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## Why Does God Seem to Favour Some People More Than Others?

(This Article Published by Request)

“And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest: but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee”—Heb. 5:4, 5.

REVIEWING the opening verses of the 5th chapter of Hebrews, we see that the honour no man was to take unto himself was that of Israel’s high priest. Aaron was especially called of God, or favoured of God, for that important office, being typical of course of Christ, who also honoured not Himself to be made a High Priest, but was highly favoured by His Heavenly Father.

As a background to Aaron being called or favoured of God for service we have helpful records in Exodus chapters 4; 7; and 28; where God instructed Moses—”And take unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office”—Exod. 28:1. Aaron is also called “the saint of the Lord” in Psa. 106:16. It may be asked why God favoured Aaron? First, because he was worthy. Also he was a Levite, of the children of Israel, with Abraham as a forefather. And God had chosen Israel to be His particular and typical nation.

Following on God’s wonderful covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, we have a comprehensive statement respecting Israel in David’s psalm of thanksgiving in 1 Chron. 16:13-17—”O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones. He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth. Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; and hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant.”

That the Lord continued to recognise Israel as His favoured people down the centuries to Jesus’ first advent is evident from the fact that He sent John the Baptist to call Israel to repentance, that they might more readily accept their Messiah at the appointed time. Jesus was six months younger than John the Baptist, thus allowing those few months of ministry by John, previous to Jesus being baptized and commencing His ministry at thirty years of age.

In John 1:6-17 we have a record respecting John the Baptist, and Jesus. In verse 11 we read—”He came unto his own (His own people, Israel) and his own received him not”—as a people, as a nation. That Israel belonged to God, to whom Jesus was sent, is evident when Jesus declared on appropriate occasions—”I am not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Early in our Lord’s ministry, He began to find the “lost sheep” who were worthy to be favoured, “to be called of God as was Aaron.”

Following on in John's Gospel 1, we have an account from verse 35 of John the Baptist introducing two of his disciples to Jesus, showing clearly that John knew his mission was to prepare those disciples who were worthy, to learn from Jesus what was required for discipleship in the Christian way. See verses 35-37. John was introducing his own disciples to Jesus as though to say, There is the Lamb of God, follow Him—"And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." From verse 40—"One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." To be able to detect that Jesus was the Messiah after a few hours of teaching from Him (see verse 39—"they abode with Him that day"), shows they were worthy of being favoured with His truth, of being "called of God, as was Aaron."

The next day Jesus had a similar experience with two more men of similar disposition to Andrew and Peter.

"The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me ... Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith Unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph"—verses 43, 45. What a lovely experience that must have been for those disciples! We note how the record reads—"Jesus **findeth Philip**"—"Philip **findeth Nathanael**, and saith, We have **found Jesus**." We realise these "findings" were not accidental. Philip and Nathanael were just waiting to be "found"; they were yearning and longing no doubt for Jesus' message of truth, and when they were found they realised from the heart that they had found Jesus. We can understand at once why those disciples were favoured of the Lord more than Israelites in general at that time. And the Lord is still "finding" Philips and Nathanaels, and Marthas and Marys, who are in the right heart condition to be found. And when they are **found by Jesus** they also realise that they have **found Jesus**.

We notice in this lesson that Nathanael was cautious when he heard Jesus called "Jesus of Nazareth." "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" he asked. Philip's answer was a worthy one—"Come and see." That is the message we can offer people who are cautious. Taste and see that the Lord and His message is good. See verses 47-49. "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, whence knowest thou me? Jesus answereth and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." It has been said that in those days the fig trees had branches right down to the ground; they were almost like a tent. Nathanael had been under the fig tree praying, and the Lord knew, and that was something that impressed Nathanael at once—here is a man who knew what I was doing even when he could not see me. Nathanael's response was—"Rabbi, thou art the Son of God! thou art the King of Israel." To which our Lord replied—"Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these." No doubt Nathanael would see the wonderful truths of the heavenly calling, and would accept them from the Lord's hand and rejoice indeed, as one "called of God as was Aaron."

