



Resurrection, Versus Immortality of the Soul

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that, he was seen of about five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time”—1 Cor. 15:3-8.

HERE we have the Apostle Paul’s confirmation that Christ has been raised from the dead. The apostle had seen the risen Lord in a miraculous way when he was apprehended on the Damascus road, so that he could give a vital witness to the resurrection of Christ in all his important ministry amongst the churches. Also in writing to the Corinthian church he declared—“Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?”—1 Cor. 9:1.

Apparently there were some in the church at Corinth who claimed “that there is no resurrection of the dead”, so Paul wrote further in this 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians from verse 12—“Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” We see here, Paul says that some of the Lord’s people in his day “are fallen asleep in Christ” which agrees with his statement in verse 6, that of the 500 brethren who saw the Lord after His resurrection, that “some are fallen asleep” in death.

The same Apostle Paul declared in 1 Thes.

4:14—“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” All who believe that the Apostle Paul was the Lord’s inspired teacher of the truth must surely agree that those whom he said were “**asleep**” in death were not living on in some other sphere when they departed their earthly life.

Where then does the teaching of “the immortality of the soul” fit into the Scriptures? It does not fit into the teachings of the Bible at all! And yet, most people in the denominations of Christendom today, from the Roman Catholic to practically every so-called Protestant denomination, believe in the immortality of the soul—meaning, that when a person dies, he only seems to die. Where did this teaching begin? It began in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve, as seen from Gen. 3:1-4—“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman (Satan using the serpent), Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.” That lie of Satan’s has been perpetuated down the centuries in every known heathen religion, and became incorporated in the teachings of Christendom apparently in the Dark Ages.

The fact that man was created a “living soul” and **not** that he **has a soul**, as a separate entity, is clearly revealed in Gen. 2:7, where we read—“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man **became a living soul**.” The union of the breath of life with the perfect human body created the living soul, or living being. When the breath of life leaves the human body at death, there is no longer a living soul, and man would have remained absolutely dead for all time, had God not provided a Redeemer, a Saviour, to give His life a ransom, or corresponding price for

Adam, and all mankind condemned to death in Adam. How beautifully this is explained by the Apostle Paul in Rom. 6:23, which reads—"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Life in the resurrection then is the **gift of God**, and not something that any of the human race have merited.

While thinking of the explanation of life in Genesis, two verses in Gen. 1:20 and verse 30 are most helpful. In verse 20 we read—"And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life" In the margin we find that the word "creature" is shown to mean—Hebrew "soul." In verse 30 we read—"And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life" In the margin the word "life" is shown to mean—Hebrew "a living soul." We thus see that the lower animals are just as much living souls as human beings, but God has not provided a further life, a resurrection, for the lower animals, as He has so graciously provided for His human family.

When considering man as a living soul, some people find difficulty in understanding Eccles. 12:7, which describes what happens at death—"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." This verse is not saying that the living spirit or soul returns to God, but rather that at the time of death when the body returns to dust, the breath of life, or spirit of life returns to God's keeping; then, in the resurrection day, it will be reunited with a created body by the power of God. Paul explains this beautifully in 1 Cor. 15:35-38—"Some one will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it (the personality) a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." In verse 37 "wheat" and "other grain" are used to picture different resurrection bodies; the "wheat" picturing the spirit bodies fitting for faithful Christians, and the "other grain" referring to the human, fleshly bodies provided for all mankind.

Turning to 1 Cor. 15:19, we read Paul's own true assessment of the present life without the hope of a resurrection—"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But he then continues triumphantly in verse 20—"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." This is a most revealing statement, showing that even Christ slept while in the death condition. This agrees with verse 4 of this same chapter, that Christ "rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

