing of this Gospel Age, and enables God's faithful, watching people to discern the signs which indicate our Lord's Second Presence.

In Matthew 24 :3 we read, "And as Jesus sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us—When shall these things be? and, What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the Age?"

We call attention to the word rendered "coming" in this text. It is from the Greek word "parousia," which means presence.

The word "parousia" occurs 24 times in the New Testament. The translators of our Authorised Version have obscured the meaning of this word by rendering it "coming" no less than 22 times. Only twice has the correct thought of presence been given in this Greek word "parousia." In 2 Cor. 10:10 the word "parousia" is properly translated "presence"; again in Phil. 2:12.

With the aid of the helps which God's providence has placed in the hands of His watching people, we are now able to discern that there are three words of distinctly different signification used in respect of the Lord's second advent, namely, "parousia" and "epiphania" and "apokalupsis." "Parousia" is used in respect of the earliest stages of the second advent, while "apokalupsis" relates to the same advent later—not that "apokalupsis" and "epiphania" relate to another or a third advent, but merely to a later feature of the second advent.

The Lord's watching people are now able to see that the word "parousia" translated in our Common Version "coming" does not mean what our English word signifies ; namely, to be on the way, approaching; but that on the contrary it signifies presence, as of one who has already arrived. It is discerned also that the Scriptures predicate certain things respecting the Lord and respecting His parousia (His presence) which clearly intimate that He will be present and doing His work, His great work (of setting up His Kingdom and smiting the nations with the sword of His mouth) wholly unknown to the

world—"as a thief in the night." The Scriptures clearly indicate that after the Lord has done certain things during His presence (parousia) and unknown to the world, He will later make a manifestation of His presence ;—a manifestation which will be discerned by all mankind ; and the outward manifestation is designated His "epiphania" which signifies "shining forth" or "bright shining."

The Lord's watching people get the two thoughts respecting the Lord's second coming; that first, although really present, a spirit being like the angels (who, we are told, encamp round about them that fear God and deliver them), our Lord, now a glorious spirit being, of the divine nature, will not be manifest to the natural eye during His presence— His parousia. Hence the necessity that the Lord's faithful ones shall "watch," because they, no more than the world, can discern a spirit being with their natural, eyes. The watching ones in due time are to discern the presence (parousia) of their Lord by the eye of faith. The eye of faith will in due time take note of the "sign of the Son of Man"—the indications of the presence of the King.

Viewed in the light of the clearer understanding which we now have of the meaning of the word "parousia," the question which the disciples asked of the Lord is full of meaning to us. Their question was not "How will we know when you are on your way—approaching?" but rather "How will we know when you are present?" "What shall be the sign of Thy ' presence' (parousia) and of the end of the Age?"

It would seem that the questions as well as the answer which follows were of divine providence; for the prophecy was surely meant more for the instruction of God's people living in this "harvest" time, than for those who asked the questions. In answer to their question the Lord warns His disciples to "take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name saying, I am Christ and shall deceive many."

Gamaliel mentions two of these false Christs in his speech referred to in Acts 5:36, 37; and history tells us of several others who deceived quite a few Jews. Most notable among these was Sabbathai Levi, of Smyrna, who announced himself A.D. 1.648 Sabbathai Levi styled himself "The first-born Son of God, the Messiah, the Saviour of Israel," and promised a restoration of the kingdom and prosperity. Altogether, there have probably been fifty or more false Christs, male and female, and many of them would seem to have been demented—possessed of evil spirits. But none of these, nor all of them together, can be said to have "deceived many." Yet it is against this kind which "deceive many" that our Lord cautions us here, and again, later on in this prophecy, in which connection we will consider particularly the anti-christs which have deceived many.

In verses 6-8 the Lord briefly summarises the secular history of the Gospel Age, and teaches the disciples not to expect very soon His second coming and glorious Kingdom. And how aptly ; surely the world's history is just this—an account of wars, intrigues, famines and pestilences. Our Lord separates the history of the true church and states it with similar brevity (see verses 9-13). How true is this description of the Church's experiences throughout the Gospel Age. "Whosoever will live godly shall suffer persecution," says the Apostle, and history attests the truth of these words.