While we have this lovely record of Jesus finding His disciples, and they feeling they had found Jesus, it was no doubt necessary that their faith and confidence in Jesus and His teachings should be consolidated. Luke 5:1-11 is helpful here. It has been suggested that this incident in Luke 5 was almost twelve months after our Lord had commenced His ministry, and on this occasion Peter, Andrew, James and John, although previously "found" by Jesus, committed their lives fully to the Lord to be His constant and permanent disciples, to become "fishers of men."

We notice verses 1-3. Jesus was teaching the people out of Peter's ship. We can well assume the message would be about the privileges of discipleship. The disciples would hear this wonderful sermon which the Lord preached to the people up on the shore. He would speak to them about the favour of being called of God as was Aaron.

Then follows the haul of fish in verses 4-7 to impress the reality of the heavenly Father's power. To think they had been out all night and caught nothing, and the Lord tells them to put down their nets, and they caught such a haul that the two boats are filled and almost sinking. They would say, Who is this One whom we had found previously? Here is the Father's power operating. The Lord knew this miracle would clinch the hearts of those disciples once and for all. He did not hurry anyone into His ministry, but they were able to reason, and the spirit working quietly in them even before Pentecost, enabled them to say, Here is the One *we* will follow for the rest of our lives.

We see Peter's reaction in verse 8—"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." He was almost overcome

with this wonderful miracle. He did not feel worthy to associate with a Man who could do that sort of thing. Peter was overwhelmed as he thought of the amazing catch of fish, but the Lord knew Peter's heart, and said—"Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men." The Lord knew Peter would be a wonderful servant, one to be favoured above others, one to be honoured, "called of God as was Aaron." Verse 11 reads—"And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him." This does not mean they hastened away immediately with Jesus. Mark's account tells us that the boats were left in the care of Zebedee, the father of James and John, with the hired servants. The Lord would not expect them to neglect responsibilities. It would be necessary to make arrangements respecting the fish, and their business interests would have to be attended to in the partnership. But how clearly we see the reason for the Lord's favour being shown to these disciples above others, because they were worthy of being "called of God as was Aaron."

We read in Luke 9:57, 58—"As they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Why did Jesus present this picture to one who seemed so willing to follow Him? The Lord did not want anyone to think it was an easy undertaking to follow Him. He requires everyone to know that being a disciple is a solemn undertaking, so that from the heart people will present their lives to Him and become real followers. "I will follow thee." "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head"—that is, no place of His own; He had no possessions of His own, no headquarters for His ministry. But the Lord found dwelling places. Israel was God's covenant people, and there were homes in Israel that delighted to have the Lord with them, because His blessings were upon them. We think of the home at Bethany, with Lazarus, Martha and Mary. What a privilege it was to invite the Lord and His disciples to dwell with them, and receive the blessings at His hands. But He had nowhere to lay His head of His own possession. *We* must not presume that the Lord was compelled to sleep out in the open, though possibly He may have done that with His disciples in favourable weather. However, there were no doubt many dwellings that received the Lord wholeheartedly, and the compensation through His blessings upon them would be very much appreciated. In explanation of the sacrifice required for a follower of the Master, we read His words in Luke 9:23—"If any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." If anyone feels invited, has been thus honoured, let him take up his cross daily and follow the Lord. Jesus needed to put these propositions before all His disciples, and the same applies to all who would follow Him today. *We* must see the privilege—not "must I", but "may I", sacrifice with the Lord. What a joy it is for those who realise the privilege of being favoured above others, to be invited into God's family.

From Luke 9:59, 60 we read—"And he said to another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." In this instance Jesus was not being hard-hearted and saying, you should not go to the funeral of your father. Rather, He was saying, Your elderly parent maybe needs much care, there could be years of old age still ahead. The Lord, knowing the circumstances of the family, was apparently implying that others in the family could well care for the aged parent—"Let the dead bury their dead"—let those who belong to the world look after the aged one. You, who could well preach the gospel, should grasp the privilege, and not delay in preaching the kingdom of God.

