

SPECIAL. —PETER'S CONFESSION

The Berean

CHRISTADELPHIAN

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE EXPOSITION AND
DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED
TO THE SAINTS; AND OPPOSED TO THE DOGMAS
AND RESERVATIONS OF THE PAPAL AND PROTESTANT
CHURCHES; WITH THE OBJECT OF MAKING READY
A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD.

EDITED BY G. H. DENNEY & G. A. GIBSON

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MOTHERWELL. —A. McKay, 103 Bellshill Road. (B.B. 11.30 a.m.)

NEWPORT. (Mon.) —T. H. Lambert, 80 Sycamore Avenue. 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

NEW TREDEGAR. (Mon.) —Ivor Morgan, Pentwyn House, Cwmsyfiog. (B.B. 6 p.m.)

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WIGAN. —G. Halliwell, 151 Moor Road, Orrell (2.30 p.m.).

WORCESTER. —H. Blake, 18 St. Dunstan’s Crescent.

The Berean Christadelphian

Edited by G. H. DENNEY and G. A. GIBSON.

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"Sin is a synonym for human nature. Hence the flesh is invariably regarded as unclean. It is therefore written, 'How can he be clean who is born of a woman?' 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.' 'What is man that he should be clean and he which is born of a woman that he should be righteous? Behold, God putteth no trust in his saints: yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. How much more abominable and unclean is man, who drinketh iniquity like water.'"—
ELPIS ISRAEL, pp. 127-8.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS:

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THE SEALED BOOK

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GOG

THE MONTANISTS
PETER'S CONFESSION

Volume XXXII

APRIL, 1944

NO. 376

EDITORIAL

“Business is Business.”

Many a man, famed possibly for generosity and kindness in his family and social circles, is guilty of practices that cannot be justified on any moral grounds, but who excuses himself and is excused on the plea, "Business is business." Often it is said, "Do not mix religion and sentiment with your business. You will be ruined if you do." In times of great national extremity Governments have to take special precautions to prevent business men making great fortunes out of their own country's needs. In Britain, Canada, U.S.A., etc., special regulations have been made since this present war began to prevent men and corporations from taking great profits. Excess Profits Tax is the means of this prevention. Many company chairmen at the annual meetings of their concerns lament their inability to give their shareholders huge dividends because of this taxation.

Just look at how some companies operate. They are "floated" by asking shareholders to take up shares valued at £1 or so each. Hopes are held out of "good" dividends. Five per cent is a really good return on invested capital to-day. But the management strive hard to get an increased profit for their shareholders, and in the name of "business" will keep their wage-earners at as low a rate of pay as ever they can "at market value," they say, by which they mean as low as they can persuade men and women to take for the work they do.

When the year's results are seen to be good, the shareholders are congratulated and the workers thanked. But it is very rarely that a 5 or 10 per cent, increase in wages is voted to the workers who have earned the profits. No! Almost always it is the shareholders who receive the increase. At this point the Stock Exchange comes into the picture. Any bank or individual can carry out a sale of shares by one person to another, so the Stock Exchange serves no good purpose. Its function is to be a medium for gambling, pure and simple. Every day men buy and sell shares with a view to making money out of rises in the value of such shares.

Shares in companies that are "doing well" go up in price and others go down. W.'s shares at their par value—that is, the figure at which they are allotted, are worth 5/- each. But because this company pay 20 to 30 per cent, dividend, the Stock Exchange makes it impossible to buy them under 25/- to 30/- per 5/- share. So, added to large dividends, men get increased artificial values for the shares they hold.

Along with this, we discover that when employees want an increase in their remuneration, they have to fight for it, either individually or collectively.

It is true to say that very few corporations to-day seek to equalise the respective values of labour and capital. The vast majority, because "business is business," lean heavily to the side of capital.

Birmingham was made into the worst city for slums in all the British Empire because its "business men" sought to obtain the cheapest possible labour and to house and feed it at as low a level as could be reached.

Now the Scripture teaches expressly that this kind of thing is wrong. Business should be conducted with the same care as the highest moral and social endeavour. Isaiah and other prophets deplore the evil and tell of the Day of God's Kingdom as bringing about its destruction. The Mosaic law was expressly designed to dignify labour and to prevent social evils, and, above all, poverty. This it most effectively did when properly operated.

But James, our Lord's kinsman, in a prophetic passage, tells of the doom of the exploiters of the world's possibilities who build up great fortunes and neglect the poor men, like the statesman of our own time, who promised in his election address to give old age pensions and then at the next election excused his want of performance on the ground that "the country could not afford it yet." Says James, "Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall finally come upon you. Your riches are corrupted and your fine clothes are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered and the rust of them shall be a witness against you. It shall eat your flesh as with fire. Ye have heaped your treasures together only until the last days. Behold the hire of your labourers, who have worked for you, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth against you, and the cry thereof has entered into the ears of the Lord of all plenty, the bestower of all good. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth. Ye have nourished your own hearts while men died around you. Ye have condemned and killed the just." "Business is business," even if by unfair competition another man is forced to his death. "All's fair in business and war."

There is another side to the matter — the attitude of the worker. Employers have often very much to complain of in respect of slipshod service and the lack of interest exhibited by those who work for them.

**The
Scriptural
Position.**

The child of God is called upon to eschew evil. Rules for the conduct of both employers and the employed are clearly laid down by Christ and the apostles as well as throughout the Old Testament. Here are a few of the governing principles: —

"Love thy neighbour as thyself."

"Do good unto all men."

"Defraud not any."

"Masters, give to your servants that which is just and equal."

"Masters, continue your business with prayer." "Watch and give thanks." "Let your speech be gracious, seasoned with salt."

"Servants, obey in all things your masters in the flesh, not with merely eye service, but in singleness of heart, fearing God. Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily."

This is the kind of way business should be conducted.

Remember the words of Isaiah in relation to the Coming Age: —"God saw that there was no help in man: that there was no intercessor powerful enough, and that there was no judgment. Therefore he raised up his own arm of salvation, His righteousness sustaining Him. He was clad with zeal, and He will repay all according to their deeds" (Isa. lix.). "He shall judge the people with righteousness and the poor with judgment."

"He shall save the children of the needy and shall break in pieces the oppressor."

"He shall spare the poor and those in want and shall save their souls" (Psalm lxxii.).

"The vile person shall not any more be called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful" (Isa. xxxii. 5).

Knowing these things, the true child of God will not refuse the hungry bread, or the thirsty a draught of water. He will not seek to excuse such refusal at the judgment seat by the plea, "Business is business."

He will seek to make his business relationships such as befit a brother of Jesus Christ, and, though he may lose man's esteem, he will be saved in the day of judgment.

When doing business deals, try to imagine that Christ is looking on and judging both action and motive.

"He that maketh haste to be rich hath an evil eye" (Prov. xxviii. 22).

"Lay not up for yourself treasure upon earth. Lay up treasure in heaven. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be" (Matt. vi. 19-20).

EDITORS.

Advertisement and Proof.

Peter in his second epistle speaks of three ways in which the Gospel had been confirmed during the history of mankind.

The first was, he shows: by angelic manifestation. Angels ministered to Abraham, to Moses, to Joshua and many others. Their power was superhuman and their appearance and actions confirmed their message as Divine. They also were the means of advertisement, it may properly be said.

The second was by the miracles which accompanied the preaching of Jesus and the Apostles, and those to whom they gave the same power. These, which possession of the Holy Spirit made possible, were a proof that the message was from above, and they were also its best advertisement.

The third method of confirmation Peter describes as the Word, made sure by the prophecies "which came not by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

From the days when the men died who had the Holy Spirit the prophecies, particularly those of the Book of Revelation, have been in their constant and clear fulfilment the best attestation of the truth of the Bible and the power of the Gospel.

In our day we have a long line of fulfilled prophecies to look back upon, with some in process of fulfilment before our eyes. This is the Truth's best advertisement. But it must be remembered that this third line of proof is only being used in the world to-day by those who reject the world-moulded

churches, who have no use for this kind of proof, in view of their divergence from the Apostolic teaching in regard to our Lord's return and His kingdom on earth.

Signs of the Times.

"The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom." —Dan. vii.

**Art thou not
God in heaven?**

Jehoshaphat's prayer, as recorded in ii. Chro. xx., sets forth the basic principle that is ignored in the world to-day, that in the hand of God is power, that none is able, to stand against Him,

and that therefore in the ultimate scheme of things the Divine purpose alone will be realised. Thus, nations may struggle for their spheres of influence and their living space, as modern political put it, but the apostolic declaration in Acts xvii. is as true as when first uttered in the ears of the disputers and philosophers of Athens. God has definitely appointed both the boundaries of the kingdoms of this world, and also the times of their duration, no matter how tyrants and intriguers may plot and the great ones of the earth attempt to stabilise their rule over men. In due time, therefore, the Divine threat to all human polities must come to pass and sweep away the facade of heathenism. "From Me shall spoilers come." In these closing days of the Babylonian system, when the kingdoms of men shall sink under the load of evil, Jeremiah's fiftieth and fifty-first chapters should be studied for the historical details now impending when the drunken princes of the nations "shall fall into a perpetual sleep and not wake."

