PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
UNDENOMINATIONAL • A RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIX MELBOURNE, MARCH 1956

Passover in Type and Antitype.

"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."-1 Cor. 5:7, 8.

THE Passover ceremonies, the first institution of Divine favour with the nation of Israel, prefigured the first institution of Divine favour inaugurated by our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Communion. As the Apostle indicated in our text, the Jewish Passover was a foreshadowing, or typifying of the better things, the real Passover, with which we Christians have to do. We are not wholly dependent upon the Jewish type for our information, however; for we have clear, Divine statements by our Lord and His Apostles respecting the relationship between Christ and His Church and respecting the special salvation of the Elect. Nevertheless, we find in the Passover type many details which assist us greatly in the understanding of the Antitype.

First of all we should notice that the Passover directly affected only the first-borns of Israel, although it indirectly affected all the remainder of Israel. That is to say, the last plague upon Egypt was the death of all their first-borns; and the Passover celebrates the fact that the first-borns of Israel were spared, or passed over, by the destroying angel in that night. As the younger children of the Egyptians were not endangered, neither were the younger children of the Israelites. Hence the latter were not passed over; yet they were certainly interested in the passing over, or sparing, of the first-borns, not merely because of their relationship, but because in the Lord's providence those first-borns became leaders and deliverers of the people on the next day, as they went forth from Egypt.—Num. 8:17, 18.

Furthermore, those first-borns of Israel, exchanged by Divine direction for the entire tribe of Levi, were thereafter represented in them; and they, as the sacrificing priests and the teaching Levites, became the ministers of the Law Covenant for that nation. The anti-type of this was distinctly pointed out by the Apostle Paul; namely, that the elect Church of this Gospel Age is "the Church of the Firstborns, which are written in heaven." These are to be the "able ministers of the New (Law) Covenant."—Heb. 12:22:2 Cor. 3:6.

These first-borns are being dealt with during this Gospel Age, or "night". These alone are in danger of a death penalty. As the Apostle declares, if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for our sins, but a certain fearful looking for ofjudgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour us as the adversaries of God and of righteousness. (Heb. 10:26, 27.) Nevertheless, the whole world of mankind is certainly interested in this Church of the First-borns, in its successful passing over, its attainment of everlasting life; for these are the Royal Priesthood and the

instructors of the New Covenant, which is shortly to be sealed, and by the terms of which all the families of the earth are to be blessed. All mankind will receive the blessing of reconciliation to God through the knowledge of the truth and through the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom, associated with the New Covenant.--Jer. 31:31-34.

Having noted the first-born class, we should discern clearly also the Passover lamb, through the merit of whose blood the passing over of the first-borns was effected. The lamb is a peculiarly innocent animal, wholly unprepared for defence or resistance, and thus a suitable picture, or type, of our Lord, who was non-resistant and who fully and freely surrendered His rights and His earthly interests on our behalf—on behalf of the First-borns. True, others than the Firstborns will ultimately profit by His sacrifice, but these especially and peculiarly so. Thus far God's only dealings during this Gospel Age are with this class. These alone have an Advocate with the Father —Jesus Christ the Righteous. (1 John 2:1, 2.) These alone thus far are reconciled to God.

All of God's blessings to the unbelievers must come in the future under the New Covenant; for only believers can be justified by faith and receive the blessings of the Faith Covenant —the Abrahamic Covenant. "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," first saves, or passes over, the Church of the First-borns, and later in the Millennium will bless all who become Abraham's seed.

There are pictures of the Church which represent her as participating with the Lord in His sacrifice; but this Passover type is not one of these. The Passover lamb represented our Lord Jesus Christ as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29.) But the sin of the world has not yet been taken away. Our Lord has not yet applied His merit for the world, but only and expressly for the Household of Faith. In another sacrifice, which represents our Lord and the Church conjointly sacrificing, as Head and members, the body of the animal was cut into various pieces and laid with the Head upon the altar, thus typifying Christ Jesus as the Head and the Church as His members, (Exod. 29:15-18.) But provison was made that the Passover sacrifice was not to be divided. It was to be eaten whole—not a bone was to be broken. It represented, not Christ and the Church, but Christ alone in His sacrifice.—Exod. 12:46; John 19:36.