Verses 61 and 62 of this same chapter of Luke state—"Another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." What did the Lord mean here? This one seemed desirous to follow Him, but wanted to go and say farewell to relatives at home. Apparently this was not merely a handshake and goodbye. There was probably something more behind this farewell that would possibly detain him—he may lose his interest, lose the privilege of discipleship, by looking back on the things he was leaving behind and long for them. The Lord could detect the minds of those who wished to follow Him. "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." To be detained along the lines of earthly things would be a hindrance to this one. No doubt in each of these accounts given in Luke 9 the Lord was showing the privilege of being favoured with the invitation to the heavenly kingdom, and it was to be appreciated above all else. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."

In Luke 17 the Lord gave a prophecy revealing the time in which we are now living, in the harvest of the Gospel Age, and showing what was expected of those who would be favoured with the harvest truths, that they may be

His people, united to Him as individuals, free from the errors of Babylon. Verses 34-37 of this chapter were given to promote a separation of the Lord's people from the systems of nominal Christendom in the end of this Gospel Age. Noting the context, we see in verse 34 the Lord reveals that a separation takes place respecting "two in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left." Some people who believe in the rapture theory take this literally. They think some will be snatched away bodily when the Lord comes—in the morning people will find that some have disappeared. But we do not think that is the Scriptural understanding of these verses. We think the Lord is speaking figuratively of this time of the harvest of the age. He uses the illustration of two in a bed—asleep in some creed system. One is influenced by the truths of God's Word and is attracted away from the erroneous creed, while the other slumbers on unaware of the one being favoured with the Lord's truths.

Verse 35 reads—"Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left." They are represented as preparing food—some form of religious service—and one is taken and the other left. One is favoured by being blessed with the satisfying truths of God's Word. The other, not able to appreciate beyond the milk of the Word, probably, grinds on, so to speak.

From verse 36—"Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Whether we take this to refer to the world, or the mission field, the outcome is the same—"one is taken, and the other left." Again the truths of God's Word do the separating. If anyone comes to the Lord to please father or mother, or whoever it may be, that is not necessarily God's calling. Each one must be individually responsible in hearing the Word of truth, applying it to their heart and rejoicing in it just as the disciples did when they were found of the Lord and said, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write." We must find Jesus in our own hearts, not because of someone else's opinion.

Verse 37—"And they answered and said to him, Where, Lord?" Where are these taken from the creed bed, from the grinding together and from the field? He said, "Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together." That seemed like a strange answer first of all. The Lord was saying—those that are taken are really keen-eyed, appreciative, alert like eagles. "Wheresoever the body is" —where the food is—"there the eagles will be gathered together." This "eagle" class pictures the keen-eyed and alert Christians who can detect and appreciate the Lord's food, from His storehouse of truth. "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." The truth is their very living; these are the ones favoured of God above others, because they have an appetite for spiritual truths.

The majority, not so favoured during this Gospel Age, are not forgotten by God. God's plan provides for every human being who has ever lived, so God is not selecting some to the detriment of others. But God is selective.

God has been selecting some in the ages past and in the Gospel Age. Later, we shall see that those not so favoured come under God's wonderful blessing of free grace.

While thinking of the favoured position of those who are keen-eyed and alert to appreciate the truths of God's Word, showing zeal in studying and giving of their best to become acquainted with the spiritual food, like eagles around a carcass, there is a helpful illustration of this in Judges 7, which describes the reducing of Gideon's army. See Judges 7:1-7. Of the 32,000 in the beginning, 22,000 are afraid and return home. In the illustration these are outside the Christian call altogether. Of the 10,000 who faced the test of drinking the water, only 300 remained for the Lord to use in demonstrating that the victory was His in the defeat of the Midianites. Those who bowed down and put their mouths to the water thought of nothing else but getting a drink. Those who lapped the water were alert and keen-eyed, and would detect the enemy quickly; these undoubtedly picture the keen-eyed Christians, like eagles, who are appreciative of God's truths when they find them. Gideon's 300 are a picture of the Lord's people of the Gospel Age, observant of spiritual food, in contrast with the remainder of the 10,000 who were wholly absorbed with the drinking of the water—fully taken up with earthly things. Such people will have their inheritance in the earthly kingdom. Those whom the Lord is calling now are alert, keen-eyed, ready to walk in the steps of the Master, ready to take up their cross daily and follow Him.