The ghastly Russo-German struggles in the East are a stern reminder of that which is to come. Everywhere along that vast swaying battle-line the spoilers are bursting into the territories of that Power which has so terribly destroyed God's people. Germany has yet to pay the bitterest price for her infamies against Israel. "The violence done to Me and my flesh ..." The destruction of her cities, the numberless dead under the battered remains of her civic glory, the holocaust of her soldiery and the shattering of her vast war machine under the hammer blows of the Allied offensive, all speak of the coming to pass of Divine judgment. Whoever touch Israel touch the apple of God's eye! Babylon paid the price—extinction. The antitypical Babylon will perish just as miserably.

The pretentious civilisation so laboriously built up is desperately shaken to its very foundations; the common people everywhere are beginning to surge and heave in restless agony—as Jesus said, "the seas and waves roaring." That mighty upheaval the world over will continue now, rising to a crescendo of fury, until Christ comes. Strikes and underground movements are just tossings to and fro of a tortured world which sees no way out of its perplexities. And when man's extremity is final, and the bitter lesson in part learned, then God will impose His own Ruler in the earth, and the millennial glory of the Kingdom of our Lord and His Christ will obliterate the sorrow and sighing of the past six thousand years of sin's misrule, and the world brought into obedience at long last to God, be enriched with the blessings of righteousness, peace and security for ever.

"The song of the drunkards."—Ps. lxi.

**The earth
empty and
waste.**

With the German armies reeling under the shattering blows of the Russian hosts, the wicket gate to the Balkans is wide open. The Japanese diplomats have fled from their posts in the peninsula, and the barriers into Europe

are down. A few years ago a mere armed rabble, badly officered and worse trained, to-day the Red Army stands triumphant and celebrates twenty-five years of magnificent achievement wreathed with victory. Its political potentialities alone perplex the world. Little wonder that Mr. Stalin finds it expedient to disclaim any designs on the West. Be that as it may, it is as equally certain that Russia

shows a much deeper understanding of the tremendous world changes involved in the war than either Great Britain or America, and her foreign policy already shows signs of following prophetic incidence.

"Men in millions," said the late Lord Lothian, "were suddenly called to face horrors without example in the cruellest ages of barbarism." And the result is foreshown by the prophet, for the earth is reeling to and fro like a drunkard with the mad jest of death upon its lips. "Fear and the pit and the snare are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. . . ." (Is. xxiv.). The Home Secretary calls this astonishing development of Russia the opening of a new chapter in the history of the world. Isn't it the last? The signals are going up all along the Russian front, and the German armies are staggering backward to death. That vast war machine, forged to bring the wealth of the world to the Nazi war god, is awaiting the final stroke.

Yet the mighty God of Israel has said that all the earth is His, the cattle on a thousand hills, the silver and the gold, that His anointed shall inherit all these things, and that He will bring all the nations of the earth to worship at His footstool in Jerusalem.

Truly the nations are mad, as Jeremiah says. And because they are drunk with their evil desires, and have filled the dark places of the earth with their cruelties, God has said that He will turn their world upside down and wipe it as clean as a plate in His anger.

The pressure, politically and economically, is gradually rising in Central Europe. It is computed that some eleven millions of destitute people are being herded by deportation or by fear into war-devastated Germany. Are we to see this seething cauldron, a boiling cesspool of humanity, transformed back twenty centuries to the times of the Caesars, a wild roving mass on the move—unsettled, homeless and hungry, pressing on the frontiers of the West? The motive power is already applied in the Russian surge to the Danube.

"He maketh the devices of the people of none effect."—Ps. xxxiii.

**Whatever
the Lord
pleased that
did He.**

Now that under the impact of Smut's recent speeches the project of a Jewish State again seems a practical issue, the entire Arab world is restless with animosity and embittered opposition.

The Arab Governments of Syria, Lebanon and the psuedo-Arab communities in

Egypt are all uniting against Israel. The Cairo Government has protested sharply to Washington against any American support for the Jewish national home. Nahas Pasha declares his intention of solving the Palestine question. Coincidental with these diplomatic moves, terrorist outrages are on the increase in Eretz Israel. As a pleasing balance to this ugly picture, the farming prosperity is most marked, Jewish communal life shows rapid advancement, all heading for that time spoken of by Ezekiel when the people shall be dwelling without bolts and bars, having gotten cattle and goods. But the Russo-Gogian onslaught will fare no better than the present evil designs of the Israelite nations to stop the purpose of God. Curiously enough, Tarshish seems for the moment to be very susceptible to Arab pressure, for quite recently a highly-placed ex-Turkish official has been advanced to a District Commissionership in the Palestine administration.

Of equal interest in this welter of Near East intrigues and political junketings is the break between Turkey and Tarshish. The decision to send no further arms shipments to Istanbul is a long-looked-for development which may have great impetus in the drying-up of the Euphrates, and the final disappearance of the Turkoman power, preparatory to the coming of the Kings from the sun's rising (Rev. xvi.).

Russia's impending entry into the Balkan area must force Ankara to a decision of vital importance to her future, for her ancient Muscovite enemy will then face her across the straits of Constantinople, the future seat of the King of the North. Meanwhile, the Anglo-American armies are

still on guard on Turkey's eastern and western frontiers. The untying of the knot of world war lies in the East.

"The present distress."—1 Cor. vii.

**The dust
of death.**

Hitlerite Germany, like all other regimes, has poisoned, itself with its own vices. It created fear, ruled by brutality, and now the terrors of vengeance and defeat stare it in the face. Its officials are daily disgraced, many are in flight where possible, its foremost leaders disappear overnight, and suicides and mass liquidations of unreliable elements are daily crimes. The dissatisfied and faint-hearted are warned, cajoled, threatened—sure signs of dissolution. Russia to-day was built upon the misery and degradation of 1914-1917; and current events are shaping the course of things to come. It is the time of decline, even as so many in the world see it.

Hitler had hoped that, as he retired before the Russian onslaughts, Europe would have risen to his aid against the Bolshevik menace. Instead, his crimes have risen up against him. As the Scriptures state, a man can only reap what he sows. And nations are but men in the mass.

Lord Halifax has again joined the ranks of the savants, but before he ventures on prophecies of peace and race-survivals, he should understand that God has sworn to make a full end of all nations except Israel, and it is the Lord alone who will confer the blessings of peace (Jer. xxx., Ps. lxxxii., 1 Pet. v.). It does not rest, therefore, with the Allies to shape the future peace, but with Him who is styled the Prince of Peace, when He shall be the Governor among the nations (Ps. xxii.).

That time is closely at hand. Everywhere, Bible signs of Christ's return are showing themselves. Famine is destroying the fabric of Chinese life faster than the guns of the Japanese invaders; the disintegration of the Pacific outpost line rapidly brings the death bombs nearer Tokyo; the crumbling of the eastern armies of the Reich—all signs that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand (Luke xxi.).

There is the overshadowing menace of the invasion of the West; the vague feeling of unrest and insecurity in the very Land of Promise itself, bomb-throwing, the murders of police, the foul deeds of the ruffianly assassin, the armed vigilant state of the Jewish communities themselves in the recent months—all forebodes a climax of horror and desolation before the coming of Him who alone has been appointed of God to rid the earth for ever of the foul stain of human misrule. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. . . ." (Jer. x.). "Take heed," is the advice of the saints, by the Master of the Household of Faith; "watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. . . . And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch!"

CARMI.

EXHORTATION

Windows of Agates.

At first sight it might appear that there is not much connection between windows and the remembrance of Jesus, but we hope to bring out that connection.

Windows were primarily intended for the purpose of admitting light into the interior of a room, house or building, etc., so that the inmates may be able to see to do their respective duties.

It was not the principal design of windows that they should be used to look out, either in abstraction or to see what is going on.

The lesson to us seems to be to work while we have the light. Jesus urged this, "work while it is yet day," while we have the daylight—for the night comes when no one can work.

Of course, this is not to be taken literally, as at the present time the great advance of artificial lighting makes it possible for as much work to be done at night as during the day.

There is a greater application than to ordinary daylight; it applies to our life work—we must every day of our lives be working out our salvation with fear and trembling. By walking in the Truth ourselves we encourage and help our brethren and sisters by our actions and words, and preach the Truth to our friends and neighbours.