It may be asked how 1 Pet. 3:18, 19 can be harmonised with the above thought with reference to the time between Christ's death and resurrection. The Apostle Peter declared—"Christ

also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit. By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." Did our Lord do any preaching while He was in the death state for part of three days? How could He when He was dead? The words "went and" in verse 19 are not in the original, so our Lord did not go anywhere in death, but He did preach by His wonderful sacrifice in death, and then His being raised from the dead by the power of God, in the sense that "actions speak louder than words." To whom did our Lord's sermon in actions witness? To mankind in death? How could that be when all in death are "asleep", and **know, hear and see nothing?** Who were these "spirits in prison"? Verse 20 of this chapter 1 Pet. 3 explains—"Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah." From Jude 6 we also read about these "spirits in prison"—"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he (God) hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

These angels which "kept not their first estate", their spirit form, materialized in human form and married the daughters of men, producing a race of beings contrary to God's design. They were intended to materialize to help mankind only for a time, then return to spirit form. The race of beings not designed in God's plan produced by these wicked spirits, was undoubtedly Satan's scheme to create a race who would not die, to try and uphold his lie to Eve—"Ye shall not surely die." God had the Flood arranged in His plan to counteract the conduct of the disobedient spirits, and the race not of Adamic stock was destroyed and the spirits returned to spirit form, being restrained from further materialization to human form. So Christ "preached" to these spirits by His faithfulness unto death, and His reward to the Father's right hand; possibly His "sermon" will result in the repentance of some, if not all the "spirits in prison" in their judgment by Christ and the Church, as stated in 1 Cor. 6:3—"Know ye not that we shall judge angels"?

Continuing in 1 Cor. 15:21, 22 we see how clearly Paul presents the resurrection hope for all mankind—"For since by man (Adam) came death, by man (Christ) came also the resurrection of the dead"—the resurrection of **the dead**, not the resurrection of anyone alive in death. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

It is revealing and important to find also that the Greek word translated "resurrection"—Anastasis—carries the thought of "a standing up again", which for mankind implies a restoration to that which was lost in Adam—complete human perfection—to be gained by complete obedience to the laws of Christ's kingdom.

Further, for the Lord's own people who are

called into God's family during this Gospel Age by full consecration, the resurrection experience really begins in the present pilgrim way on earth. This is truly a lovely, thrilling experience and privilege, to be sure. The Apostle Paul explains this thought so helpfully in Phil. 3:10, 11—"That I may know him (Christ), and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." What a lovely thought—Knowing Christ and the **power of His resurrection now** in the present life. Our Lord's lovely prayer to the Father in John 17:3 expressed the same thought—"This is life eternal, that they (His true followers) might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent." To know God in this intimate, spiritual sense, is surely the desire of all like-minded with Paul who are partakers of the heavenly calling.

Again, we have the words of Paul to the Colossians in similar strain—"if ye then be risen with Christ, (in the spirit of your mind) seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God"—Col. 3:1-3. What a lovely, consoling thought—"Your life is hid with Christ in God." The same apostle expressed the spiritual life begun with Christ's true followers on earth in His message to the Romans—"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life"—Rom. 5:10. We see here Paul is not speaking of salvation being gained by Christ's sacrifice of life in death, but rather that being reconciled to God by faith in Christ, we shall be saved by His life, the Christ-life in us—"Christ in you in the hope of glory."

From the Epistle to the Romans we read again—"Therefore we are buried with him (Christ) by baptism into death (not water baptism); that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death (sacrificially), we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection"—Rom. 6:4, 5—attaining also to the immortality which our Lord received on proving faithful unto death. This gracious inheritance is expressed so clearly—"The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together"—Rom. 8:16, 17. Heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ is truly beyond our comprehension, but is sure of fulfilment to the faithful followers of the Master, by His grace.

Then, in 1 Cor. 15:23, all mankind are included in the general resurrection. First we have "Christ the firstfruits" who experience the "power of Christ's resurrection" now; then "afterward they

that are Christ's at his coming"—or the presence of His Kingdom time. And in Gen. 12:1-3 when God promised Abraham—"in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed"—that was a clear indication that all families of the earth would be resurrected. They would have to be resurrected to be blessed. This was repeated to Abraham in Gen. 22:15-18, after he had offered to sacrifice his son of promise, Isaac. There we also have recorded the two seeds of Abraham—"the stars of heaven"—picturing Christ's Church—"if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise"—Gal. 3:29. Also "the sand which is upon the sea shore"—picturing Abraham's earthly seed—and through both seeds, "shall all the nations of the earth be blessed", following their resurrection to life on the earth. Our Lord also referred to the wonderful faith of Abraham who felt assured that what God had promised would be sure of fulfilment, when He declared—"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it (by faith), and was glad"—John 8:56.