In verse 14 the Lord assures His disciples that the gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations (not to Israel only) before the end of the age would come. The Lord did not say that all the nations would be converted by the preaching of the gospel during this age; rather, it was to be "a witness to the nations," and to call and perfect and gather out of all nations "the elect." Later on "the elect," When raised to kingdom power, will bless the nations, opening their deaf ears to the gospel, and their blinded eyes to the True Light. This witness has already been given; the Word of the Lord, the gospel of the Kingdom has been published to every nation of earth. Each individual has not heard it ; but that is not the statement of the prophecy. It was to be, and has been, a national proclamation, and the end of the Age has now come. "The harvest," as our Lord explained (Matt. 13:39), "is the end of the Age."

Thus our Lord briefly summed up the eighteen centuries of trials and persecutions upon His Church, and the fruit of their labour, in successfully witnessing to all nations, and hastened on to answer the important query respecting how the living would know of the time and the fact of His second presence.

It was with evident intention on God's part, though unknown to the Evangelists, that the record of our Lord's prophecy at this point is given piecemeal—here a part and there another; here a reference to the typical trouble on typical Israel in the close of the typical harvest, there a reference to the similar though more general and greater trouble in the end of this Age upon antitypical Israel—Christendom. The prophets declared of our Lord that He opened His mouth in parables and dark sayings, and “without a parable spake he not unto them.” Yet in harmony with the divine intention, the dark sayings and parables are now becoming luminous to all whose eyes are anointed with the true eye-salve.

(Read verses 15-22.) Four points in this narrative show that while it may have had a typical application to the trouble in the end of the Jewish Age, its real or most important application belongs to the trouble with which the Gospel Age terminates. (1) The reference to the “desolating abomination” mentioned in Daniel's prophecy. (2) The statement that the trouble will be the most severe the world has ever known or will ever experience.

(3) That unless the duration of the time of trouble should be shortened there would be no flesh saved.

(4) The context succeeding unquestionably ‘describes events at the end of the Gospel Age—events which could not be applied to the end or harvest of the Jewish Age and were not fulfilled there. Two of these points deserve special examination.

The prophet Daniel 9:27 did record that after Messiah would be “cut off” in the midst of the seventieth week of covenant favour, He, by establishing the antitypical sacrifices of atonement, would cause the sacrifices and oblations of the law to cease; and that then, because abominations would prevail, He would pour destruction upon the desolate (rejected nation), as God had previously decreed.

All this had its fulfilment in the destruction of fleshly Israel's polity. From the time our Lord said, “Your house is left unto you desolate”—“ye shall see Me no more until that day when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah,” their religion became an abomination, an empty form, a mark of their repudiation of the one sacrifice for sins which God had provided; and resting under the curse they had invoked upon themselves when they said, “His blood be on us and upon our children,” their course toward destruction was rapid as God had decreed and foretold.

But Daniel's prophecy has much to say about an Abomination that maketh Desolate in nominal spiritual Israel; which was set up in power representatively in Papacy, and which has exercised a great and baneful influence of spiritual desolation in the spiritual house or temple of God, the church of Christ. This abominable system of error was to continue until the cleansing of the sanctuary class; and beyond that it was to prosper greatly and lead many in nominal spiritual Israel to repudiate the ransom-sacrifice, given once for all; and the result of its overspreading influence would be the desolation of rejected Christendom. Dan. 11:31; 12:11.

The great abomination of desolation whose foundation rests in the doctrine of the Mass (which substitutes human performances instead of the great sacrifice of Calvary, for the cleansing away of sin) is now being supplemented by theories of self-atonement, and these overspreading abominations are backed by such influence and sophistry as will deceive many—“if it were possible the very elect,” and be precursors of the destruction of Christendom.

Looking back we see in this another parallelism between the end of the Jewish harvest and the end of the Gospel harvest. Fleshly Israel's rejection of the true sacrifice for sins, and their retention of the typical sacrifices which were no longer acceptable to God, but abominations, was an important incident in connection with their national and ecclesiastical fall. So here, the rejection of the doctrine of the ransom and the acceptance of either masses or good works or penances instead, is abomination in God's sight and is an important incident in connection with the fall of Christendom, civil and ecclesiastical.