Be it remembered that the passing over took place in the night, not in the daylight. When the morning arrived, the Israelites went forth out of the land of Egypt to liberty, to freedom from bondage. But during the night they were still in bondage, waiting for the deliverance which could come only after the passing over of the first-borns. That night of the type represented this Gospel Age.

This same thought is given by our Lord when He says, "Let your light so shine before men"; again, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." (Matt. 5:15, 16.) The Apostle Peter expresses the same thought, saying, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light That shineth in a dark place, until the Daydawn and the day star arise in your hearts." (2 Pet. 1:19.) Again, the Prophet, speaking of the Church, says, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."—Psa. 119:105.

Numerous other Scriptures refer to the new Millennial Dispensation as the Morning in which the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His beams, and in which the shadows of superstition and works of darkness shall all be driven away. The appropriateness of this figure must be evident to every reasonable mind. God's people are children of the Day in the sense that their hopes and sentiments belong, not to the darkness of sin, not to the night-time but to the Day, to the Reign of Righteousness, for which they are praying, "The Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Eighteen centuries ago our Lord said that He had come as a Light into the world, but that men loved

darkness rather than light. (John 8:12; 3:19-21.) Only a few yet recognise Him as “the true Light.” But eventually He will “lighten every man that cometh into the world.” (John 1:9.) Indeed, His Church are invited to become associated with Him as lamp-bearers; and if faithful in • permitting their light to shine now, they will by and by be parts of that great Sun of Righteousness which shall heal the world with its beams. Our Lord pointed this out in the parable of the Wheat and the Tares. He declared that in the end of this age He would gather the wheat into the barn; and that then should “the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.” (Matt. 13:43.) Alas, that so few have “an ear to hear” and accept the wonderful teachings of the Divine Plan!

The Israelites were instructed that the blood of the lamb must be sprinkled on the doorposts and the lintels of their houses that night. This indicated that all who would belong to the Household of Faith must believe in the precious blood of Christ, and thus be “justified by faith” irrespective of denomination. To believe thus would make us members of the Household of Faith; but it would not determine whether or not we would be of the First-borns. The Very Elect, the Saints, the Royal Priesthood, have this place of seniority in the Household of Faith—not by reason of natural years, but by reason of spiritual development. They are priests, elders, in the sense of their primacy of development in the character-likeness of their Redeemer, which also indicates their faith and obedience.

We cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that this is the Scriptural teaching. We are not merely to believe that Jean’s lived, that Jesus died. We are especially to believe that He died SACRIFICIALLY, “the Just for the unjust,” and are to accept our share of the redemption which He secured by His precious blood. The sprinkling of the blood upon the doorposts in the type implied public confession of the precious blood of the Lamb of God, in His death and in its efficacy for us, which is thus signified.

It will be remembered that the Israelites were enjoined against going out of the house during the night; for when the Lord would pass through to smite the Egyptians, He would see the blood upon the lintels and doorposts, and would not suffer the destroying angel to come into their houses. (Exod. 12:1-3.) The injunction that those under the door sprinkled with blood should not go out from under it during that night had special application and force with respect to the first-borns. Antitypically it signifies that if any of us who are of the first-borns should go out from under the blood, in the sense of denying the merit, the efficacy, of the blood of Jesus, the penalty of such a course would be death—the Second Death—hopeless extinction.—Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-31.

As the blood of the lamb marked the household of faith, not merely the first-borns of that household, so the eating of the lamb was not merely for the first-borns, but for all the household. So our Lord said, “My flesh is meat indeed”; and again, “This is the Bread which came down from heaven; he that eateth of this Bread shall live forever.” (John 6:55, 58.) In other words, not only was it necessary that Jesus should die, a meritorious sacrifice, but it is also necessary that all who would have profit from His sacrifice must feed upon Him —must appropriate the merit of His sacrifice.