Another passage of Scripture which helps us to understand God's selection of the favoured ones during this Gospel Age is found in 1 Cor. 1:26-31—"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh,

not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise . . . And base things, and things which are despised, hath God chosen . . . to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.”

“Ye see your calling, brethren.” Do we grasp our calling as a privilege from the Lord? It is the greatest privilege under the sun, and each Christian needs to see it in that light, because the mighty, the noble, the great are more or less self-sufficient, and think only of their own abilities, and are great in this world and its affairs, and are not invited to be servants of the Master. These, of course, are general statements, that no flesh should glory in the Lord’s presence. Those who are favoured of God are really humble and lowly and feel their own weakness, and know the strength they gain in the Truth comes from the Lord Himself.

Regarding those people whom God has not favoured during this Gospel Age, the Scriptures clearly show that they are not forgotten in God’s plan of the ages. In Revelation 22 we have depicted the kingdom set up and the blessings flowing out to all the families of the earth. In the opening verses of this chapter we see “there is no more curse”—the curse of death has been overcome by the sacrifice of Christ, and the resurrection of mankind has been accomplished. In verse 17 the opportunity for lasting life will be available to everyone. This verse is often misquoted as applying at the present time, but it will be fulfilled when there is a Bride of Christ, who will be reigning with Christ when—”whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” At that time free grace will be manifested to all humanity. During the Gospel Age, and in past ages, selection and election has been going on. God has been doing the selecting. “No one can come to me”, Jesus said, “Unless the Father draw him.” God’s spirit draws to Jesus those who are worthy and who accept the privilege of walking in the steps of Christ, that they may also reign with their Lord to accomplish the blessing of all the families of the earth in the wonderful kingdom of Christ.

Do we not rejoice that God has favoured some of mankind more than others, because it is His will. It is not because some people are better than others in themselves. It is the poor of this world, the despised ones, those who are not, who are chosen to confound the things that are mighty. God knows who to choose; God’s spirit can transform such poor material into vessels fit for His service now, and prepared for greater service in the kingdom to come. We rejoice also that God will not overlook any of the human family. Christ’s sacrifice provides for all. In deciding to take “many sons to glory” God has provided for the ultimate blessing of all the families of the earth. We praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM *Australia, 3101.*

# Memorial Thoughts

AS another anniversary of Christ's death draws near the faithful follower of the Master is more particularly mindful of the important circumstances surrounding the life, death and resurrection of the One upon whom the welfare of the whole world depends.

The 34 years of Christ's sacrificial life on earth—from Jordan to Calvary—fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel relating to the fact that Messiah would be cut off in the midst of the 70th week (of years)—Dan. 9:26, 27. Realising that He became thirty years of age (the age of maturity under the Law) just 34 years previous to this Jewish Passover, it can be seen how wonderfully accurate all things worked out in the birth, public ministry and death of Jesus, who became "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (in due time) on that important anniversary of the Jewish Passover, now over nineteen hundred years ago.

That the institution of the Jewish Passover in Egypt was a most important type, there can be no doubt. It was essential for every household to provide a lamb and carry out the instructions in detail respecting the killing of the lamb and sprinkling of the blood on two side posts and upper door post of each house, whereby the firstborns of Israel were saved from death. And inasmuch as the Lord instructed Israel to keep the Passover each year on its anniversary, it can be seen that not only was the deliverance from Egypt to be remembered, but the yearly ceremony was also intended to point forward to the time when the real Lamb of God would come, and the antitypical firstborns (the Church, the Bride of Christ) would be passed over during this Gospel Age, to be followed by the deliverance of all mankind from bondage to sin and death, in the morning of the glad Millennial day.