The abomination of desolation which defiled God's holy place or true temple, the Church, was the papal one, the cornerstone of which is the blasphemous doctrine of the Mass. The abomination, defilement and desolation are old; but so gross was the darkness of error during centuries past that few, if any, could see it. That the Mass was not seen to be the abomination, even by the Reformers, is evident; for although the Church of England in her Articles denies the power of the priests to create Christ out of bread and wine, to sacrifice Him afresh, yet we have no intimation that the enormity of this sinful practice was seen. And Luther, while full of denunciation for many of Papacy's sins and falsities, did not see the great abomination of desolation to be the Mass. On the contrary, on his return to his church after his stay at Wurtburg Castle, finding that the Mass as well as images and candles had been discontinued, as being without scriptural authority, Luther re-established the Mass.

In this view of the matter there is much significance in our Lord's words—"When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation having stood in the holy place, as foretold by Daniel the Prophet (reader, consider), then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains." Here we must remember the parallelism between the two harvests, the two times of trouble and the two flights; and must consider that Judea would represent Christendom of to-day.

The Greek word rendered "mountains" may with equal or greater propriety be rendered in the singular—mountain; and it is so rendered in a majority of cases in the Common Version. Indeed, to flee out of Judea (literal) to either a mountain or many mountains seems peculiar, since Judea was in fact "a hill country," and Jerusalem is described as set in the top of the mountains. But to apply our Lord's words to the present time, and to His people in Christendom, who now, in the light of present truth, see the Abomination stand where it ought not—in the holy place—in the stead of the true sacrifice, is a very simple matter. They should at once flee from the influence of the Abomination and from the system falsely styling itself Christ's (mountain) kingdom, to the true mountain or Kingdom, which at this time Christ has returned to set up in glory and power.

But to leave Christendom, repudiating her temples, her forms of godliness, her social enchantments, her flatteries and honours, and to brave her denunciations and anathemas and her various powers of boycott, and to flee to the Lord and the true Kingdom, repudiated, ignored and denied by the worldly-wise and worldly-good, is surely quite a flight, quite a journey; and few but the "saints" will even think of starting on it. The perils of the way are portrayed by our Lord in a manner that would seem overdrawn and contrary to His usual custom if applicable only to the physical sufferings of the believers who fled from Judea in the close of the Jewish harvest; but His words are manifestly appropriate to the spiritual flight and trials of this present harvest time. In a word, this command to flee, and the description of its trials, can only be properly understood in connection with the command of Rev. 18:4—"Come out of her, my people, so that you may have no fellowship with her sins, and that you may not receive of her plagues."

Verses 17-18. These verses indicate the propriety of haste in flight out of "Babylon" as soon as each sees the abomination of desolation. The Lord's word is, that all temporising or parleying or human reasoning will be dangerous; no time must be lost in obeying as soon as He causes us to see the abomination of Babylon, and its relationship to all who have named His name. We must each watch and preserve our liberty in Christ even after having left Babylon and her defiling errors. We must preserve our liberty of conscience; our right of individual judgment. No man or set of men must be permitted to take the place of

Christ our only Head. We must promptly resist any tendency to force upon us teachings contrary to the 'Word and spirit of our Lord. Alas ! how many, failing to heed the Master's word, have suffered themselves to be bound hand and foot, so that now flight is almost impossible. But the Master says—"My sheep hear My voice and they follow Me."

There is another lesson in these verses; they show that some of the Lord's people are in the houses or organised systems of Babylon—but, as intimated here, they are generally house-top saints, who have a higher life and experience and faith than merely nominal church members. These in their flight are not to go down into the house (nominal church systems) to seek to carry with them their "goods" -- their valuables in human estimation, such as titles, dignities, respect, commendations of good and regular standing, etc., but are to forsake all for Christ, and flee to the true Kingdom. While some of the Lord's people are in the "houses," others are in the "field," labouring in the interest of some earthly organisation. These should not think it proper to tarry in the field of their labour; but using their liberty should flee from their condition of bondage to sectarianism and become one with the Lord as members of His Kingdom. These verses show the need for prompt and positive action on the part of each and all of the Lord's people who find themselves in any danger of sectarian bondage.