Another helpful illustration of the resurrection of mankind, including those in Jesus' day who so strongly opposed Him, is found in Luke 13:28, 29, where we read—"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye (opposers) shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." It will be noted that Jesus did not say you will also see Peter and John and James and the other apostles in that assembly, because He was referring to the earthly phase of the kingdom of God. Those who opposed our Lord at His first advent will be "thrust out" of the kingdom, so to speak, until they repent, in that resurrection day. The expression "sitting down in the kingdom of God" is a picture of pupils sitting at the feet of tutors, and what tutors Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the prophets will be as "princes in all the earth"—Psa. 45:16.

The Psalmist was also inspired to write about the resurrection day for all mankind in Psa. 102:19, 20—"The Lord hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death"—to open the prison-house of death. Again the Psalmist wrote of God—"Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night"—Psa. 90:3, 4. Here we have indicated the thousand years of the reign of Christ with His Church, to resurrect and bless all the obedient of mankind—Rev. 20:4.

From the prophet Ezekiel 37:11-14 we find a most revealing description of the resurrection day for Israel and all mankind to follow, in the

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Symbols of the Bible

THERE has been general appreciation of the thoughts expressed in the article in the last issue of "Peoples Paper" entitled—"Let Her be Covered." However, some further thoughts on the symbols used in the Bible to impress very important truths should also be helpful. All who study their Bibles know that the Lord has given us important symbols to represent very important teachings. For instance, the symbols of bread and wine to picture the Christians' participation with Christ in His sufferings and death. Likewise, the symbol of water immersion which pictures baptism into Christ's death. Apparently the Lord saw it would be wise to introduce these symbols as a means of impressing the vital truths of the reality in each case. The fact that these symbols are often used with less understanding and appreciation of their real meaning in some religious circles, does not detract from their value where they are used as the Lord intended—as symbols of very deep and vital realities in Christian worship.

When considering the symbol of a head covering for the sisters in the gatherings of the Lord's people, as outlined in the article—"Let Her be Covered"—there is a tendency for some friends to think this symbol is of lesser importance at some times than other symbols the Lord has seen well to include in His Word. For instance, some feel that at the Sunday gatherings in a public place it is fitting for the sisters to use the symbol of a head covering, but in other meetings in the homes of the brethren, this symbol need not be considered as of the same significance. This raises the question as to what constitutes a gathering of the Lord's church. It is helpful to find that the early church gathered in the homes of the brethren, as we have it recorded from the Apostle Paul in Col. 4:15—"Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is **in his house.**" See also Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19, etc. These assemblies in the homes of the brethren were surely as important as if they had been held in a public building, and truly were gatherings of the Lord's church. The same applies today, for wherever the brethren and sisters come together in the name and spirit of the Lord, that constitutes His church, where He has promised to dwell and bless the small or larger company—Matt. 18:20.

Another thought connected with the symbol of the head covering for the sisters, to show that they picture the Lord's church in the gatherings of His people, while the brethren picture the Lord, is that things of an outward nature are less important than the heart condition. That could well be, as based on the text—"man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart"—1 Sam. 16:7. When, however, the Lord Himself designs the outward symbols to be used in the services in His church, this surely indicates that He places real importance on such, when they are observed in spirit and in truth. So, while the natural man of the world may well look on the outward appearance of symbols only, the Lord looks on the heart condition which is reflected by the use of symbols to honor Him, and not for outward show of any kind.

Christ—The Resurrection and the Life

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live"—John 11:25.