The eating of the lamb pictured, or typified, the appropriation, by the Household of Faith, of those earthly rights and interests which were forfeited by Adam’s disobedience and redeemed by Jesus’ death. In other words, it signifies our appropriating justification from sin. We eat by faith, and therefore are said to be “justified by faith.” By faith we are permitted to count ourselves as fully reinstated in God’s favour through the merit of Christ’s sacrifice, even as we were debarred from Divine favour through the demerit of Adam’s sin. The eating of the lamb signifies the appreciation of these things and the appropriating of them to ourselves. The more we eat, the greater is our feeling of satisfaction in respect of our freedom from condemnation and our reinstatement in Divine favour through the merit of our Passover Lamb.

Year by year for more than sixteen centuries the Jews kept the Passover by, Divine decree—not merely the sacrifice of the lamb and the eating of it on the same night, after the doorposts had been sprinkled with

blood, but additionally a feast of seven days following. That Passover feast represented the joys and rejoicings, the blessings and favours of relationship to God, based upon the merit of the Passover lamb—its sacrifice and the eating thereof. Yet the Jews understood not the meaning of what they did. It was not necessary that they should understand. When God's due time came, the explanation would be granted.

That due time came on the night in which our Lord was betrayed—the night of the fourteenth day of the first month, the very night of the typical killing of the Passover lamb. The Master gathered about Him His twelve Apostles. They had their usual Passover supper of roast lamb; and afterwards our Lord introduced what we familiarly term "The Lord's Supper" —a new symbolization of the anti-typical Passover.

What our Lord introduced was to take the place of the Jewish ceremony with His followers, to carry out the same thought, but on a higher plane, as representing a clearer, better understanding of the matter. Instead of the lamb would be the unleavened bread, representing our Lord's flesh. This He distributed to His Apostles, saying, "This is My body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me." (Luke 22:19.) The eating of that unleavened bread represented their appropriating to themselves of the merit of Christ's sacrifice —their justification by faith.

Then our Lord added a new feature — "the cup." For while all might partake of the bread, might realise justification through the merit of His sacrifice, yet only a certain class of believers were invited to partake of the blood. The cup represented death. Ordinarily, under the Jewish Law, the partaking of blood would represent blood-guiltiness, or responsibility for the death. (Lev. 17:10-14.) But our Lord gave His disciples fruit of the vine as symbolic of His blood; and He urged upon them its appropriation, saying, "This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you, and "for many." "Drink ye all of it."—Luke 22:20; Matt. 26:27, 28.

This invitation to drink of His blood signifies a participation with Christ as His members in a sacrifice of earthly life, earthly interests, hopes, aims, ambitions—everything. All who accept this invitation to drink of His blood thereby pledge their lives in the same service for which He gave His life. This thought is entirely additional to anything in the Jewish Passover type. There is no intimation that any of the household were to partake of the blood of the slain lamb. Nevertheless we who now accept our Lord's proposition to share in His blood and lay down our lives with Him in defence of the Truth, thereby mark ourselves as elder brothers in the Household of Faith, members of the First-borns with our Lord, our Redeemer, and as prospectively the Royal Priesthood.

Therefore whoever intelligently partakes of the Memorial Supper thereby indicates two things: (1) His faith in Jesus as the Passover Lamb, and his appreciation and participation in the merit of Jesus — his justification by faith; and (2) his membership in the Body of Christ, all the members of which agree to be broken — membership in that "little flock" whose faithfulness is manifested by drinking of the Master's cup—sharing with Him in His sacrifice, suffering with Him in order to reign with Him."-1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

Passover Memorial, 1956

The anniversary of the institution of the Memorial of our Lord's death falls this year on the evening of Sunday, 25th March; after sundown on this date will therefore be the appropriate time to observe the Lord's Supper by the true followers of the Master.

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

Memorial Services.

Melbourne.—Sunday, 25th March, at 7 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide.—Sunday, 25th March, at 6.45 p.m., at Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide.

Sydney.—Sunday, 25th March, at 7 p.m., at 87 The Boulevarde, South Strathfield. (Visitors should leave Strathfield_ Station on the left side coming from the city, and 87 is on the right of Boulevarde, only 10 minutes walk, or the 4th bus stop from the station.)

Perth.—Sunday, 25th March, at 5.30 p.m., at The Literary Institute, 1st Floor, Corner Hay and Pier Streets, Perth.

