

DECEMBER, 1947

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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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.

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FAITH**

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

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THINKETH NO EVIL

Men are on all hands imperfect, and, of course, brethren too; and if we do not clothe ourselves with something of Divine magnanimity that puts up with the frailties and shortcomings of men, we shall never get on at all.

We have to shut our eyes to a great deal. We need not give countenance to faults, but we must not be too critical; we must forbear much and pass things by, or we shall only make a bad job worse.

Charity hides a multitude of sins. It exhibits solicitude toward one's neighbour; it looks not only to one's own things, but about the things of others; and is rather prone to put a good construction (where such is possible) upon a man's actions, than a bad one. As Paul declares, "Charity thinketh no evil, and is not easily provoked."—"Seasons of Comfort."

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No. 418

EDITORIAL

Where is Christ in the World To-day?

We are once more approaching the day when Christendom will be celebrating, in various forms, the birth of Jesus Christ. As we observe these annual celebrations, they appear, at the time, to be performed in all seriousness, but as Christmas passes, and the business world settles down to its normal routine, Christ seems to pass out of the picture and becomes the forgotten man. To look at the matter on the surface, it would seem that Christianity is prospering. The name of Jesus has been carried to every part of the world, and wherever you go you will find Christian churches. Business and public men, in all walks of life, are usually connected with some such church, and they become quite indignant if one suggests that they are not Christians.

As we turn our eyes hopefully to the United Nations Assembly, our hopes are shattered when we observe that the influence of Christ has such a small part among those who are struggling with the problems that concern the human race. The voices that are heard above all others are not the voices of professing Christians. Compare, if you will, its sound with the sound that emanates from those who say they are Christians, and you will find very little, if any, difference. Visit the sessions of our Parliament, and listen to the disputes and discussions of the members as they deal with problems affecting our national welfare, and note carefully the absence of the influence of Christ. Yet, if you were to question the members, it is probable that they would all consider themselves Christians, unless some of them should be members of the Hebrew race. But listen to them again, as they renew their word battles, and you will generally find them acting as though Christ never existed.

What does it all mean? Does it not signify that the hearts of men are set on things of this life and its possessions—things that have no relation to the teachings of Christ. If we are a Christian nation, where is our Christianity? Look at management and labour. Management uses every power and influence to increase its profits, and labour leaves no stone unturned as it struggles for higher wages, shorter hours and vacations with pay. Then turn to the Scriptures and read the life and works of Christ, and see how far they have drifted from His teaching. Stand in front of our theatres, and moving picture palaces, and watch the crowds as they surge to and fro. Walk inside and listen to and see the various forms of entertainment, and tell me, dear reader, what you learn of Christ? Visit our great sports arenas, whether it be baseball, football, hockey, horse racing or prize fighting—all a part of the life of nominal Christian nations. Do you see anything there concerning the influence of the teaching of Christ? No, we do not.

As we think of these things, does it not reveal the fact that the entire social and ecclesiastical structure of Christendom is astray from the system of doctrine and practice established by the labours of the Apostles in the first century, and what we have to-day is not the Christian Church, but an institution in which the commandments of men have replaced the teaching of Christ.

G.A.G.

Perfecter of the Faith.

Taking the above (Diaglott) rendering, which seems somewhat better than "author and finisher of our faith," since God is truly the "author," we ask: How can we look to Jesus? Is it possible the worshippers of idols holding a crucifix in hand are looking unto Jesus? Just here the comforting thought comes that God, with perfect foreknowledge of all our needs, caused the necessary helps in the form of references to be put right where we can instantly compare other Scripture passages which often throw much light on otherwise obscure statements.

Referring then to ii Cor. iii. 18 we at first think the matter has become less clear than before. However, by referring to ii Cor. iv. 6, the true meaning becomes plain: the "light" is knowledge or understanding of God's Truth. Now, turning back to ii Cor. iii. 18 and consulting the best rendering available, we read, "But we all beholding the Glory of the Lord in a face unveiled, are transformed into the same likeness, from Glory to Glory, as from the Lord, the Spirit."

After pondering the matter contained in this chapter from verse 6 onward, we learn Moses' face was veiled as representing the veiling of the law from the discernment of Israel as a nation. This becomes clear from verses 13 to 16 where the reading of "Moses" does not enlighten Israel because the "veil" is over their hearts or minds.

This then places Moses as "the law," so that to look at his face is to attempt to understand the law; hence to look to Jesus "with the assurance of 'a face unveiled'" we can understand His commands, and "the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God breaks upon us while we gaze with earnest appeal."