How truly John the Baptist described our Lord to his own disciples, as we read in John 1:35-37—"Again the next day John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he said, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." What a different outlook it would have been for Israel, if they had believed John's message! What a change it would mean in world affairs today if mankind would also believe the testimony of John! But God knew that just as a few disciples only would accept the lowly Lord at His first advent, so similar conditions would prevail at His second advent—"When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth."

With the majority of Israel (His own) against our Lord, can we approximate His feelings, when, on the night of the Jewish Passover, 34 years after His baptism in Jordan, and knowing that on this occasion He was to become the slain Lamb of God, He gathered His little band of apostles together at the appropriate hour and said unto them, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer"—Luke 22:14, 15.

What a momentous occasion for Jesus! What great issues must have welled up in His mind. Upon His faithfulness in the next few hours depended the salvation of mankind from death. His little band was to be left in an unfriendly world to carry on His ministry. How much He wished to tell them, but—"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now"—John 16:12. However, in John's Gospel, chapters 13 to 17, we have preserved for us some of the most precious words of Jesus, all spoken to His little band on that momentous night—"With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer."

There can be no doubt that our Lord directed the minds of His disciples from the Jewish Passover ceremony to the all important fact that He was the real Lamb of God, and in instituting the Memorial of His death, this simple, yet solemn service was intended to take the place of the typical Passover. The Apostle says this is to be continued, "till he come"—till the last member of the Body of Christ is gathered to be with the Lord, in "that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Respecting the emblems which Jesus passed to His disciples, we read—"Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body (this represents my body). And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my blood (represents my blood) of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"—Matt. 26:26-28. On a previous occasion

our Lord said, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you”—John 6:53. The Lord was showing that only by appropriating the merit of His perfection to ourselves by faith, could we have any standing before God. And so, this is the primary lesson in the Memorial service—By faith all who have accepted Jesus as their Saviour, in spirit and in truth, receive the benefit of His all-sufficient merit and are thus justified by faith and have peace with God—Rom. 5:1.

However, the Apostle shows in 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, that there is a secondary and deeper thought respecting the Memorial instituted by our Lord. It is upon the basis of justification by faith that he could exhort any to “present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable, unto God.” This passage in 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, describes those fully consecrated Christians who have done this, those who have been baptized into Christ’s death, sharing in His sacrifice, “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ”—Col. 1:24.

What a privilege it is to thus view the Memorial of Christ’s death in this manner. Our Lord’s words in Matt.

13:16, 17, come to mind in this connection—”For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.” It is well to be reminded also that the spirit in which the Memorial is kept is to be preserved throughout the year, by the Lord’s grace. The love of God which prompts His people to observe the Memorial in remembrance of Christ and also in demonstrating that their vows of consecration are being fulfilled in joyful service and willingness to suffer for His sake, will likewise manifest to the brethren, yes, and to all mankind, that they have been with Jesus and learnt of Him.

“Lord, I would keep Thy Holy feast,  
Like Israel when his bondage ceased;  
And safe beneath the sprinkled mark,  
His every home became an ark.

Only the lamb which Israel slew  
I need not to make bleed anew:  
Because the blood which stained the Cross  
Is mark of which there ne’er is loss.

I’d keep the feast with bread from heaven,  
Free from all taint of earthly leaven:  
Yet find some sad resemblance glide,  
Which sets the bitter herbs beside.

I seek the feast with upgirt mind,  
As for immediate work assigned;  
And eat like one on passing stay,  
Impatient to resume the way.

That sprinkled blood hath had the power  
To hold me safe in judgment’s hour;  
But still for me a task remains,  
To haste and flee from Egypt’s plains.

With Thy refreshing viands fed,  
I shrink not, Lord, wherever led;  
And still with pilgrim’s staff in hand,  
Plod firmly to’ards the promised land.”  
—Selected.

## Passover Memorial 1974

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Friday, 5th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "In remembrance of Christ."

### Memorial Services

Melbourne—Sunday, 7th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide—Sunday, 7th April, at 6.15 p.m., at the M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Sydney—Friday, 5th April, at 7 p.m., at 81 James Street, Leichhardt.