Adelaide Easter Convention.

The brethren of the Adelaide Class wish to announce that their Easter Convention is to be held this year, D.V., commencing on Good Friday, 30th March, and continuing till Easter Monday evening, 2nd April. The gatherings will be held in the Builders and Contractors Rooms, 17 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, and all friends able to attend this Convention are cordially invited to do so. Further information is procurable from the secretary—Mrs. H. Bartel, 10 Winston Avenue, Clarence Gardens, Adelaide, S.A.

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy." —Most helpful explanation of this timely subject, 50 pages, paper cover, price 9d.; 6 copies for 4/-.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 4/6 (85 cents) per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne, Victoria Australia

Spiritual Mindedness.

"To be spiritually-minded is life and peace.—Rom. 8:6.

ABILITY to understand the Scriptures, to talk fluently upon them, and to expound them clearly is a qualification which we think should follow in the wake of spiritual-mindedness; but some might be able to expound Scriptures very well, and to express truths in very good form, who are not necessarily very spiritual-minded.

To be spiritually-minded is to have a mind in harmony with the spirit of God, and fully surrendered to the Divine will — fully consecrated to the Lord.

In Rom. 8:6 the Apostle uses the expression "spiritually - minded" in describing a certain class who have become followers of Christ, who have made a full consecration of their lives to the Lord, and who, in harmony with this consecration, have been begotten of the holy spirit. These are spiritually-minded. These are granted a spiritual insight into Divine things.

This was true of our Lord Jesus. Having left the glory which He had with the Father, and having humbled Himself to take the human nature, He was found in fashion as a man. We read that He was not imperfect man, but "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26.) Yet with all these special qualities He did not have the spiritual mind to which the Apostle has reference. Our Lord had a mind such as Adam had before the fall—a mind in perfect harmony, perfectly balanced. Our Lord received the spiritual mind, however, at the moment when He was begotten of the spirit, when He made full consecration at baptism, and as a consequence the holy spirit descended and lighted upon Him in bodily form like a dove.

Following that begetting, the Lord had an enlargement of understanding, and was granted to see certain deep things of God which He had not seen before His consecration; so we read in that connection that "the heavens were opened to Him — the higher things became clear to Him — the more spiritual things, the things St. Paul calls "the deep things of God." "The natural man," St. Paul says (the natural man would be a perfect man; fallen man is imperfect, unnatural), "receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14.) Then he proceeds to say that we have received the spirit of God through the begetting of the holy spirit; and that, having the new mind—this spirit begetting—we are enabled to understand the deep things of God.-1 Cor. 2:11, 12.

So, then, the one who has been begotten of the holy spirit is spiritually-minded. He sees things from the new standpoint which God specially brings to the attention of the spirit begotten. As the Apostle John says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye all know it." (1 John 2:20.) Whoever receives this begetting of the holy spirit, this anointing, has an understanding of heart and mind which is different from that which any natural man would have, a quality that will progress with him. He has the privilege of growing in grace and in knowledge and in the appreciation of the deep things of God; and he should grow. The apostles Peter and Paul explain (1 Peter 2:2, 3; Heb. 5:13, 14; 6,

1, 2) that one thus begotten of the spirit of God is at first only a babe, and, as a babe, should desire the sincere milk of the Word the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; but as he goes on he should feed upon the strong meat of God's Word and desire more and more to tell forth the blessings which he has received from the Lord.

It has been noted that some who speak with stammering lips have sometimes accomplished wonderful things, while some with a great deal of eloquence have failed to obtain the same results. The victory is not always to the strong nor to the swift; for the Lord may grant His blessing to the feebly spoken word,

particularly if the whole life be in harmony with the message given out.

Sometimes those who have apparently considerable understanding of spiritual things in the sense of being able to tell about them, do not always give evidence in their lives that they really have the spirit of the Lord. Sometimes in their lives there is that which is contradictory. We should bear n mind that whoever speaks the words of the Lord with his mouth should uphold it in his every act, word and thought in private life, as well as in public. The Truth should be the standard, and we should daily live in conformity with it.

Peace and Goodwill.