Verse 19. This verse indicates that those engaged in the work of bringing forth and nourishing spiritual children in nominal Christendom will find many difficulties confronting them. How necessary it is to study carefully in order to understand the kind of work God would now have His people engage in. Some are so busy "winning souls for Christ" that they seem to neglect the higher call of this Age—to sacrifice earthly good things in order to run the race and attain the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. The nominal church of to-day is full of "babes," some indeed babes in Christ; but many not sons of God; begotten of error instead of truth—"tares." How difficult it seems for those engaged in this work to leave all and follow Christ. They seem to want to bolster up the tottering walls of "Babylon"; but the message of the Lord is, "Come out of her, My people." Rev. 18:4. "We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed : forsake her." Jer. X1:9.

Verses 20-22. This gathering of the church occurs in what is called a "harvest" time, at the close of a summertime of favour. Our Lord explained that in this harvest He would garner His wheat and burn the tares in a great time of trouble following. It is still the custom in country places to leave the burning-off of refuse until the winter. We understand our Lord to mean, then, that we are to seek help and strength to escape from Babylon before the wintertime of her trouble comes upon her.

We are to remember that there are two classes of wheat saved in this harvest—contrary to nature though it be. (1) The "overcomers," the faithful and promptly obedient who get out before "winter" and are "accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass." (Luke 21 :36.) (2) Those loyal, but not promptly obedient children of God, overcharged, having a zeal not according to knowledge, and more or less contaminated with the spirit of the world. These will be helped out of Babylon when she is falling, and will flee in the winter-time, saying in the words of the prophet, "The harvest is past, the Summer is ended (Winter has come), and we are not saved." (Jer. 8:20.)

The Lord very graciously indicates that all the truly loyal of these shall ultimately "come up out of great tribulation" and be before the throne (not in the throne with the "little flock" who inherit the kingdom as joint-heirs with Christ), having washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 7:14-15.) Let us pray and labour accordingly, that we be through our flight before the "winter" of trouble comes. We are to pray and strive that our flight be not on the Sabbath day. What Sabbath day is meant? The Sabbath day here is the great antitypical Sabbath—the Millennium, the Seventh- thousand-year Sabbath. This present Gospel Age is the time during which the Church, the Bride, is being called and selected. The completion of the Bride class will mark the full end of the Gospel Age; if, therefore, we are hoping to reign with Christ as joint-heirs in His future Kingdom, how necessary it is that we get through with our flight from Babylon

and all her worldly ways before the antitypical Atonement Day--the present Gospel Age closes, and therefore before the Millennial Age (the Sabbath Day) begins. Does not this remind us of the need for hastening our preparation, giving "all diligence to make our calling and election sure."

(To be continued.)

Literature Available.

Pittsburgh (U.S.A.) Convention Reports, 1935. Two copies of this Report are on hand for disposal, and further orders can be placed as required. Containing 32 large pages of Convention addresses, etc. Price, 1/6 each.

"Daily Manna for the Church."—A few copies of this "Manna" with new daily comments are available. Some friends like these as well as the original "Daily Heavenly Manna." With strong paper covers, at 1/6 each.

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Convention News.

THE Easter Convention arranged by the Adelaide and Gawler Classes was again a season of real blessing and spiritual refreshment. Our hearts go out in thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for the blessings received, and we trust that the many helpful thoughts contained in the various addresses, as well as in the fellowship meetings and Bible Studies, will long continue with us, and serve to strengthen our faith and love and zeal in the narrow way. •

The portions of Scripture chosen for Bible Studies were Gal. 6 :1-10 ; 1 Peter 4 :8-14; Heb. 2 :9-14 ; and Rev. 3:14-22 ; and the consideration and discussion of these passages gave us much food for thought. The usual Praise and Testimony and Fellowship meetings which were entered into by various brethren were also appreciated. The Fellowship meeting on “Helpful Suggestions from Experiences in the Overcoming and Sacrificing Life” proved helpful. In this connection we were reminded of the necessity of keeping our thoughts on the things that are pure and good and true ; exercising at all times a good strong faith in God ; and then watching and praying at all times ; and when temptations are forced upon us by evil influences it is found helpful to shift our thoughts to other lines and refrain from dwelling upon undesirable lines of thought. Sometimes mistakes and failures. help us to be more aware of our weaknesses and more on guard against them ; also the necessity of taking time for reading and meditation on the Word, and the meeting together with others of like faith must not be overlooked or neglected.