Now the first reference to a window in the Scriptures is in Genesis vi. in connection with the building of the Ark. Noah was instructed (6), "a window shalt thou make to the Ark and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above." It has been urged that a window of such small size to so vast a ship would be practically useless, but it is possible that what was intended was a window course running the entire length of the Ark, lighting the whole upper storey, similar to the clerestory of an ecclesiastical building.

The question whether or not glass was known and used need not trouble us. It is sufficient that some transparent or translucent material was used.

The unusual Hebrew word used, in the plural, signifies "noon." This might be due to the fact that at noon the sun was directly overhead and the sun's maximum light was obtained. According to Jewish tradition, it was a precious stone that illuminated the whole structure of the Ark, and this is not such an extravagant idea as might appear at first sight.

In the prophecy through Isaiah (liv. 12) God says: "I will make thy windows of agates." Now agates are precious stones, partially transparent and uncrystallised. They are varieties of quartz, variously coloured by the admixture of different earths, although the neutral tints are the most frequent. They are neither as transparent as rock crystal nor as opaque as flint and seem to be the product of elements fused by fire.

There is no doubt to whom this chapter in Isaiah is, addressed. Paul, writing to the Galatians (iv. 24) shows an allegory. He says that Hagar is Mount Sinai answering to the then present Jerusalem, in bondage with her children, but Jerusalem, which is above (and which is to be manifested from above very soon) is free and is the mother of us all.

This is the key to the right understanding of the matter, and indicates that New Jerusalem is the subject of the chapter. Verse 9 introduces the waters of Noah for the comfort of the elect, who, like Noah and his family, shall be saved in the coming overflowing of the wrath of God.

Then follows a description of the precious stones and foundations and agate windows of the afflicted and storm-tossed Jerusalem. Verse 11: "O, thou afflicted, tossed with tempest as fiercely as the Ark, when the windows from on high were opened, but behold, the black storm-tossed Ark is transformed into a palace of light, a temple of living stones laid by God." "I will lay thy stones with fair colours (glistening stones, according to 1 Chron. xxix. 2), and I will lay thy foundations with sapphires and I will make thy windows of agates."

Can we suppose windows of agates to mean windows of faith? In this world we have not the clear outlines, the vivid hues and tangible forms of sight, only the dim, misty shapes of faith, sometimes exaggerated, sometimes diminished, but always more or less destitute of the bright charm and living beauty of reality. Our faith is sometimes clearer than at other times, but at best it is only a semi-pellucid agate window. Here, strive as we may, we cannot have perfectly transparent windows—

windows of diamonds—we cannot have perfect vision. The shadow of our own selves clouds our view, we see through a glass —through windows of agates—darkly, and as agates are coloured by the admixture of different earths, so earth mingles with, and tints, our present realisation of things.

So the use of these windows of agates is to let the light of Heaven shine upon our lives, that we may discharge our various duties as members of the household of faith—that we may act as children of the day and of the light.

We are not to sit all day with folded hands at the window looking out listlessly. The light we get through the window is given us to enable us to work, to work out our own salvation and help others to work out theirs, work while it is to-day, for the night of death comes, and those that look out of the windows are darkened, as when the light coming through the windows is darkened.

The light of heaven is given us for usefulness as well as for beauty. So let the light that streams in upon us through these windows of agates—costly light obtained from a faith tried in the furnace of affliction—let this light warm and quicken and ripen our lives and make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

Though, as we have previously remarked, windows are not merely for gazing through, there are several instances in the Scriptures of people looking out of windows, and we might look at one or two cases, for the purpose of obtaining some instruction, comfort or warning, which is the object of exhortation.

We can see—Why they looked out, What they saw, Their frame of mind and the result.

The first instance is found in Gen. xxvi. 8. The circumstance was a famine, and Isaac was instructed by God to dwell at Gerah. The men of the place asked him of his wife and he said, "She is my sister," because he was afraid to say she was his wife in case someone killed him to possess himself of Rebecca.

Isaac meets the same experience as his father, Abraham, and most unwisely adopts the same plan for safeguarding his life. To kill a man to possess his wife was a common royal custom in those days, but there does not seem to be any such intention on the part of Abimelech. He, however, gathers from the conduct of Isaac and Rebecca that they are not brother and sister, but husband and wife, and reproves Isaac for concealing the fact on the grounds of what might have happened.

Is not the lesson to us that our conduct should be above reproach? Subterfuge is bound to be found out and draws reproof.

The next three instances are more or less similar, in that the central figure of each is a woman, the mother of Sisera, Michal, Saul's daughter, and Jezebel.

The first occurs in the song of victory, sung by Deborah and Barak (Judges v.). They had, with God's help, routed Sisera's army, the general falling a victim to Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite, and in a wonderful poem of great dramatic power the incident is described (v. 28):

"Through the window she looked forth and cried,
The mother of Sisera cried through the lattice,
Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?
Her wise ladies answered her,
Yea, she returned answer to herself.
Have they not found, have they not divided the spoil?
A damsel, two damsels, to every man,
To Sisera a spoil of divers colours of embroidery,

Of divers colours of embroidery on both sides
On the necks of the spoil."

We have here a most vivid picture of the palace of Sisera himself. The impatient expectation and awakening fears of his mother are portrayed by a few powerful strokes. We see the noble Canaanite lady, attended by her women, going up to the window of the upper chamber, which commands a view of the road by which, as she thinks, her son will return laden with the spoil and glory, that she might catch the first view of the returning conqueror.

But as the time rolled on and he did not come, first impatience, then anxiety and motherly fear, are depicted, then the efforts of her women to calm her apprehension and suggesting some good reason for the delay. There is such a vast amount of spoil that it takes a long time to apportion it out. Her women comfort her by the certainty that Sisera is bringing back a rich booty and the delay is caused by its collection and distribution.

So she returns answer to herself, keeps repeating to herself her vain hopes in an effort to silence her presentiment of evil, and this is where we discover her frame of mind.

"A damsel, two damsels to every man," signifies the captured Israelitish women she expected her son to bring back, a very insulting word intentionally used to show contempt of God's people.

So the hymn of praise finishes (v. 31): "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord, but let them that love Him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might."

Can we not say "Amen" to this? Though we are despised by God's enemies, as was Jesus, we know that in a very short time they will perish, as did Sisera, but we who love God, though in a very feeble, imperfect way, when the Sun of Righteousness arises, shall go forth with Him and be like Him.

We next come to 2 Sam. vi. 16: "And as the Ark of the Lord came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, and she despised him in her heart."

In the days of Saul the ark had been neglected, and Saul had shown himself in every way to be an irreligious king. His daughter seems to have been of a like spirit.

David was passing his house to accompany the ark to the Tabernacle he had pitched for it when Michal saw him dancing. He then returns to bless his household. He had blessed the people (v. 18), but there were inmates of his own house whom the custom of the age did not allow to be present, and so, with his usual considerate kindness and affection, David came to bless them, too, when Michal speaks words which reveal her true character. David, however, justifies himself and the judgment of Michal is recorded.

Here we have another instance of the enemies of the Lord despising His people, and above all, His anointed king.

We could elaborate at considerable length on the example of David, the example of humility before God, which is so foreign to the minds of wicked and worldly men that they despise it.

The third instance occurs in 2 Kings ix. 30: "And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it, and she painted her face and tired her head and looked out at the window."

"Painted her face" is literally "put her eyes in antimony," that is, she dyed her upper and under eyelids with pigment, the effect of which was to increase the apparent size of the eye and give it an unusual brilliancy. Here we pause a few moments to consider the perfect harmony of the Scriptures, as we have here another undesigned link between the portions we are considering.

We have already referred to God's words through the prophet Isaiah (liv. 11): "I will lay thy stones with fair colours," the last words being rendered "glistening" in 1 Chron. xxix 2. This is literally "in antimony" stones of a hue like antimony, with which women painted their eyes.

So Jezebel, foreseeing her fate, determined to keep up her regal splendour to the last, using these feminine embellishments, putting on her royal robes, with her head jewels (tiara) so that she might die as became a queen. Whatever else she might have been, she was no coward, and what was her frame of mind? It was pride. Proud people always think that they are superior to others. Her name has gone down in history as the type of either an individual or a system opposed to God and endeavouring to seduce His servants from His service. Jezebel's hatred towards God's prophets and her devotion to the prophets of Baal (1 Kings xvi. 31) has been the chief representation of heathenish seductions. The prophet Malachi tells us that all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, are to be as stubble in the day of the Lord, and they will be devoured root and branch, not even the skull and the palms of the hands will be found.

Then we have a man who tells us that he looked out of the window. Proverbs vii. 6: "At the window of my house I looked through the casement." The speaker is the Wise Man. What did he see? The evening was getting darker (twilight turned into evening, then into the black and dark night), a young man is sauntering along (not brought out in the A.V.) when a woman meets him. Her attire should have warned him, but he is void of understanding, and he goes after her as the ox goes to the slaughter or the fool to the correction of the stocks. He has taken no notice of the exhortation of v.s 1—5. The lesson to us, surely, is, let us say to Wisdom "My sister" and call understanding our kinswoman, to keep us from strange doctrine and spiritual adultery.