Perth—Friday, 5th April, at 7 p.m., at Women's Service Guild Rooms, 7 Harvest Terrace, Perth (opposite Parliament House).

### *Adelaide Easter Convention*

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a cordial invitation to all friends able to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th in the Manchester Unity Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information from the Class Secretary—Mr. F. M. Grinsted, 1 Wendy Avenue, Valley View,

South Australia, 5093.

## Christ's Death and Resurrection Needful

IT is needless that we seek to dispute as to which ' was the more important event—the death of Jesus or His resurrection from the dead. Both were equally important. Had He not died there would be no basis for a reconciliation of Adam and his race condemned to death. Had He not risen there would have been no one to apply the merit of His sacrifice. Had He not risen there would have been no call of the church during this Gospel Age to be the Bride of Christ. Neither would there have been use for the Mediatorial kingdom to be established at His second coming for the blessing of Israel and the world.

Thus Jesus explained to the two with whom He walked to Emmaus on the day of His resurrection, saying,

O slow of heart to believe all that God hath spoken in the Law and in the Prophets! Was it not necessary that Messiah should die and should rise from the dead, that in His name repentance and remission of sins might be proclaimed? How could any be invited to come to God until a way had been opened, until the redemption price had been provided? Whoever can hear this message and accept it may properly be invited to repent of sin and to reform and to live contrary to the tendencies of his fallen nature, because, in so doing, through the Redeemer, he may attain unto eternal life. And if he ask, How about the things that are past, the answer would be the same. God's provision is for the remission of sins through the merit of the sacrifice of His only begotten Son.

The eleven Apostles were commissioned—"Go ye, disciple all nations"—Matt. 28:19. This did not signify, as some suppose, a command to convert the world. It meant that they should make disciples out of people of all nationalities—and not any longer, as formerly, of the Jews only. And the Master's injunction has been fulfilled. Disciples, followers of Him, have been found in all nations. But, as Jesus did not say, Convert all nations, neither has the Gospel message done this. Those accepting discipleship were to be baptized with Christ's baptism in the name or authority of the Father, Son and holy spirit. In all, these have been but "a little flock"—Luke 12:32. But theirs is the "high calling" to joint-heirship in His kingdom, which is soon to bless the world.

But even this commission to disciple people of all nations could not, and did not, begin at once. For three and a half years after the cross, in fulfilment of divine prophecy, the Gospel message was kept from the Gentiles, until the door for them into this high calling was opened by St. Peter—Cornelius being the first to enter it.

All disciples of Jesus were instructed to follow Him, to take Him as their pattern and example. Any instructions contrary to these are contrary to the words of the Great Teacher. And the Master said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." He has been with His faithful followers to bless them, to comfort them, to strengthen them, to fellowship them, to safeguard their highest interests, though often at the expense of temporal interests. And this promise of His Word, of providential guidance, was to continue until the end of the age—then He would come again in a personal and official sense to exalt His church, to establish His kingdom, to bless Israel with the New Covenant arrangements, and thus to bless the world of mankind.

## Frank and Ernest Broadcast God's Covenants. (Part 3)

(Continued from Last Issue)

ERNEST: I'm looking forward to continuing our discussion, Frank, on the subject—"God's Covenants." So far we've seen very clearly how the Apostle Paul, in Galatians, shows that the followers of Christ, true Christians, are developed under the Abrahamic Covenant during this Gospel Age, and that the Law Covenant was given to Israel in the days of Moses and onward, to guide them as a schoolmaster to Christ. Then, at the close of our last broadcast I asked about the New Covenant which is mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments. I don't think the New Covenant is mentioned by the Apostle in Galatians, and that seems rather strange, in view of the fact that he was dealing particularly with the subject of the Covenants rather freely in that Epistle. Is there any special reason why Paul does not refer to the New Covenant, in writing to the Galatians, do you think, Frank?