The Question meeting was also found helpful, there being not sufficient time to consider all the questions brought forward ; those dealt with were well discussed by the brethren and then nicely summed up by the chairman.

The addresses by various of the visiting and local brethren were much appreciated, the topics being “Watching unto Prayer,” “Wisdom,” “Mat. 5 :3-4” and “5 :5-7,” “Signs of Christ’s Presence,” and “Times of Refreshing and Christ’s Return.” The public were invited to hear the latter address given at Gawler on Easter Monday evening. While much appreciated by the brethren, regret was expressed. that the public attendance was small; this was probably due to the holiday and the glorious weather conditions which attracted so many from their homes. .•

The usual Love Feast and singing of “God be with you till we meet again” brought another helpful Convention to its close: - It is felt that much of the helpfulness of these gatherings is due to the presence of visiting brethren from other States and country centres. While giving the Lord all the praise for the blessings bestowed, we would also express our appreciation of- the loving efforts of the brethren and sisters of the local classes in entertaining the visiting friends in their homes and in attending to their needs in other- ways ; our thanks and appreciation is also expressed to the dear friends from the Digby, Vic., and Melbourne Classes, whose journey involves quite a sacrifice of time • and means to share with us the blessings so richly bestowed from the Heavenly Father’s hand. We trust that each and all realise the fullness of God’s blessing as they return once more to their homes and various duties. Num. 6:24-26; Rev:3 :1M2 1 Cor. 15 :58.

Memorial Observances.

IT is with much pleasure that the following reports of some of the Memorial Services held throughout Australia are included in this issue, and which we trust may be the means of stimulating the faith and zeal of all dear members, especially those in isolated places. The ones and twos have also been heard from in various parts, and we rejoice that they also have celebrated in the presence of their Lord, in spirit and in truth.

Melbourne and Digby, Victoria.

Sunday, 5th April, being the anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death, the brethren of the Berean Bible Class in Melbourne solemnly yet gladly observed this sacred ordinance left us by our Master : "This do in remembrance of Me."

In the afternoon the Apostle's words in 1 Cor. 11 :23-26 were considered, which impressed and refreshed our minds concerning the primary and deeper significance of the Memorial, as it comes down to us these centuries later from the faithful Apostle who had, through revelations beyond measure, as he says, "Received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you."

At 7 p.m. the Memorial Service was opened with appropriate hymns and prayer in which all the Lord's people everywhere were remembered. Helpful Bible readings also provided much thought for meditation, and the Passover in type and antitype was reviewed for the benefit of all. Just as our Lord's body was broken and His blood poured out for us; we realised that the value of this sinless offering was the one and only means of our approach to, and justification in the sight of God. Then, further, we realised again, that our Lord's invitation to drink of His cup, and be broken with Him was really the revealing in full of the wondrous high calling, whereby those who suffer with Him, faithfully unto death, shall also reign with Him and "drink anew in the Kingdom."

With thanksgiving and blessing, upon both the bread and the cup 24 members partook in quietness and confidence, thus renewing their consecration to God, to follow in the Master's footsteps, by His grace and strength. With a closing hymn (the words of which are given at the close of these reports) the friends dispersed as did the Lord and His disciples on that memorable night so long ago—"When they had sung an hymn they went out into the mount of Olives."

The Memorial of our Lord's death was held at Digby on Sunday evening, 5th April. Six assembled and availed themselves of the privilege of partaking of the emblems.

We were reminded of the solemnity of the occasion—the privilege of partaking—and realised a blessing from heeding the Master's words, "This do in remembrance of Me." The Apostle also surely expressed the mind of the Lord for all His members, when he exhorts that we "keep the feast" because "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." How we should appreciate the privilege of celebrating the most important of all events—the death of the Redeemer of the whole world.