There are always men and women who are jealous of others. Sometimes it is because the one has a superior position, and there are various other reasons.

We read (Dan. vi. 10) that Daniel was the first of three presidents over 120 princes and he fell a victim to this jealousy. The other presidents and the princes tried to find something that they could use against him and so bring about his downfall. They could find nothing, and the only way they could get at him was through his religion. So the king was persuaded to issue an edict forbidding anyone to ask a petition of any God or man for 30 days, the king himself alone being excepted, on pain of a penalty which was equal to death.

What was the effect on Daniel?

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, and his windows being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem—we note that he does not open them on purpose, that would be ostentation, but neither does he take the trouble to shut them, that would be cowardice—he kneeled down upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

Of course they found him thus. They had not studied his actions for years without knowing that they could rely on him doing the same whether a penalty was attached or not. We all know the record and the result. The lesson to us seems to be, if those jealous of us can only find occasion against us concerning the law of our God, happy are we.

Windows can also be the means of salvation. In the book that bears his name, chapter ii., we have the record of Joshua sending out of Shittim two men to spy Jericho secretly. These two men came to Jericho and lodged in the house of Rahab, a harlot. The king of Jericho was told and sends to Rahab with orders to produce the men. She tells the messengers that, although the men had come to her house, they had departed just before the time for the shutting of the gates. She did not know where

they had gone, but thought that they could be easily overtaken if pursued. The messengers believed her and went. When all was safe, the two men left their hiding place. Rahab told them that the people of the land were terror stricken, knowing of the designs of the Jewish host, having heard of all the marvellous deeds that had been wrought on their behalf.

She was perfectly assured that, by the might of God, they must prevail, and in that confidence she exacted a pledge for herself and her relations in consideration of the aid that she had afforded them.

This was readily given. She was to tie a scarlet cord which they gave her to a particular window of her house. This was to enable them to recognise the house, and they pledged themselves for the safety of all who might be in the house when the city was taken.

The sign chosen by the spies seems to have been chosen with some reference to the Passover solemnity, when the door posts were sprinkled with blood to denote that the destroying angel might pass by doors so marked when the first-born of Egypt were slain.

The gates were shut, but Rahab's house was on the city wall, and she was able to let them down by a cord from the window in the very same manner as that in which the Apostle Paul made his escape from Damascus (2 Cor. xi. 33).

It might be remarked that this was only a temporary safety, but in the case of Rahab it eventually led to her accepting the Truth and marrying into the Holy Nation, becoming one of a line through which (including other Gentile women) the great Saviour of mankind was born.

Both Rahab and Paul are bracketed together in Heb. xi., the former as one of the old worthies who have not yet received the promises, the latter as one of "us" for whom a better thing has been reserved, that they without us should not be perfect—obtain eternal salvation.

H. F. WICKS.

Burnt Oak, Middlesex.

Shadows.

Shadows, weird shadows, with frightening force,
Loom all around God's glorious earth;
Shadows of ill forebodings of death,
Taking away all laughter and mirth.
Shadows creating a tremb'ling of heart,
Wond'ring what sorrows and trials shall be,
Tyranny rampant where enemies gain,
No one to set the bound prisoner free.

Shadows, yes, shadows, but comforting ones,
'Neath God's wings we safely trust.
Sheltered and calmed with so sacred a thought,
He careth for us, though born of the dust.
The shadows of mercy, goodness and love
Give succour while toiling through heat of day;
Rejoicing in hope, for now night is breaking,
And all the ill shadows by morn fade away.

WINIFRED M. BOOTH.

“**THE WHOLE FAMILY.**”—Eph. iii. 15.

Ecclesial News

Ecclesial news is welcomed and will be inserted from those Ecclesias throughout the world who wholeheartedly and unreservedly believe and uphold our Statement of Faith, known as the Birmingham Amended Statement, and who as a result restrict their fellowship to such in accordance with Divine direction.

All Ecclesial News and news from correspondents should be sent to Bro. G. H. Denney, 47 Birchington Road, Crouch End, N.8

All should be sent in by the 5th of each month.

BALTIMORE, M.D., U.S.A. —A LETTER.

We have no complaint to make at all. I send to others some of the extra numbers you let me have. Our ecclesia, always small, is still smaller now through losing brethren because of the draft. The Lord can work as well through few as through many, if that few are deeply interested in scriptural matters, but those who are deeply interested are few indeed. I sometimes wonder since it is going to be in the days of the coming of the Son of Man as it was in the days of Noah, if such an insignificant number of souls as eight is going to be about the number of those living and professing Christadelphian doctrine and conduct who will be saved. Eight in the days of Noah would be called in these days a representative number, if the names weren't actually given. I suppose it need not worry me about how many are saved, but that I look to myself that I receive a full reward.

I was glad that you maintained that Russia was to be the king of the North and not Germany to have that role. I was surprised at some who took up the idea that Germany was Gog. They surely have had to give up the notion they held, for what could be plainer now to unbelievers as well as to ourselves that Russia is going to have a tremendous influence in Europe as a whole after the so-called peace has been reached? I don't know how you have lived through some of the frightful hours in England you must have suffered. And if it has been bad in England, what is the Continent suffering? If the Lord is raining such destruction on those who have never professed allegiance to Him, what is in store for those who have taken on the saving name of Jesus and refuse to accept the responsibility it brings?

God grant that we may be accounted worthy to escape all the things that are coming to pass and to stand before the Son of Man. May you keep well. Your sister in Christ, Beulah H. Williams.

[Note: Sis. Williams is the daughter of the Bro. Williams with whom Dr. J. Thomas resided in Baltimore. —Ed.]

BILLERICAY.

We regret to announce the death of Bro. W. A. Wille, well known to the older generation of Christadelphians, who fell asleep on February 16th at the age of 89½. He was buried at Sutton Cemetery, Southend-on-Sea, on February 18th. There was a large company present at the graveside. He was baptised 49 years ago. He was the father of Bro. W. Leslie Wille, of Rayleigh, and was a man of very gentle disposition.

BIRMINGHAM. —Edmund Street. Breaking of Bread, 3.30; Lecture, 6.0; Sunday School, 3.30. Bible Class, Thursday evening, 7.0.

We are glad to report the following additions from our Sunday School: Margaret Clarice Grenfell, age 18, the daughter of our Sis. Grenfell; also Jean Valarie Turner, age 17, the daughter of our Bro. and Sis. Turner. We delight to see these young sisters remembering their Creator in the days of their youth and we pray that they may walk worthy of their Creator and so obtain that crown of life that fadeth not away.

On February 12th we held our annual Sunday School party and prize distribution—a very happy time was spent with the children, who entertained us with singing and selected recitations, which was added to by various brethren and sisters.

We have been pleased to welcome around the Table of the Lord Sis. Gray, Ealing, Sis. Nickleson, Worcester, Sis. Marshall, Ettington, and Brethren Young and B. Williams, junr., both of Newport. —T. Phipps, Ass. Rec. Bro.

BOSTON, MASS., U.S.A. —218, Huntington Avenue. Lecture, 10.30 a.m.; Sunday School, 11.45; Memorial Service, 12.45.

We would appreciate a visit from brethren and sisters travelling through New England. — Kenneth MacKellar, Rec. Bro.

BRANTFORD, CANADA. —Christadelphian Hall, 44, George Street. Sundays, 9.45 and 11.0 a.m. and 7.0 p.m.; Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m.

On January 7th all enjoyed the annual Sunday School entertainment and prize distribution and supper. Visitors at the Table of the Lord since last report include Bro. John Sommerville, Jersey City Ecclesia, Bro. and Sis. Clifford Styles, Toronto (late of Iroquois Falls) and daughter, Margaret, Bro. and Sis. Garfield Robinson and Sis. Martin, also of Toronto, and from Detroit Bro. Arthur Livermore, together with son, Raymond, and daughter, Margaret, Bro. and Sis. Ernest Styles and Bro. and Sis. Herbert Styles. Brethren Ernest and Garfield gave us the good word of exhortation. — H. W. Styles, Rec. Bro.

BRISTOL. —73, Groveleaze, Shirehampton. Sunday School, 3.0; Breaking of Bread, 6.15; Bible Class, Thursdays, 7.15.

We have good news this month. Edward Bailey, second eldest son of Bro. and Sis. Bailey and eldest scholar of the Sunday School, put on the saving name in the waters of baptism on Saturday, February 26th. Thus eight years of sowing the seed has brought forth fruit to the glory of God at last.