(Convention Address)

THROUGHOUT many centuries the Christmas season of the year has been set aside as an occasion for special celebrations, and the sending of greetings and gifts to one another by the peoples of the earth. Christians alone understand the true significance of these celebrations — that it is not an occasion for revelling and drunkenness, but rather a time for sober reflection and joy as our minds traverse back to that great Gift, and the Giver of that Gift over nineteen centuries ago. We realise that He, who, in God's plan and purpose was destined to be the Saviour, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, was transferred from a spiritual to an earthly existence and nature, and those who bore witness said, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14.)

They beheld the glorious perfections of His manhood. Others wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth, and said, "Never man spake like this man." Is it any wonder that His introduction to the human family, a race of condemned and dying sinners in a hopeless condition, was heralded by an angel. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. . . A Saviour is born, which is (destined to be) Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10, 11.) Then, with great enthusiasm the angelic host burst suddenly into song of praise and good will—"Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will toward men."

This good news and the power to accomplish salvation for mankind was centred in that tiny Babe 'n the Bethlehem manger. He was born to be a Saviour and a King. In prospect He was the long expected Christ, the Messiah, the King of kings. Jehovah's government would be upon His shoulders; that which was foretold was now on the way to fulfilment. (Isa. 9:6, 7.)

Towards the close of our Lord's ministry, when the position seemed utterly hopeless from a human standpoint, the question was put to Him when He stood bound before an earthly ruler of this world—"Art thou a king then?" Jesus replied, "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should witness unto the truth, (unto this truth)". What a favour it is for us to proclaim this same message and bear witness to this truth also, even though the world is now filled with gloom and foreboding, with evil and calamity, and cannot appreciate, as yet, the Kingship of Christ.

The human family is threatened with destruction by the development and stock-piling of devastating weapons of war by the angry nations that control the human family. The driving force toward this disaster is the fear and distrust between nations, not good will toward men; and the more we know of the world, the less hope there is of peace and good will through human governments. Hence, the Scriptures represent the powers of this world as great and terrible beasts, absorbing wherever possible the peoples of smaller nations into their systems of governments and empires.

In Daniel 7:1-8 a forecast of these world powers is given. These, as universal governments, have passed into history. (1) The lion with eagle's wings; (2) the bear with three ribs between its teeth; (3) the leopard

with four wings and four heads; (4) The fourth beast was so terrible and strong to behold that Daniel could not find a suitable name for it. It had iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces and trampled the residue underfoot, and it had ten horns. In other words, these represent the four great world powers ruling in succession during the Times of ‘ the Gentiles; namely, Babylon, Medo - Persia, Greece and Rome. The last mentioned was in power when our Lord was born, and Israel was subject to its universal rule.

All these ruled by God’s permission until the King of kings shall take His great power and brake in pieces the nations as a potter’s vessel, and rule the people with a rod of iron at first, which will be necessary because of the existing state of emergency, rebellion, confusion and anarchy, prevailing for a period during the closing days in the end of this age into which we have already entered.

Rev. 11:15-18 applies from this time forward—”And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. . . . Thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry and thy wrath is come, etc.” Because of the oppression, injustice and misrule of these empires, the Scriptures speak of humanity as a whole waiting and groaning in pain and bondage (Rom. 8:22), under one central authority and control—the unseen prince of darkness, Satan, the God of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2.) The Apostle John also says, “The whole world lieth in the wicked one.” (1 John 5:19, R.V.)

We need not wonder, therefore, that there is such appalling lack of peace and good will among men and nations. Only a dozen years ago it was denied that the world was becoming more wicked, the claim being that the people have ever been so, and that the evil deeds in our day are simply given more prominence in the daily papers. But now it is admitted that our days are more perilous, disorderly and godless than formerly. For instance, child delinquency is becoming a very acute problem, and is discussed in the press, radio and pulpit. These children are to be our future citizens, members of state and local governments. Are the prospects very bright for peace and good will among men, or that justice and truth will be given its place among society, communities and nations? No! However, the Scriptures are an authority on this matter, and in the beginning of the age accurately forecast the trend and prevailing conditions during the end of the age, which has now arrived. Long centuries ago, then, the Bible forecast our very days as a ,sign of the end of the age. See Tim. 3:1-7 —”Know this also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away . . . Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Note verse 5; all these characteristics are found where there is a form of godliness, an “appearance of religion.” Also verse 7 where there is an “ever learning but never able to arrive at a recognition of truth.” (Fenton.)