We reviewed the type and were reminded that in the Divine Word every ceremony, ordinance and sacrifice pointed forward to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and not one more strikingly than the Passover—"When I see the blood I will pass over you." Nothing more required but faith in God's promise to that effect, to keep them at peace and safe, on that awful night. What a forceful illustration of the sole, ground of our peace. The blood of Christ alone is sufficient for our past sins, as well as for our daily shortcomings. How prone we are to look at self and something done; but it is well to continually remember that faith alone in Christ, His blood alone gives us our standing with God. What a

privilege to feed on the Lamb, to have fellowship and communion with Him; and not without the bitter herbs is this possible, for we cannot enjoy, communion in the sufferings of Christ without trial.

We sang from Christian Hymns numbers 253, 118, 294 and 286. All of the Lord's people were remembered—the brethren in their prayers being mindful of the need of all, as well as that of our local ecclesia.

Adelaide and Gawler, South Australia.

Here in Adelaide we again experienced another blessed season of fellowship with our Lord and with one another in breaking of the Bread and drinking of the Cup which our dear Redeemer enjoyed, as representing His body and His blood given for us.

We were deeply impressed with the sense of sacredness of the solemn hour and occasion, especially so as we kept the feast on its anniversary.

It was a renewing again of our consecration to be dead with, Christ, and to endeavour by His grace to walk humbly and more earnestly in His steps of self-sacrifice, even unto death.

This privilege was especially brought before us in our study and discussions during the week previous to the Memorial. As we looked upon Him in His hour of sorrow and loneliness and conflict, it makes our little sacrifice and trials light indeed.

It was a privilege to meet with the Class at Gawler on Sunday, 5th April. During the afternoon we considered the Apostle's words in 1 Cor. 11:23-32, which prepared our hearts for the evening service when we met to keep the Memorial of our Lord's death in harmony with His request, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

How full of precious significance is this ordinance, and how thankful we are that the Lord gave us this opportunity of refreshing our hearts and minds especially at the appropriate season each year, concerning the deep significance of His great sacrifice for. our sins and also for the sins of the whole world.

There were just nine members present who partook of the emblems, signifying our acceptance of Christ's death as the only means of securing our justification before the Father, and also renewing our pledge of consecration to be dead with Christ and to be broken together as fellow-members of the one Body ; sharing each other's burdens and seeking to devote ourselves to God in humble service for one another.

Burnie, Tasmania.

On the evening of the 5th April the friends gathered together at Sister , and at 7.30 p.m. commenced the little service that culminated in partaking of the emblems in memory of our beloved Lord. and Saviour.

As we would expect, our dear Redeemer could have thought of nothing else so helpful to His followers, than this simple act done in remembrance of Him.

Truly we find each year the heavens are opened to us wider and wider, enabling us to understand

and appreciate more and more both the primary simple significance, -and the wondrous secondary and deeper lesson. Truly our hearts burn within us as our dear elder Brother teaches and expounds our common-union with Him, until it is a heart appreciation, not only a head knowledge, and we say with fervency, "Even so, come Lord Jesus," that we may drink it anew with Thee in the Kingdom. Members

worldwide were remembered at the throne of grace. As you know us all, a list of names is included, seven in all.

Sydney, New South Wales.

We held our Memorial Meeting on Sunday evening, 5th inst., and for the afternoon session we suspended our usual study and substituted that portion of the Sixth Volume dealing on that subject. So simply and beautifully was the subject explained that a blessing came from reading it, even without studying, as time did not permit of our so doing.

All present seemed to realise that we had come to another milestone of our Christian journey, and were grateful to our Heavenly Father for another privilege of celebrating the solemn occasion, but still rejoicing in the fact of being called to the honour of being part of that loaf, to be broken with our dear Lord. I think of the Apostle in 2 Cor. 4 :15, 16, "All things are for your sakes," etc. Oh ! what a privilege to be called the sons of God, and to be joint-heirs with our blessed Lord, to all things. "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him"—happy thought.