FRANK: Well, Ernest, it does seem strange at first, as you say, that the New Covenant is not mentioned by Paul when writing to the Galatians, but the reason is that the New Covenant does not apply for Christians of this Gospel Age. Hence the Apostle did not confuse their minds with an additional teaching which would not assist him in clarifying their ideas about the Abrahamic and Law Covenants. Had the New Covenant been applicable to Christians at the time Paul wrote to the Galatians, or at any time during this Gospel Age, then of course, it would have been the very place to explain it to them.

ERNEST: But, Frank, the Hebrews were Christians, and the Apostle refers to the New Covenant very freely in writing to them. How do you understand that?

FRANK: That's a good point you've raised, Ernest. The Hebrews knew of God's dealings with their forefathers back over past centuries, and the Apostle sought to impress upon them that the Lord still loved their forefathers who failed to serve Him acceptably under the Law Covenant. God's love for Israel was shown by providing a New Covenant which would accomplish what the old Law Covenant failed to do for them, that is, give them lasting life, when they are raised from the dead in the kingdom age. The Apostle explains this beautifully in Heb. 8, from verse 7.

ERNEST: I certainly wish to read that passage, Frank, as follows—"For if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord." Well, Frank, there's no doubt that the Apostle here shows that the new covenant is to be made with the same class of people, earthly people, with whom the Lord found fault under the Law Covenant. But how do you understand the words—"and I regarded them not, saith the Lord"?

FRANK: That's explained in verse 10 of this 8th chapter of Hebrews we are studying. It reads—"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord." After what days? After the days when the Lord "regarded them not"—that is, during this Gospel Age, the time when they are cast off from God's favour. Then verse 10 continues—"I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Then verse 11—"And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." What a lovely explanation, Ernest. How clear it is that the New Covenant is made with Israel after the days when the Lord "regarded them not."

ERNEST: Yes, Frank, I can see that very clearly, and we realise also that the Apostle was quoting from Jeremiah 31:31-34, that wonderful prophecy which God gave to the prophet Jeremiah to encourage Israel to know that their failure under the Law Covenant did not mean they were to be cast off from God's favour forever. I can see also that the Apostle brings this out in his epistle to the Hebrews that they might appreciate the wideness of God's mercy by not casting off their ancient forefathers completely. This would also prompt them to desire to serve the

God of their fathers, by becoming followers of Christ. This, I believe, was Paul's main object in informing them of the blessings of the New Covenant to follow in the age to come.

FRANK: That's true, Ernest. Paul was very diplomatic in presenting the gospel of the kingdom in the very best light to suit each class of people amongst whom he preached, and to whom he wrote his epistles. And the Apostle gives us the same truth in Rom. 11, from verse 25—"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery ..that blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in", that is, until the seed of Abraham is produced. And then what? "All Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Here again we see the beauty of Paul's presentation of the truth. It is after the "fullness of the Gentiles be come in", when the full number for the Bride of Christ has been completed, that God deals again with Israel through the New Covenant—"for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

ERNEST: That's certainly very satisfying, Frank, to see how the plan of God operates for the blessing of all families of the earth through the seed of Abraham. I remember, also, that Jesus referred to the "blood of the new testament (covenant)" at the Last Supper, as recorded in Matt. 26:28. I'll read the verse—"This is my blood of the new testament (covenant) which is shed for many for the remission of sins." You may have some thoughts on this verse, Frank.

FRANK: Well, Ernest, we remember our Lord passed the cup of wine, picturing His blood, His sacrifice, to the disciples to drink at the Last Supper, showing they were to participate in His sufferings and death, as He informed them quite often. Jesus knew that later the disciples would understand the meaning of what He expressed to them, although it was a dark saying then. They would realise that the first covenant (the Law) was made effective by the shedding of the blood of bulls and goats, and the blood sprinkled upon the people, and the New Covenant would be made effective following the sacrifice of Christ and His Church, and with the antitypical sprinkling upon the people in the next age, including Israel and all the world, it will freely cleanse and sanctify. Whereas the blood of the Law Covenant, the blood of bulls and goats, could not take away sin, the blood of the New Covenant would do so, for the benefit of all the families of the earth.