HOW helpful it is to meditate upon our Lord's great victory over death, and to realise that His victory means victory also for all His faithful followers, and in due time victory for all the obedient of mankind in the Kingdom Age.

The lesson in John 11 is very beautiful and stimulating to us, especially in view of "the distress of nations with perplexity" in this end of the age. Let us picture ourselves back there with Jesus and His disciples. When Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, became ill, we read in John 11:3-5—"Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." It will be noted that the message to Jesus from Martha and Mary was not an appeal to Him to come quickly and heal their brother, but no doubt they had hoped that would have been the case, knowing that Jesus had healed many people up to that time by the power of God. Also by Jesus hesitating to return to Bethany to restore Lazarus to health showed no lack of sympathy on His part. He loved that family dearly, but by allowing Lazarus to die "the glory of God" would be manifested in a most outstanding manner.

From verse 11 we see that when Jesus became aware that Lazarus had actually died, His message to His disciples conveys a truth not clearly grasped by the majority of people today, including most church attendants—"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." The disciples thought that being asleep

would be beneficial for their sick friend. Jesus' answer from verse 14 is most enlightening—"Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him." The statement by Jesus—"Lazarus is dead"—could well be taken to heart by all who seek to know the truth respecting the departed. Our Lord knew that Lazarus had not gone to heaven, nor was he alive in some other realm. Martha was also well informed respecting her brother, when she said—"I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day"—verse 24.

When Jesus decided to return to Bethany after the death of Lazarus, the statement by Thomas—"Let us also go, that we may die with him"—shows a lovely spirit of devotion to the Master. We hear very little about Thomas, but when Jesus spoke of returning to the danger zone, where the Jews had sought to stone Him—verse 8—the readiness of Thomas to accompany the Lord and die with Him if necessary is a lasting testimony to his faithfulness which does us good to contemplate.

When Martha met Jesus on His return to Bethany her words were—"Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died"—verse 21. Yes, if only Jesus had been on the spot! Now, Martha would reason, He had returned too late. Even the words of the Lord—"Thy brother shall rise again"—still left sadness in the heart of Martha, for in thinking of the resurrection day, that was a very long time ahead. So today, with even the Lord's people who know of the glorious resurrection hope, death of loved ones still leaves a grief to be borne with courage. We need to look forward with thankfulness to God that our Lord Jesus has conquered death, and the resurrection is assured for all mankind; therein lies the comfort for all the bereaved who exercise faith in our gracious Lord who has done all things well to compensate for the dread consequence of disobedience in the Garden of Eden.

The assurance of Jesus—"I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth (then) and believeth in me shall never die"—still left the loss of Lazarus touching deeply the hearts of Martha and Mary. We can well imagine how apprehensive Martha felt as we read verse 39—"Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he corrupteth: for he hath been dead four days." How lovely are the following verses—"Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." Here we see how closely Jesus was in communication with His heavenly Father; He knew that the raising of Lazarus would be "for the glory of God", and that God's power would accomplish this greatest miracle of His ministry. When He had thus spoken to His Father, "he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth." What an amazing miracle that was! It pictured the resurrection of all mankind—whether four days, four years, or four thousand years makes no difference to the Lord, when, in due time "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth"—John 5:28, 29.

It will be noticed in verse 25 of John II that Jesus said He was both "the resurrection and the life", and this definitely refers to the general resurrection for all mankind, for the resurrection is but the beginning of life for the world. Then must follow obedience to the laws of the kingdom to gain everlasting life. The prophet Hosea spoke for the Lord in proclaiming the hope of the resurrection—"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."—Hos. 13:14. The Lord will never repent (change His mind) in carrying out the resurrection of humanity, that they may then receive lasting life.

It will be realised that our Lord's words in this 11th chapter of John—"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth", and "Lazarus is dead"—describe the world of mankind in death, and not the Lord's true followers when they finish their pilgrimage in this harvest of the Gospel Age, for the Apostle Paul says of this class—"We shall not all sleep"—in death. What a wonderful hope is set before the Lord's people today, when their resurrection will indeed mean fullness of life immediately, as Paul stated again in Col. 3:4—"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." In the meantime the hope of this same class is expressed—"Christ in you, the hope of glory"—Col. 1:27.