We are very grateful to the London North (Winchmore Hill) Ecclesia, who examined and immersed the new candidate for probation to the Kingdom of God. We very much appreciate and express our grateful thanks to them and especially Bro. Denney who, with wonderful agility and enterprise, made the well-made plans possible in so short a time. Leaving Bristol at 9.30 a.m. we, Bro. Bailey and son, were met at Paddington by Mr. Denney who, after taking us to lunch, whisked us off to the hall in North London, Bro. Bailey attending the usual Bible Class while the candidate for immersion was successfully examined by Brethren Bath and Headon, after which the immersion took place and at the Breaking of Bread which followed he was given the "Right Hand of Fellowship" by Bro. Bath before a good number of brethren and sisters. We very much appreciated their support and were sorry we had to leave so soon after to enable us to catch the 6.30 train from Paddington back to Bristol, which we did quite successfully.

We pray and trust that our Heavenly Father may give our new brother strength to run the race with patience and self-denial until the Master returns and that he may be among the faithful ones who will receive the reward of everlasting life in the Kingdom of God. —A. V. Bailey, Rec. Bro.

GLASGOW. —Central Halls, 25, Bath Street. Breaking of Bread, 1.0 p.m., Sunday.

Since our last report we have been able to rent a small room at the above address for two hours on a Sunday. We are unable to have our organ or other equipment with us meantime, owing to the lack of accommodation. We are thankful, however, to have some place to meet in to keep the feast of remembrance in these evil days, as halls are almost unobtainable up here. Again we welcomed to the Lord's Table Bro. and Sis. Weir, of Motherwell, and are glad at all times to have the company of brethren and sisters who may be up in this corner of the vineyard. —D. M. Clark, Rec. Bro.

HOUSTON, TEXAS, U.S.A. —Harrisburg: School. Sunday School, 10.0 a.m.; Memorial, 11.0 a.m.

Our ecclesia has been augmented in size by the addition of Bro. and Sis. Harrington, who have moved here from Lampasas, Texas. We are indeed glad to receive them since they are both earnest and sincere workers in the Truth.

We greatly rejoice that Bro. H. R. Johnson, who has been out of fellowship with us for some time, has been received back into the assembly. May he hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

Bro. S. S. Wolfe, of the Lampasas, Texas, Ecclesia, was a welcome visitor among us in September.

It has been our painful duty, in accordance with 1 Cor. v. 11, to withdraw fellowship from Bro. Claud Passmore on account of conduct unworthy of the name of Christ. Our hope and prayer to God is that our brother will be restored to us again soon with strength and determination to uphold the greatness of the calling wherewith we are called. —E. W. Banta, Rec. Bro.

LONDON, N. —Adult School Hall, Church Hill, Winchmore Hill, N.21.

Our fraternal gathering was held in the hall of the Society of Friends, Euston Road, on Saturday, March 11th. The hall was kindly loaned to us for the occasion by the Quakers. There was a crowded attendance and the brethren who spoke gave fine counsel, from the Word. Bro. I. Rees, of Newport, spoke on Faith, Bro. A. E. Headon, dealt with Hope and Bro. J. L. Mettam spoke feelingly upon Love. We had a very happy tea together after the meeting, again having to acknowledge the kindness of the "Friends" in making this practicable.

On Sunday, March 12th, we had the company of the following brethren and sisters, who stayed over the week-end: Bro. I. Rees and Bro. D. M. Williams, of Newport, Sis. Fitzgerald and two other sisters from Birmingham.

During the past month we have welcomed to the Table of the Lord Bro. J. A. Balchin, of Putney, Bro. H. M. Doust and Sis. Ruddick, of St. Albans, Bro. A. V. Bailey, of Bristol, Bro. D. M. Williams and Bro. I. Rees, of Newport. We also had the great pleasure of assisting Mr. Edward Bailey, of Shirehampton, Bristol, to obey the summons to repent and be baptised. This was on February 26th. —C. H. Bath, Rec. Bro.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA.

We cull the following from the "Argus," sent on by Bro. J. Hughes: —

Twelve appeals by Christadelphian conscientious objectors to service in the military forces as non-combatants were upheld by Judge Magennis in the County Court.

The judge said he thought the appellants had a conscientious belief against combatant or non-combatant duties. It was not for the court to say whether it agreed with those beliefs and whether they were ridiculous or not.

The judge varied in each case the order made in the lower court to provide that each appellant should be registered to perform such work of a civil character as specified by the Minister for Labour and National Service and should undergo any training provided and approved by the Minister in connection with such work.

The Christadelphian Church, which claims to represent the practice and faith of apostolic times, advises its members not to work on munitions or do anything which might be used in the destruction of human life, Judge Magennis was told by the Recorder of this sect (Robert George Walker).

NEWPORT, MON. —Clarence Hall, Rodney Road. Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 11.0 a.m.; Lecture, 6.30 p.m. Wednesdays at 7.15 p.m.

Since last report we have had the pleasure of the company in the service of the Truth of Bro. R. Smith, of Birmingham Ecclesia, on January 30th. Our brother faithfully exhorted those of like precious faith and in the evening conveyed the message to the stranger. In these days of darkness it is certainly encouraging to have a few strangers at the lectures, and at Newport we have up to now had the privilege of anything up to six strangers almost regularly. One of our hearers is a young man stationed at Chepstow in the N.C.C. Before joining, he had been in touch, by attendance at meetings with a sect known as "Followers of Christ" at his home at Eastleigh. He has a good grasp of the fundamentals of Divine Truth, which he has studied more closely since joining the Forces and says had he known as much before his tribunal he would have faced up to a straight religious issue. We hope that God will allow us to further enlighten our friends to their eternal well-being and our Father's glory. It is our earnest desire that in a very humble capacity Christ may find us working and watching when He comes. —Thomas H. Lambert, Rec. Bro.

PLYMOUTH. —Oddfellows' Hall, 148, Union Street (next to Gaumont Theatre). Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 2.30 p.m.; Lecture, 4.0 p.m. Bible Class, Thursdays (house to house).

On February 27th six of our members received our newly immersed Bro. Murton into fellowship at Newton Abbot. They also broke bread with his wife, Sis. Murton, who, having endorsed our position, has now become a member of our Ecclesia. We pray that, having diligently instructed her husband in the Way of Life and seen him put on the Saving Name in the appointed manner, she will be a companion and help to him on their journey Zionward.

Our Bro. Phillips has been dangerously ill with pneumonia, but we are happy to report that in our Heavenly Father's mercy he is now well on the way to recovery. —Hubert R. Nicholls, Rec. Bro.

ST. ALBANS. —A TRIBUNAL CASE.

Bro. P. W. Goodwin appeared before the Westminster Tribunal last month. The decision was: "That the applicant has satisfied the Tribunal that he conscientiously objects to military service." The applicant stated that he had a conscientious objection to any form of conditional exemption because it would render him liable to be called up for Civil Defence service, to which he had a conscientious objection. The only objection he had to being registered subject to a condition was that it left him liable to be called up for Civil Defence. The Tribunal understood that the appellate tribunal hold that the question whether an objection to conditional registration shall be recognised must be decided as a matter of discretion in each case, and they thought that the right course in this case was to impose conditions as set out below, which do not require the applicant to undertake any work to which he has a conscientious objection and to draw the attention of the Ministry of Labour to the fact that in the Tribunal's view the applicant has a conscientious objection to Civil Defence.

The decision of the Tribunal, therefore, was: "That the applicant shall remain in his present situation with the G.P.O. for as long as he would have been permitted to remain had he been liable to be called up for military service and that he thereafter undertake full-time hospital or ambulance work under civilian control or full-time work in connection with the land."

TORONTO, CANADA. —Kimbourne Hall, 1480, Danforth Avenue. Sundays: 11.0 a.m. and 7.0 p.m.

We are happy to report three immersions into the Saving Name of the Master. On October 31st, 1943, June Curry, a member of our Sunday School and a daughter of Bro. and Sis. Sydney Curry, on November 21st, 1943, Verna Trotter, and on December 22nd, William Andrews. One thing is needful: and they have chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away if they walk faithfully in that newness of life to which they have been introduced by their obedience of the Gospel. Our ecclesia has also been greatly strengthened by the removal of Bro. Clifford Styles and family from Iroquois Falls. With him has come his wife, Sis. Lillian Styles, and their daughter, Margaret. We are very happy to have them with us. Recent visitors were Bro. and Sis. Calvin Clubb and Bro. Jack Clubb (London), Bro. William Drywood and Sis. Addie Turner (Hamilton) and Sis. Olive Turner (Winnipeg).

We have decided, if the Lord will, to hold a fraternal gathering on Good Friday, April 7th, 1944. A cordial invitation is therefore extended to our brethren and sisters, far and near, to attend and help us to make it a day of rejoicing among ourselves and a day of praise to our Father in Heaven. — George A. Gibson, Rec. Bro.