In the evening 21 friends partook of the emblems, the service being conducted as usual with humility and reverence. The chairman made a few remarks as to why we took it yearly, and who were privileged to partake of it, and what the sacrifice of our Lord had made possible to us, even to laying claim to all our Heavenly Father's promises.

A Brother then gave an address reviewing the general meaning of the Passover as it was instituted to the Jews, tracing the relationship between the typical passover lamb and Christ, the Lamb of God our Passover, and saw in the firstborn of Israel passed over in that night, a type of the Church of the Firstborn, which God is passing over during this Gospel night. We saw that subsequently these firstborn ones became the leaders of Israel as a whole and their deliverers from Egyptian bondage, and that the antitype of that deliverance will be the ultimate deliverance of all who love God and who desire to serve Him, from the bondage of the world, of sin and of Satan, the antitype of Pharaoh. This ultimate deliverance would be during the Millennial Age, when the "Church of the Firstborn" will be associated with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom.

Then the Brother viewed the matter from the other standpoint, the secondary one, mentioned by the Apostle in 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, namely, that the entire church is one loaf, and that it is the duty and the privilege of all who have become members of the one loaf, the one Body of Christ, to be broken in the service of the Head, and in the service of each other, that thus we might have fellowship with Christ in His sufferings and ultimately be sharers in His glory. We saw that the cup of blessing is indeed our communion or fellowship in the blood (sufferings) of Christ, our mingling of our lives with His life, our joining with Him in "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."

We sought the understanding of the deep meaning of the beautiful symbol, and to have it in our hearts, a power of God, leading us to a keener appreciation of our dear Saviour, and a more earnest desire as His disciples, to walk in His footsteps. Then after a prayer of thanksgiving on the bread we partook of same. After this we gave thanks for the cup and partook of same, thanking God that by His grace we have been called to fellowship with Jesus, and that we may run our course with faithfulness and eventually be received to joint heirship with our Master in His glory, when we are partakers with Him of the joys of the Kingdom.

A home gathering is reported as follows :—Once again we kept the Memorial feast, when eight of us assembled around and claimed His promised blessing; our clear elderly Sister of 82 years entered into it with deep appreciation, and in prayer all who draw near in such reverence and thankfulness were

remembered.

The Brother who directed our little home gathering spoke most fittingly, reviewing the type as shown in the institution in Egypt which only reckonedly justified Israel from the annual sins, but in the antitype we saw that Christ our Passover Lamb's sacrifice was efficacious not only for individual, but also it broke the power of cancelled (Adamic) sin, and would lead us off as over-comers. And one Brother reviewed the Master's ministry during His last week on earth and exhorted us to "consider Him." It all was so impressive, and we wondered who of our little party may join Him before next time and entering the joy of the Lord, drink the wine anew with Him. We are sure the Lord would suit a blessing to each one celebrating this Feast of Love and thankfulness, and we go forward in the spirit of renewed consecration, realising the great privilege of son-ship.

Perth, Western Australia.

Last Sunday, 5th April, brought us together in the afternoon to study Exodus 12—the Passover in Egypt, and salvation of the firstborn. Then in the evening we observed the ordinance left us by the Lord, in memory of our Saviour's death, who gave Himself for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps. "Follow the Lamb whithersoever He may lead."

There were but sixteen present, and no doubt as we near the end of the call of the Church and the closing of the door of the marriage chamber, numbers are likely to grow smaller on this side of the veil as the antitypical temple of living stones is being completed at the other side. We rejoice, however, in the thought that when the Kingdom is set up, and the pure language—the truth--turned to the people they will all turn to the Lord with one consent and all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest.

A brief report of another gathering states :—We had a good meeting on the fifth of the month. We were all there, fourteen being present. • Brother presided, and it was a heart-searching time. I think we all resolved to try and do better in the year entered upon.

"Lord, I am Thine, entirely Thine, Purchased and saved by blood of Thine; With full consent Thine I would be, And own Thy sovereign right in me.

Thine would I live, Thine would I die, 'Be Thine through all eternity;

The vow is past beyond repeal,

And now I set the solemn seal.

Here, at the cross where flows the blood That bought my dying soul for God, Thee, my dear Master, now I call, And consecrate to Thee my all.