Note again a further description of the religious world of our day in 2 Tim. 4:3, 4—”For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts (desires) shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” Why has this state of affairs, these perilous days, come amongst us? Because the authenticity and inspiration of the Scriptures have been ignored or denied as something out of date in this modern age of achievement and learning. This is what Paul says— ”Sound doctrine cannot be endured,” because of selfish doctrines substituting teachings which tickle the ears—new ideas and schemes. With no hearing ear for the truth of God’s plan and purpose for suffering, perplexed and fearful humanity, the ear and mind is thus open to fables, falsehood.

There is a proverb which says, “There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” (Prov. 16:25.) In this instance the death of the spiritual; itching ears develop into deaf ears; learning has developed into ignorance of God’s Word—His times, seasons and methods. In our times these are known as modernists, as distinct from the fundamentalists. We may not look for peace and good will, nor even a message of glad tidings for all people from this quarter, even though many of these leaders are apparently very sincere. At most, they would promise that after an atomic war a few people may survive and later reorganise a society again; others are pessimistic and see only total destruction.

Neither can we get over the difficulty by translating our text, as is sometimes done —”Peace’ on earth among men of good will.” Have men of good will lived in peace during this age ? Consecrated Christians only are men of good will, and their peace is not physical, but a peace of heart, a spiritual peace based upon faith in the Lord and His promises. The Apostle Paul states in Phil. 4:7—”The peace of God shall garrison your hearts through Christ Jesus.” Jesus said to His followers—”In me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation.” And again, “A man’s foes shall be they of his own household.” (John 16:33; Matt. 10:36.) Paul further declares—”All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (2 Tim. 3:12.)

For centuries the Lord’s people were betrayed, afflicted, persecuted and killed by false Christianity — false Christs would rule over them. Christians do not expect to live in an atmosphere of peace and good will among men; neither do they expect this condition to be established on earth during this age. This can be verified by reading carefully our Lord’s great prophecy in Matt. 24, which describes conditions during the Gospel Age down to the time of His second advent. There would be wars and rumours of war, trouble and pestilence, famine, etc. These would not be a sign of the end of the age, but the beginning of sorrows, troubles and deceptions. Verses 4-6—”Take heed that no man deceive you.” Even though Jesus’ followers would not be popular He exhorts them—”Be not troubled.” Verse 9—”They shall kill you . . . and ye shall be hated of all nations for my sake.” The Christian’s life and environments are not peaceful but rather opposition from an unfriendly world is experienced.

Then the Lord goes on to give definite signs indicating when the end of the age arrives; for He arrives then also, and makes His presence known after arrival; but, as in Noah’s day the world “knew not,” so the same is true today—they know not this truth, that a change of dispensation is at hand. Nevertheless, the gleaming angelic message still glows in the midst of darkness—”I bring you glad tidings . . . to all people . . . a Saviour . . . peace .. . good will toward men.”

But is it the good will of men the angel refers to? Does it not mean the good will of God is now toward men in a way it had not been shown since the fall of Adam into sin and death ? The Scriptures put it in that light; for instance— ”The kindness and love (philanthropy) of God our Saviour appeared . . . . according to his mercy he saved us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.” (Tit. 3:4.) Also in 1 John 4:9 we read—”For this (in the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem) was manifested the love (good will) of God, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might be saved through him.”

In this Gift, the good will and love of God was revealed to man as it had not been previously, and peace with God was now attainable through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Is it any wonder the angels ascribe—”Glory (honour) to God in the highest.”

The mysteries of the types and shadows of the Law Covenant were soon to come to an end by fulfilment in the one efficacious sacrifice of His only Begotten Son--one offering, once for all men. This was indeed glad tidings. The good will of God toward men was there manifested, and angels rejoiced that permanent life-giving benefits would now come to the sin-stricken human family.