CLAPHAM FELLOWSHIP.

We greatly regret to say that a further split has taken place in this fellowship following upon the rejection of Matt. xviii. and the determination to proceed by "edict." The Pefferlaw, Canada, Ecclesia in their fellowship has now withdrawn from all who do not endorse their decision in regard to "alternative service."

We have received further correspondence from members of this fellowship confirming the general acceptance of the "edict" form of withdrawal with its challenge to ecclesial independence and to Matt. xviii. and also upholding, on pain of disfellowship, the position that is now made part of Clauses B and C that a man may have two wives, one in and one outside the one Faith, providing always that he divorces the one at some (or any) time before his baptism and marries the sister of his choice afterwards, even although he knew he was wrong in going to law before a Gentile court at the time he did it and if his intention was to be obedient to the Truth afterwards.

DEATH OF BRO. D. L. JENKINS.

We regret to say that Bro. D. L. Jenkins died on March 12 after a short illness. A fuller report will appear next month.

Turkey.

Turkey stands between Russia and Palestine to-day. In some way or other, either before the big push south or at the moment of its launching, Turkey must give place to Russia or join her in a common endeavour. It is therefore of great interest to see the present international contacts of the Turkish Government. The Book of Revelation (xvi. 12) likens Turkey to the Euphrates "drying up," and says of the final phase of its evaporation that it should be at the time of the last great conflict between human forces.

Lessons from Paul.

No. 8—ABOUT THE ADMISSION OF THE GENTILES TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

The threefold narrative in the Acts of the Apostles about the conversion of Paul suggests that the primary reason for Paul's apostleship to the Gentiles was the embarrassing fact of his having previously persecuted the Jewish Christians. The latter would be suspicious of him, and thus fear to heed his message, which would more likely be given a ready reception by those unacquainted with Paul's antecedents.

However that may be, the preaching to the Gentiles, though revolutionary in some respects, was equally the logical outcome of the Gospel which Paul had espoused. While Jesus had confined His mission to the Jews, His message had universalist implications, and it was Paul who showed what these implications were.

Concerning what Jesus taught, the first three Gospels tell us that He who said "Go not into the way of the Gentiles. . . . But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," also said, in parable, that the Kingdom should be taken away from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof (Matt. x. 5-6, xxi. 23), a statement made plainer by His commission to His disciples after His resurrection "to go and teach all nations" (xxviii. 19). Again, in His encounter with the Syro-Phœnician woman, He seemed to compare the Gentile with the dogs of the street; yet He said, "Let the children first be fed," implying that the dogs might also expect their turn to follow, and he commended the woman's quick repartee that even the dogs can eat the children's crumbs (Mark vii. 26-8). More explicit were His post-resurrectional sayings, two of which are recorded by Luke: the first in His Gospel about preaching Christ's name "among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," and the second in the Acts, where He appoints His followers to be "witnesses . . . both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Luke xxiv. 47, Acts i. 8).

But it is in the Johannine Gospel that the sayings of Jesus find closest correspondence with the teaching of Paul. There Jesus spoke of Himself as "the light of the world," of giving His "flesh for the life of the world," of the hour which should come when the worshipper "in spirit and in truth" would not be confined to local sanctuaries either at Gerizim or Jerusalem. He spoke of other sheep "not of this fold," to whom he was shepherd, and, finally, just before He suffered, He cried: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me."

However plain the teaching of Jesus may have been, explicitly it was confined to the statement that the Gospel would be extended to the Gentiles. The original disciples found this, hard enough to understand; the implications of Jesus' teaching as to the conditions under which the Gentiles were to be admitted were quite beyond them. But it was no mystery to Paul, because God had revealed to Him how that the Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs, fellow-members of the body and fellow-partakers, of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel (Eph. iii. 1-6). In explaining this to His brethren, Paul was not teaching something new. He was merely giving theological expression and development to what Jesus had already taught. In doing so, he removed those elements of Judaism which had stood in the way of proselytes.

This was important, for large numbers of Gentiles, tired of the follies or obscenities of pagan religion, had been attracted to the ethical monotheism of Judaism and had allowed themselves to become attached—some closely, some more loosely—to the synagogue. Some had become full proselytes, but the majority shrank from circumcision and the other ordinances of the law. They were attracted by the ethical, yet checked by the ceremonial elements. Consequently, they were content to remain "strangers within the gate" of Israel; in the Acts they are styled "the God-fearers." It was this class of Gentiles which provided the ready audience to the Christian preacher of a faith which at once incorporated the highest principles of Judaism and left aside its ceremonial observances.

The disturbance which followed when some Jewish Christians endeavoured to reimpose the ceremonial restrictions, of Judaism was therefore to be expected. The Judaisers were proposing to re-erect the very barrier which, by its removal, had been the means of the Gentile acceptance of Christianity. This, surely, was a betrayal.

But it was more than that. It was a denial of the spirit of liberty which was enshrined in the Christian faith. And this was realised more clearly by Paul than by any other. In combating this heresy the Apostle used many arguments; but fundamental to them all was the Pauline principle on which we have laid so much stress in previous articles. This is that the spirit ("the spirit of life in Christ Jesus") is in sharp antithesis to law; that righteousness is the possession and demonstration of the spirit of Christ—it is not the formal compliance with law; that salvation is attained by grace through faith—not by legal conformity; and, moreover, that both grace and faith are gifts from God—they are not rewards for meritorious service. The law no longer occupied a meditational position; it was no longer the ideal of a good life. It had been replaced by Christ, and in Him all distinction between Jew and Gentile vanished.

Thus Paul wrote to the Galatians: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law . . . that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith" (iii. 14-15). The Ephesians were taught the same lesson: "Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace who hath made both one and hath broken down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (ii. 13-16). To the Colossians he wrote: "Put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him; where there is neither Gentile nor Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all" (iii. 11). To the Corinthians: "By one spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink in one spirit" (i. Ep. xii. 13). To the Romans: "A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth" (iii. 28, x. 4).

In five passages, to five ecclesias, Paul teaches the same lesson in five ways: —To the Galatians—Christ is the end of the law; in Him no barrier to the Gentile therefore remains. To the Ephesians—Christ has reconciled us to God; both Jews and Gentiles are acceptable to God apart from law. To the Colossians—the new life of the Christian is not one of compliance with law, but one of the outworking of the spirit of Christ. To the Corinthians—unity of Jew and Gentile is attained, not by common adherence to one law, but by being baptised by one spirit into One Body. To the Romans—faith in Christ, not the works of the law, is the basis of righteousness and salvation.

The usefulness of the law had thus come to an end. It was as Paul said to the Galatians, a preparatory form of Divine education to be set aside when the pupil became more advanced (iii. 23, iv. 3). To succumb to the Judaisers was to "turn again to the weak and beggarly elements," again "to be in bondage." For those who succumbed, Christ would "become of no effect," His work nullified (iv. 9, v. 4).

In conclusion, it is evident from the amount of space Paul gives to it, that the question of the admission of the Gentiles loomed very large, very large, in his day. But to-day it has disappeared—with the Jewish Christian church. But, while that may be so, the fundamental principles which lay behind Paul's attitude on this question, and which have again been enumerated here, are as important to-day as they were nineteen centuries ago.

TERTIUS.

FROM THE STUDY

The Epistles to the Seven Churches

(Rev. ii. and iii.)

Bro. J. Thomas, in "Eureka," Vol. I., very properly shows that the epistles were written in the vein of "things shortly to come to pass," and were therefore related to the real periods and the epochs of time in which they took their place.

There has been of recent years some neglect of the good Doctor's writings, and a few writers in contemporary magazines have quietly shelved this interpretation in favour of the idea that the epistles had to do with ecclesias contemporary with one another and with their relationship to each other.

The epistles do not deal with "ecclesial relationships" and "independence of individual ecclesias," as some assert. Each ecclesia addressed is used as a type of the position of the whole body, i.e., all the ecclesias combined at certain very well-defined times.

With this in mind, and still following "Eureka," we discover that the general fault found with the One body was that it tolerated error in its midst. "Thou hast them there," is the constant refrain, and Bro. Thomas shows how neglect of this warning in successive generations led to the terrible disaster of the apostasy.

Just take one instance. Athenagoras joined the ecclesia at Athens in the 31st century. He began to teach the doctrine of the immortality of the soul which he had learned from Plato. He was strenuously denounced by Ireneus, Bishop of Lyons, in France, and the admittance of the doctrine in fellowship was described by him as "a very dangerous innovation." But those responsible for the "Thou hast them there" refused to rid themselves of the innovation and his teaching, and in two hundred years' time the believers in mortality as man's condition were ousted. The camel, having got his face into the tent, gradually pushed out its former tenants and took possession.