Do Thou assist Thy feeble one The great engagement to perform; Thy grace can full assistance lend, And on that grace I dare depend."

Correspondence.

The Berean Biblical Institute, . South Australia. Melbourne.

Dear Sir,—

I received the free literature safely, also your letter. Thanks very much for same. I was pleased to find someone continuing the good work on the same lines as the late Pastor Russell. I have the six volumes of Scripture Studies and was a subscriber to the “Watch Tower” for a few years before the Pastor’s death, but have since withdrawn my support as I consider its teachings unscriptural.

I am enclosing postal note for —. Please send me the book, “What Pastor Russell Said”—his answer to hundreds of questions.

I might say I am very interested in the Book of Revelation, and would like to know the price of the two volumes mentioned in “People’s Paper.”

With kind regards, Yours sincerely,

Berean Biblical Institute. South Australia, 20th April.

Dear People,— -

I write once again to trespass on your generosity by asking you to forward to me pamphlets entitled ‘Perplexed Humanity’s Only Hope’ and “Do the Dead Know Anything: Where Are They?”

I am very pleased with what I have already received. They are very interesting. Thanking you in anticipation,

Most respectfully,

Dear Brethren,— Queensland, 19/4/36.

Please find enclosed and please renew our subscriptions to the “Herald” and “People’s Paper” for twelve months, and the balance to be used as you wish.

We received your good letter of November, 1935, also; I have been away from home working, but I’m one of the unemployed again.

Yes, we are being tested along the lines of the truth, and the “many” are losing their “first love.” But the Lord knew that at the end it would be just the few that go in to the “marriage of the Lamb.” We rejoice with you that we are “able to stand” in His strength alone, and are “more than conquerors” by His kind favour; like Bro. Peter, “to, whom shall we go?” We do not seem to have to travel far ere we cross the wilderness of confusion, so let us hear each other up, until we meet Him, “whom having not seen we love,” in glory and beauty arrayed.

We conclude now, and with love to the Melbourne Church. Your Brother and Sister.

New South Wales, 21st April, 1936. Dear Brother,—

Greetings in the name of our dear Redeemer.

Enclosing for our Lord’s work, and the balance to pay for the “Herald” and “P. Paper,” and also would you send me a little book—“God and Reason”? It is just lovely, and I want this one to give away.

We have be-en away for some months, and one place we went to was a very lonely spot near the ocean, something like where we live. So while we were talking to an elderly man, and another man with him, well educated, to my great joy we found they were followers of what Brother Russell taught, and had been for over thirty years, and had attended the Class in Melbourne. He is very poor, and only has the “Studies,” so I want the book for him; I have plenty of “P.P.,” and will pass on the “Heralds.”

Unrest seems to be gathering quickly, and yet the people seem in the dark, and no doubt some prefer it—the gaiety is their idol.

Hope you and Sister are quite well; with kind regards, Your Sister in the One Hope.

Dear Brother,— Perth, West Australia. You will be glad to hear of the good meetings we have had here. The first began by a Baptism Service at the river side. This was about 10.30 a.m. in the morning, and a nice little company gathered for the occasion when a Brother and Sister thus symbolised their “baptism into Christ”—”Into His death.”

All seemed to get a blessing in again having brought to our minds just what our consecration means.

In the afternoon we had the study on the Holy Spirit, as dealt with in the Fifth Volume of the Studies, and in the evening a talk on “We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

It is a happy little Class, holding firmly to the present truth, just seeking to build each other up in the faith and encourage one another in the way. They each exercise their minds and that seems so necessary in this day (Heb. 5:11, 12), when we must individually stand the tests of all sorts of questions, theories and false doctrines, etc. Spoon feeding may do a little while for babes, but we must develop and have our senses exercised to discern both truth and error. With Christian love to you both,

Yours in Christian Fellowship.

Friends desiring to communicate with this office by telephone may now do so direct by calling Hawthorn 6251. While we are in attendance for the greater part of each day, the following hours are recommended for telephone calls:—Between 9 a.m. and 10.30 a.m.; and from 3 p.m. till 5.30 p.m.; or by arrangement.

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