The faithful Colossians were required to sleep in death until the harvest of the Gospel Age, and then Christ would be their "resurrection and life" so to speak, in the first resurrection, when the dead in Christ were raised first. The same would be true of the Apostle Paul himself, as he stated in 2 Tim. 4:8—"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

The Apostle Peter adds similar testimony to Christ being "the resurrection and the life" immediately to all faithful followers in the first resurrection in the harvest of the Gospel Age, in 1 Pet. 1:3-5—"Blessed be the God and Father of

our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." What a wonderful reservation is here expressed!

While the Apostles Paul and Peter knew they were required to "sleep" in death when they finished their earthly course, until the first resurrection, it is important to find that Paul was not desirous of being "unclothed" had that been God's plan for him, as he expressed—"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life"—2 Cor. 5:1, 4. This desire of the Apostle Paul seems to agree with the message John heard from heaven, as recorded in Rev. 14:13—"Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

So the Lord's faithful people today shall not be "unclothed" when they finish their earthly course, for Christ shall be to them "the resurrection and the life" immediately, because they shall not sleep in death, but shall be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." On the other hand for all mankind generally, Christ will give them resurrection to life, and later fulness of human life on the restored earth as they obey the laws of the kingdom. That the Church will be associated with Christ in giving resurrection and life to all mankind is revealed by the words of our Lord in Matt. 19:28—"Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration (the resurrection of all mankind) when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones (participate in the rulership), judging the twelve tribes of Israel." How thankful we are, then, that Christ is indeed "the resurrection and the life" first of all for His true followers of this Gospel Age for the spiritual inheritance, and also the great life-giver and restorer of the obedient of all the families of the earth, during the thousand years of His Kingdom.

Melbourne Christmas Convention

The brethren of the Melbourne Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend their Annual Convention to be held this year (D.V.) on December 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th, in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond. Further information from the Class secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 27 Redhill Avenue, Burwood East, Victoria, 3151.

Question Box

Question: Should Christians keep the Sabbath? In the "Peoples Paper" there is a good point in the "Question Box" recently, on page 6. I myself did not know the answer to the question on salvation. It is clear to me now after reading this article that there are two distinct salvations, a heavenly and an earthly salvation. This means some will live in heaven, and the rest of mankind upon this earth. Now I have the further question as above.

Answer: There are no Scriptures from our Lord in the Gospels, nor from the Apostles throughout the New Testament to teach that Christians should observe the sabbath day which was given by God to Israel as a "servant" class. The Apostle Paul explains the difference between the "house of servants" and the "house of sons" in Heb. 3:5, 6—"Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we (Christians) if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." It is helpful to remember that the sabbath was given to the servant class who lived prior to the time when the invitation was given for believers in the Lord Jesus to "present their bodies a living sacrifice" that they may be begotten of the spirit and become God's spiritual sons, in hope of the heavenly inheritance.

Throughout the Book of Acts we find many outstanding testimonies to the truth by the apostles and others—some to the Jews as a people; some to their rulers, some to civil rulers of the day; and some to Gentiles—but in none of these is there any mention whatsoever of seventh-day sabbath keeping.

One of the difficult issues which confronted the early Church was how to deal with Gentile converts to Christ who were seeking fellowship among Christians of Jewish birth. This issue became so serious that a conference of the apostles was called in Jerusalem at which the subject was discussed and conclusions reached—Acts 15:1-10. Here is the full statement of the apostolic edict which was sent out from that conference—"It seemed good to the holy spirit and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these **necessary** things, That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well"—Acts 15:28, 29. No mention was made about observing the sabbath day, yet this was the logical place to mention it if they did consider it to be an essential part of divine law which Gentile Christians should observe.