The object of putting aside "Eureka" has sometimes been to provide a new cloak for toleration of wrong doctrine in our day. Sometimes, of course, this logical sequence is not seen by the writers because they have not steeped themselves in that great work "Eureka." We counsel a return to it. We often wish that Ireneus had openly "split" the brotherhood over this immortal soul doctrine, instead of contenting himself with merely fighting it. He would have done better service, as the sequel showed. Do not let us have the sad indictment to face when we come to judgment, "Thou hast them there."

Letters to a Friend in Doubt—No. 13.

Peter's Confession.

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi He asked His disciples, saying: Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

"And Jesus answered and said unto him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee: That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 13-19).

The sixteenth chapter of Matthew's Gospel opens with a significant phrase, "The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came . . . tempting." It is significant, because this is the first time that these erstwhile enemies are mentioned together since they joined forces some three years previously to spy upon and to interrogate the forerunner, John Baptist (Matt. iii. 7, John i. 24). Once more these leaders of Jewish thought and customs ("the blind leaders of the blind" is Jesus' name for them) see their position and prestige in danger on account of a popular preacher. So they forget their old quarrels and organise a campaign, a coalition, to deal with this troublesome free lance, seeking to trap Him in His speech. But Jesus refuses "battle." He treats them curtly and leaves them, not to meet them again until the last week of His life, when they get at death-grips with Him. Then He does not leave them as He does now; He knows it is a fight to the finish; and it is they who "leave Him and go away" (Matt. xxii. 21). But just now, when the final visit to Jerusalem still lies in the future, Jesus is not ready to fight. He wants a breathing space. So, breaking the gathering circle of foes, He warns His disciples against any further parley with these people. They must have nothing to do with His tricky opponents (vs. 6-12).

To escape His assailants, Jesus leaves Galilee, moving towards the sources of the Jordan into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi. This town, which was some 23 miles north of Bethsaida, stood at the foot of Mount Hermon. It was rebuilt by the tetrarch Philip in honour of the Caesar and served as an outpost of the Roman Empire. Both the city and its pagan temple were built of white rock (limestone and marble), and there the Emperor was worshipped as God manifested in flesh. No doubt these facts provide the background for what Jesus has to say. The Kingdom which Jesus was to build was to be constructed from living stones, like Simon Peter; convinced all-venturing believers in Himself as God's Son.

Resting here, He has leisure to think of what lies ahead—a brief struggle, betrayal by friends, a wretched trial, a cruel death, a triumphant resurrection, and then—an ascension to heaven, following which, His Spirit would develop that community of living stones which would constitute His ecclesia, the first elements of which are already to be found in the little band which are gathered about Him.

It is time to prepare these disciples for what is to follow. Their association with Him has already led them to wonder at their Master and to postulate His divine origin. But this gradually formed conviction needs stabilising. So Jesus asks them what is thought and said about Him (verse 13), then, what do they think? (verse 15). To which Peter, speaking on behalf of them all, replies, "Thou art the Messiah, God's Son." A magnificent confession this, even though Peter has yet to learn that Messiahship comprehends death as well as victory, and that Sonship involves suffering as well as glory.

Jesus, in reply, called Peter "blessed." "Happy art thou, Son of John: a great honour is thine. Not because thou hast grasped the secret, but because God hath chosen thee to whom to reveal the secret." "Flesh and blood" implies humanity in its earthly mortal aspects. This knowledge came down from heaven; it did not come up from the earth.

Jesus continues: "And I also say unto thee" (R.V.—not as in A.V., which misplaces "also"). I.e., "I also, as well as the rather." The Father has revealed to Peter one great truth; Jesus proceeds to reveal another. The one revelation paves the way for the other.

"Thou art Peter." Jesus introduces Simon Peter's second name here for the purpose of playing on its meaning. For Peter's name in Aramaic (the language then in general use in Palestine) is Kephias, and kepha means a rock. "Thou art Kephias, and upon this kepha I will build my church." The word-play is preserved in the Greek, except that there a change in gender occurs: "Thou art Petros (masculine), and upon this petra (feminine) I will build. . . ."

Now we are brought face to face with a real difficulty in interpretation. But, first, it must be observed that a play on words is a play, the outcome sometimes of humour. It follows therefore that we cannot expect an exact equation between the meaning of the word played upon and the pun as

used. Hence, it would be unwise to insist that the rock on which the church was to be built was Peter. It might rather be Peter's faith. Students have always been divided as to whether the rock which Jesus had in mind was Peter or his faith. It is, I think, almost impossible to decide on exegetical grounds, and most writers tend to adopt the view most acceptable to their theological prepossessions. For example, for the Catholic Church the rock is, without question, Peter (and, it is added, most unwarrantably, the successors of Peter); the early Protestants thought the rock unquestionably to be Peter's faith. Let us view the alternatives more closely.

(a) If Peter is the rock, then Jesus means that He regards Peter as the first of a nucleus of believers — the foundation member of a new community which is based on the faith in Messiah Jesus. The image of the rock which bears the community, and applies to a particular person, was not strange in Jesus' day. Thus an ancient Midrash (commentary) on Deut. xxi. is quoted by Taylor ("Sayings of the Jewish Fathers." p. 160) to the effect that God, in contemplating creation, said, " 'How shall I create the world while the godless exist and provoke Me?' But when He saw Abraham who should be born, then He spake, 'See! I have found a rock to build on it, to found on it the world.' Therefore named He Abraham rock, for it is said, 'Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn' (Is. i. 1.)." How ever atrocious the rabbinical exposition may be the idea underlying it is clear. And just as the rabbis regarded Abraham as the foundation and keystone of their nation, so our Lord regards Peter as the foundation of the new Israel. On this interpretation, therefore, Jesus means more or less literally that Peter is the rock. But in admitting this, it neither gives Peter a perpetual primacy in the Church, nor does it endow his self-appointed successors with any ecclesiastical power.

(b) If, however, the exactness of the play is not to be pressed, then the rock is the object of the revelation from God. "Flesh and blood did not reveal it," i.e., the Messiahship and Sonship of Christ. "Upon this rock of revealed truth I will build my church." It was as if Jesus says to Peter, "You have given expression to a revealed truth, and your name Kephias suggests a metaphorical name for it. It shall be the kepha on which the Church shall stand. In other words, it shall be the central doctrine of the Truth."

"I will build my church." Again we must hesitate. We must not read into Christ's use of "church" the full meaning which it possesses for us after twenty centuries. We cannot say whether Jesus then contemplated the complete break with the Jewish "church" which came after. Perhaps a glance at the words employed here may provide us with a clue. The Greek word is the one so familiar to us: *ecclesia*. It occurs in this passage and in Matt. xviii. 17, but nowhere else in the four gospels. In the LXX. it usually represents the Hebrew *qahal* = Israel as a congregation assembled for religious purposes (e.g., "the church in the wilderness," Acts vii. 38). No doubt it is used by Matthew in this passage as the equivalent of the Aramaic *k'nishta*, a word in current use for a separate congregation or synagogue. If so, the meaning ties up with the historical situation. We know of the synagogal opposition to Jesus and His followers. At one time He had been welcome there and had been invited to participate in the services (e.g., Luke iv. 16), but later He was frozen out. This gradual transformation of the official attitude to Jesus is best seen in Mark's Gospel, but it is in John's narrative that the final position is to be seen most clearly. The parents of the man born blind hesitated to attest to the circumstances of their son's cure "because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already that if any man did confess that He (Jesus) was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue (iv. 22). The Jews had by this means forced Jesus and His followers to become a separate synagogue or church, a remnant of true Israel.

The *ecclesia*, or *k'nishta*, of which Jesus speaks here therefore comprises His followers, still forming part of the general synagogue or congregation, but nevertheless constituting a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Pet. ii. 9; see Peter's use of this passage in conjunction with his description of Jesus as a chief corner stone). Hence we find in Jesus' words an allusion to Daniel vii. 27, where the Kingdom is promised to the *ecclesia* of the saints of the Most High, the synagogue of the Last Days.

What, then, Jesus means is that Peter and those who hold a Petrine faith constitute the New Israel or Ecclesia, the ground of association of which is His Messiahship and Sonship. They are heirs of the Kingdom and the saviours of Israel. "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against them."

By this last phrase is meant that this congregation of firstborns, this building of living stones, will not be subject to the powers of eternal death (for this is the meaning of the "gates of Hell," as will be seen by reference to Is. xxxviii. 10). Jesus knew, in the words of the psalmist, that His soul would not be left in hell, nor would His body see corruption; once raised, death would have no more dominion over Him. So likewise, though they might linger in the grave, yet they, too, should ultimately be freed from the prison of the grave because they are children of the resurrection.