ERNEST: Thank you, Frank, for those thoughts. As individuals we have the privilege of entering into a covenant of sacrifice with God, in response to His invitation. I call to mind the text we had before us earlier in these discussions, in Gal. 3:29—"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." What a favour it is to belong to Christ, to serve Him now, and to be in line, as it were, for greater service as a part of the seed of Abraham to participate in the work of the New Covenant—the "blessing of all the families of the earth."

FRANK: Yes, indeed, Ernest. And to repeat another text we have had before us in these broadcasts, showing the result of the work of the New Covenant, as stated in Heb. 8:11—"And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least unto the greatest."

I would be true, for there are those who trust me,  
I would *be* pure, for there are those who care;  
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;  
I would be brave, for there is much to dare;  
I would be friend of all—the foe, the friendless;  
I would be giving and forget the gift;  
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;  
I would look up (to God) and laugh and love and lift.

# Pilgrimages Ended

ON Sunday, 3rd February last the earthly course was finished for our dear elderly Sister Hiam of Kalamunda, W.A., in recent years, and formerly of Victoria. Our dear Sister had reached the age of 93 and was well known and well loved by the brethren throughout Australia, and also New Zealand.

The first contact with the truth was in 1908, when, with the late Brother Hiam, a copy of the “Divine Plan of the Ages” was received into the home in Gippsland, Victoria. For a number of years the truth message was appreciated through the literature. In 1933 the Hiam family moved much nearer to Melbourne, to be able to attend the Class meetings. From that time onward, with members of her family, Sister Hiam had been in constant touch with the brethren, either in Melbourne or in Perth, W.A., and also in New Zealand when on a short visit to that country.

With her late husband, our Sister Hiam sought to bring their family up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and this had such a good effect that each member of the family can testify to the example and spiritual qualities of their parents, enabling them also to embrace the truth very fully, by the Lord’s grace. It was evident to all who knew Sister Hiam that she was one of the Lord’s saints, one in whom the fruits of the spirit were abundantly developed, one who was not known to complain, but who had learned in all circumstances to be content.

It has been revealed also by those who knew our dear Sister best, that she was a tower of strength, not only to her own family, but to numerous families throughout her long life, by her visits to support, comfort and console those passing through difficult times. All this was possible because of the Lord’s spirit in her own heart. Sincere sympathy is extended to all members in our Sister’s family circle in the loss of such a devoted Christian mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, but who nevertheless sorrow not as those without hope.

The pilgrimage of our Sister Hiam has been summed up by one of her family—She loved the Lord; she loved His Word; she loved her family and all others. She loved the hymns, one of her many favourites being, “All the way my Saviour leads me”, the last lines of which are very appropriate—”This my song through endless ages— Jesus led me all the way.” “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth.”

Word is to hand from Perth, W.A., concerning the passing of another of our elderly Sisters in that area. On 5th March our dear Sister Phillips finished the earthly course at the age of 90 years. With her two sisters, Sister Phillips came into the truth more than 50 years ago, and never deviated from appreciation of the Lord’s great sacrifice and the truth which meant so much to her over the greater part of her life. It is felt that she has been a “more than overcomer”, and by the Lord’s grace shall have entered into the joys of the Lord.

Our Sister Phillips had a loving, meek, teachable disposition, which meant that the Lord was pleased to reveal unto her “the deep things” which made her wise unto salvation. Before being confined to hospital some time ago now, she had been a regular attendant at the Sunday and mid-week meetings in Perth, and was a great help at the Bible Studies. Sister Phillips was noted for her personal study and was thus prepared for helpful discussion, being able to contribute well for a profitable time.

Sincere sympathy is expressed to Sister Phillips’ two sisters who continue to rejoice in the truth, and also all members of the family in the passing of a loving and devoted Christian mother and grandmother. The brethren in Perth rejoice with our dear Sister Phillips, as we do also, realising that the race was well run, by the Lord’s grace and strength. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.”

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FRANK & ERNEST TALKS

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