In Acts 20:27 the Apostle Paul is reported as saying that he had "not shunned to declare . . . all the counsel of God." In view of this it is helpful

to note that in all of Paul's epistles and sermons he omits to mention the necessity of keeping the seventh-day sabbath. From this we must assume that seventh-day sabbath keeping is not a part of the counsel of God for Christians. This is also understandable when we realise that Christians serve the Lord seven days in the week, and do not esteem one day above another in their service for the Lord and His cause. See Gal. 4:9-11; 5:1.

Correspondence

Dear Brother—Having been a subscriber to "Peoples Paper" for many years, I still continue to appreciate and look forward with joy and zest to receiving of same, and therefore desire to make known the fact that the last issue appealed to me most impressively. All the articles are choice and are most edifying and encouraging, being supported by Holy Scripture, especially the admonition from the Apostle Paul's extract from his epistle to the Church at Corinth. We would do well to earnestly heed his injunction along these lines, not only in the letter, but particularly in the spirit of truth. Trusting that all readers received as much profit and edification from all articles presented. I am, by His grace, your sister in the Blessed Hope.

Dear Sir—Please find enclosed \$2.00 being my annual subscription for the "Peoples Paper." I wish to thank you for forwarding such interesting reading during the past twelve months. I also have enjoyed listening to your broadcasts from 3 GL, and wish you both, Frank and Ernest, my kindest regards. Yours faithfully.

Dear Frank and Ernest—For the pleasure and knowledge I receive from you each Sunday morning, I search my Bible more. Carry on the good work. God's blessing be with you both. Yours in harmony.

Dear Frank and Ernest—I listened to your radio programme over the last two weeks and really enjoyed it. I've decided to accept your offer of the booklets "God's Plan" and "Day of Judgment." Thanks very much for them. I'm presently in jail and I would appreciate any other literature you may have "laying around."

Once again thank you. I'm praying daily for our Lord to bless your efforts and I know He answers our prayers, so keep up the good work. Yours faithfully; God bless.

Dear Frank and Ernest—We continue to listen each Sunday evening to 3 NE with great pleasure and tremendous interest to your interpretation of the various subjects. Thank you for the "Peoples Paper" received in recent times. I particularly enjoyed the article "Let Her be Covered." For other literature and the booklet sent previously, I was

most grateful. My husband would like the booklet to study "The Judgment Day" to which we listened, and if you could spare a copy of "Hope Beyond the Grave" for me, I would like to have it also. With best of blessings. Sincerely,

Dear Sir—I am interested in your "God and Reason" booklet, so could you please send me a copy. I read your advertisement in an old copy of "New Idea" . . . If it doesn't cost any extra could you please send me two copies, one for a friend. Thanking you.

It was very kind of you to take the service for Mother. It was a very comforting one, which I know she would have liked. In the difficult passages we have, Mother always had great help from her faith. I attach a small cheque as donation to your Institute. Yours sincerely.

Berean Bible Institute, Dear Sirs—Please find enclosed bank note \$2.00, to cover my subscription to "Peoples Paper." This should have been paid last December but owing to illness the matter was quite overlooked, which I sincerely regret. The "Paper" has been coming to hand, and I enjoy reading the helpful contents of same. Yours faithfully.

Character Development

A GREAT thing to develop in life is character. This is the peculiar quality which distinguishes one man from another, or something that permeates his whole being, prompting him and guiding him in all things. Character is structural, and may be likened to a house, the building of which demands many things, first design. Successful characters are never developed haphazardly, they always show a sequential purpose and plan in the mind. The seed of character is thought. If we sow a thought we reap a word; if we sow a word we reap an action; if we sow an action we reap a habit; if we sow a habit we reap a character. Therefore, it is essential that whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report, think on these things.

One of the outstanding charming values of Christianity is that it presents to us a perfect character design. A flawless example of whom Pilate had to say, "I find no fault in Him at all." No sensible man will neglect that perfect life, that pattern character. Having decided on the design, there is the site to consider, though perhaps not to choose. Only a few can choose the site of their activities, the place where they can live and work, but the beauty of character-building is that it is often done best under the least helpful conditions, just as the sweetest