Thus far Jesus has been concerned with Peter and the faith of Peter, which will provide the basis of union between his fellow-Peters. He proceeds now to speak of what further steps Peter should take who had been first in his recognition of the Messiah.

To him shall be given "the keys of the kingdom of heaven." This is quite a different figure of speech, but, as in the case of the rock, it has its basis in the Old Testament. For in Isaiah xxii. 22, God declares of Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah: "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open." The same prophecy is obviously drawn upon in Rev. iii. 7, where in the apocalyptic message to the ecclesia in Philadelphia the Spirit is described as "he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and none shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth." It is clear from these passages that to hold the keys of the Kingdom, which were vested in Christ, but transferred metaphorically to Peter, implies (a) a position of power and administrative authority, and (b) the application of that power to admit or to refuse admittance to the Kingdom. But it is evident from the teaching in Matthew xviii. and elsewhere, when certain disciples sought supremacy in the Kingdom when established, that the leadership which Jesus promises here relates not to the future Kingdom, but to the present testimony of the saving faith in Messiah-Jesus. That is, Peter's is the responsibility for extending the Gospel of the Kingdom, and, by implication, of accepting or rejecting those seeking the way to the Kingdom.

Did then Peter use these keys? We will not repeat what Dr. Thomas says about this matter in *Elpis Israel* where (pp. 196-209) he treats it very fully; but a short quotation from "Eureka," Vol. I., p. 378, will suffice. Speaking of Peter's use of the keys, he says: "Peter had opened the door or gate which gave admission into 'the way' which leads to the Kingdom. He had opened it to the Jew on Pentecost, and to the nations at the house of Cornelius; not, indeed, by his own power, but by His which descended upon him in baptism of Spirit, even by the power of Him who openeth and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens.'"

The next promise of Jesus to Peter is that "whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." In "*Elpis Israel*" (p. 199) Dr. Thomas proceeds to show that "knowledge is the key to remission, or release from sins, and to an entrance into the Kingdom of God. No one can enter this kingdom in his sins, and destitute of a character approved of God." The Dr. concludes that in exercising his prerogative of revealing or not revealing the mystery of the Kingdom, Peter was at the same time securing the remission or otherwise of men's sins. There is thus a close connection between the two parts of verse 19.

We have lingered over-long on these verses, but it will be clear that they relate to the central truth of our Lord's Messiahship and Divine Sonship, to Jesus' revelation of Himself to the understanding of Peter, and to Peter's part in extending that discovery to both Jew and Gentile. There are many difficulties of interpretation, but, whatever these may be, they give no warrant for investing Peter with ecclesiastical and episcopal authority as "the Vicar of Christ." Even less do they authorise a similar investment of Peter's "successors." As the Dr. says: "But we would ask any reasonable man, unspoiled by human folly and absurdity, if a power be conferred on (A), eighteen hundred years ago, is it therefore bestowed on (B), living eighteen centuries after? The keys were promised to Peter, and

not to successors of Peter, if it were possible for him to have them in such an office: which none but the most stupidly ignorant of the Scriptures would venture to affirm" (Elpis Israel, p. 197).
London. J. B.

Gog.

II.—THE PRINCE OF ROSH.

(Continued.)

Dr. Ossendowski, one-time professor at Petrograd, has travelled much in those old lands east of Tobolsk, the Tubal of Ezekiel xxxviii., and feels that the old idea of the Asiatic Peril is no less real because dormant. Some years ago he published his account of awakened Asia "full of enigmas, but also full of answers to the questions set by the destiny of mankind. This great continent of mysterious pontiffs, living gods, mahatmas . . . is awakening and the ocean of hundreds of millions of human lives is lashed with monstrous waves." As Christ said, the seas and waves will roar at the end (Luke xxi.). The imperial urge of Japan is significant of this tendency. "And what if . . ." asks the Professor, "what if peoples of different colours, faiths and tribes begin their migration towards the west . . . a great new migration . . . and what if the *King of the World* be with them?" The italics are ours.

This last phrase is cryptic. In the Book of Karma, studied in all esoteric centres of Asiatic learning, the legend of the last great conqueror of the nations is set out. This is what another well-known writer describes as the ancient enemy of our civilisation—"the barbarian of the eastern steppes." And to this one God has addressed Himself in prophecy, "Art thou he of whom I have spoken of old time by my servants, the prophets of Israel . . . ?"

Few, however, perceive the underlying concept in Ezekiel's vision. While man, by an almost universal refusal to recognise that God has created all things for His own pleasure, invents instead a political theory evolved solely on a natural basis, there can be no appreciation of the principle that God "ruleth by His power for ever; His eyes behold the nations . . ." (Ps. lxvi.). God has His plan.

Human government therefore can only be admitted as an expedient, covering the age of evil and subject to limitations and control imposed by God Himself. This then is the vision's message; it exempts none from the scope of its application and invites all to examine the way of escape from destruction. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezek. xxxiii.).

The Russo-Gogian confederacy is the last phase of human dominion, the last bid for power-politics of the kingdoms of men. The end is sure. "God came from Teman and the Holy One from Mt. Paran . . . before Him went the pestilence and burning coals went forth at His feet. . . He beheld and drove asunder the nations . . . and wounded the head out of the house of the wicked" (Hab. iii.). Paul also prophesied of the same event and warned the Thessalonian brethren of Christ returned to the earth "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God" and punishing them "with everlasting destruction."

The rise of the Russo-Gogian power under its eventual titular head, the Prince of Rosh, Meschech and Tubal, is strongly evident in modern thought and politics. Indeed, the current world-drift is all to the speedy fulfilment of Bible prophecy. The chief of the German Socialist Democratic Party, speaking in September, 1938, said of his country, "She will be entangled in a bloody conflict with the ascending Slav world." Ever since the dawn of the 18th century the Slav has been expanding his frontiers and increasing in both power and ambition. His external political complex has altered neither his drive nor his designs. Napoleon saw this. "Russia," he said, "will have Constantinople." He was speaking of the future, for Turkey was a mighty Power at that time. Every military and diplomatic move Russia has since made has favoured such a project. Tsar Ivan III. adopted the double-headed eagle of Byzantium as the imperial arms, and the observation of Heinnemann, the world historian, is

undesignedly in harmony—"Moscow regards herself as the Third Rome, just as Byzantium thought herself the Second." And, like Rome of the Caesars, the urge is always to universal dominion, for, as Francesco Nilli, one-time Italian Premier and a signatory of the Versailles Treaty, sets out, "the Moscow Government has for some time represented a serious danger to European civilisation . . . and seeks world government."

If the will of Tsar Peter the Great has any authenticity, its policy could not have been more faithfully executed. Lord Esher rightly knows that "the principles of the French Revolution spread over the civilised world, and probably the same thing will happen to the principles of Lenin." But, despite all man's power and boast, the end as shown at Chebar is certain—Gog must fall and God's plan will most assuredly be realised.

John's apocalyptic vision is in harmony. He heard "a voice" of much people (the Saints in heaven, the political place heaved up of power and authority), and the great multitude of new world rulers, resplendent in immortality, proclaim the vast change in earth's affairs—"the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." By reference to Ezra i. 1 (marg.) it is clearly seen that "the voice" is a proclamation. It is directed to the whole world by the newly-constituted Divine government in Jerusalem. And John shows that the glorious one of Revelation xix. is none other than Christ, and with Him His friends, who makes war in righteousness and slays the remnant of His foes with the sword. This is the happy issue out of all earth's sufferings, not only revealed to Ezekiel, but to every writer in the Bible. "When He giveth quietness," says Job, nearly 3,500 years ago, "who then can make trouble? And when He hideth His face (i.e., is angry), who then can behold him? Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only . . . He shall break in pieces mighty men without number and set others in their stead."

Uxbridge.

H. E. J. M. DOUST.

The Real Picture.

Some men, very unwisely, have attempted to decry the Gospels and to discover "contradictions," as they call them, that invalidate their accuracy.

But let anyone try the experiment of setting four men of great ability to draw up a fictitious narrative concerning an equally fictitious person. Ask them to draw up four narratives without or with collusion that shall describe this character and his actions. At the same time, they must be asked to show a character consistently upright, perfectly blameless and altogether beautiful and delightful, both spiritually and morally. Then ask them to describe a tragic end that nevertheless has inspired thousands to self-sacrifice and to death. Could they do it?

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Notes

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Jewish Relief. — Received from R.P. 20/-, H.P.C. 10/-, Santa Barbara 50 dollars, A Sister 5/-, M.W.P. £5, 2 Sisters £1.

Loose-leaf Bible. — Will anyone who has a loose-leaf Bible to spare or knows where one can be purchased write to T. Lambert, 80, Sycamore Avenue, Newport, Mon.

Ealing. —Will intending visitors please note that there will be no meetings on April 9th, June 4th or July 30th.

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