During the Gospel Age the good will of God is especially shown to the saints, the consecrated in Christ. These do not expect peace to prevail now among the nations, nor do they labour to that end. The Christian knows that the present confusion, discord, strife and wickedness will continue until the Prince of Peace takes control of the angry nations, and speaks to them through the operation of His mighty power. He will vex them in His sore displeasure, until thoroughly humbled; then they will be ready to learn war no more. Speaking through the prophet, the Lord says—

”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. For 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. 3:8, 9.)

In Isaiah 2:4 we also read—”He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

We see the angelic announcement of good tidings of great joy, of peace and good will toward men is a prophecy. It is the shape of things to come in the near future.

These things shall be; a loftier race
Than e’er the world hath known shall rise,
With flame of freedom in their souls
And light of knowledge in their eyes.

They shall be gentle, brave and strong
To spill no drop of blood, but dare
All that may plant man’s lordship firm
On earth and fire and sea and air.

Nation with nation, land with land,
Unarmed shall lip, as comrades free;
in every heart and brain shall throb’
The pulse of one fraternity.

The Creator has placed the fulfilment of these glad tidings of man’s salvation not upon our worthiness, effort or ability, but upon the sacrifice and worthiness of His own Son. “To you is born a lifegiver which is Messiah the Lord.” (See 1 Tim. 2:4-6.) There are many sincere consecrated Christians who long for the opportunity and time to engage in the world’s uplift, and to see definite results when justice truth and righteousness are enthroned permanently, and all ills, sorrows and wrongs corrected; when bad tidings give way to good tidings, when strife and discord give place to peace and harmony, and sin and death give place to obedience and life.

Dear brethren, these yearning hopes will not be frustrated. This Christmas message is the key—Christ, a Saviour, born to be a king. “The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.” And He will have associates--”If we are his children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.” (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12.)

The Lord is preparing us, training us, sanctifying us for this future work. Christ, our great High Priest, was touched with the feeling of human infirmities, weaknesses and disorders; so do we need to be touched with, afflictions, trials, corrections, discipline, in order to be sympathetic underpriests in the great work of the next age. Then the time to give gifts to men will have arrived, and they will receive them with

joy. “Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price.” “Therefore, with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” “And the spirit and the bride say, Come; let him that heareth, say, Come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.” (Isa. 55:1; Isa. 12:3; Rev. 22:17.)

This is indeed glad tidings of great joy to all. The angelic message will be applicable in a double sense—peace and good will of God toward men, and peace and good will among mankind. “The zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall perform this.” (Isa. 9:7.)

Correspondence..

Dear Brethren in the Lord—Please find enclosed cheque for sum of — for the work, preferably the Radio Fund.

That seems such an important part of the work, reaching the hearing ears with the wonderful message; I often wonder what response there is to it.

Have had occasion tc send your paper “Does the Bible teach Divine Healing for Today?” to a friend who wrote that she and her husband intended to attend Oral Roberts’ meetings in Sydney, and follow him to the Melbourne meetings, and expected a blessing. I find he is a Pentecostal. How natural that poor humanity longs to be cured of their many physical troubles, and how good to be assured that soon the desire of all nations will come.

I trust the Lord’s richest blessing will be on you both. With kindest regards; your sincere friend.

(From the response to the radio witness it is encouraging to know that many are appreciating the messages over the air from week to week. Supplies of various literature on the Scriptural teaching regarding Divine Healing are available free to all.—B.B. Insitute.)

The Secretary, Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sir—Enclosed please find my donation towards the Radio work. We continue to appreciate the message each Sunday morning, and we are sometimes surprised when mentioning the session to friends to find that they already listen and derive help from it. Yours sincerely, in Him we love.

Messrs. Frank and Ernest, Berean Bible Institute—Thank you very much for your generous sending of Biblical literature. Enclosed is 10/- (small as it is, though we know the value is not in terms of money). Everything you have mat me is most wonderfully interesting, and I have much to learn—seemingly I have everything to learn, and trust I may so do by the goodness of God and Jesus Christ our Saviour .. . Again thanking you for your valuable writings. Yours sincerely.