The "Glory" of the Mosaic Dispensation becomes dim by comparison, as plainly stated in verses 7 to 11 in this third chapter.

Now, turning to Eph. i. 18, it becomes plain that the eyes with which we "look to Jesus" are the eyes of the mind—"eyes of your understanding." While it is true we do actually employ our natural eyes and ears in obtaining more "light" or understanding of the teaching of Jesus, the object is "that ye may know what is the hope of His calling—the exceeding greatness of His power," etc., verses 18, 19.

If we consider the statement in Rev. xii. 4 concerning those who are Christ's servants, "and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads," in the light of these passages we have considered, the way opens for more than mere physical sight being implied. Although "the King

in His Beauty" will be radiant to behold, there will be that perfect "understanding" of Jesus on the part of His followers *then* which cannot now be possible.

The Name indelibly imprinted in their foreheads is certainly of the same mystic significance, rather than a literal stamping, since the forehead would represent the intelligence which has faithfully retained Jesus' teaching, after the manner the Psalmist describes in Ps. xxxvii. 31, "The Law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide." This is, of course, emphatically prophetic of the Anointed of Deity.

From Ps. cxix. 18 we remember the oft quoted statement which is in harmony with Paul's concerning the "eyes" being the mind, for he requests God to "open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

The "veil" was evidently not over the law when the Psalmist prayed for enlightenment, whereas Israel, as a nation, were "blinded," Rom. xi. 7.

We can also see the unveiled glorious truth if we faithfully read and study the Prophets who wrote of Him and the Apostles who not only expounded His teachings, but revealed His life and works as our pattern—an ensample unto life everlasting. This is *the way*.

Continuing along this line of thought, we read in John iii. 14, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up."

Turning to Num. xxi. 6, we see God sent fiery serpents, whose bite or sting meant death, to plague Israel for their murmurings; then the God-provided remedy is given, verses 8, 9. The brazen serpent erected to "look unto and live" was undoubtedly prophetic of Jesus "made in all points like His brethren," Heb. ii. 17, to whom those having "the sting of death which is sin," i Cor. xv. 56, can "look unto" with the eyes of their understanding, believe His word, obey His commands, and "live," or be clothed with immortality as Paul shows in i Cor. xv. 43 to 58.

While much more might be said concerning the light of knowledge which brings life eternal by "looking to Jesus," I will rather leave the subject with the earnest admonition for all to not neglect the means provided in our days for "looking to Jesus"—an open Bible and helps, from the references and concordances to the writings of such brethren as Thomas and Roberts, whose lives were occupied in enlightening those who had "eyes to see" and "ears to hear." Also, those many opportunities to hear the Truth expounded at Bible Class and at Services at Breaking of Bread—in fact, wherever the elect foregather.

"Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart," Ps. cxix. 2.

Jesus saith unto them, "Have ye UNDERSTOOD all these things?" Thus they looked to Jesus with the "eyes of their understanding."

H. A. SOMMERVILLE.

Lake Ariel.

Signs of the Times.

"I clothe the heavens with blackness"—Is. 1.

XXXVIII—A World Adrift.

It is very significant that "the fourth kingdom upon earth shall be diverse from all kingdoms and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces"—Dan. vii. These

words of prophecy, coming at the end of the matter presented in the vision, are set down as a prelude to the final consummation, when "the kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven shall be given to the saints of the Most High"

To-day, this consummation is almost upon us. The Council of Foreign Ministers is meeting in London even as these notes go to press. One item on its agenda will shatter any possibility of agreement, the ways and means of reorganising Germany as one economic unit with a common trade policy and import-export programme. This project, fundamental to the revival of trade in Europe, is linked with the Soviet proposal that the Ruhr industries should be operated by a Four-Power Control.

This would at once bring Moscow directly into the political and industrial developments of the Anglo-American western zone, while at the same time Russia emphatically refuses to even raise by one inch the iron curtain which cuts off eastern Germany and the whole of eastern Europe from the rest of the world. The Kremlin, in effect, is demanding a voice in the affairs of the Anglo-American zone, while cutting off from all intercourse those countries and lands which she regards or has made into Russian spheres of influence. This policy clearly shows that the Kremlin is engaged in a mighty drive for world dominion. The Communist-inspired strikes and riots in France and Italy are the visible results of this policy. The ultimate result will be to destroy any hopes of the success of the Marshall plan and to reduce during the course of the coming winter the entire Continent to a mass of seething disorder. We are looking at the fragmentation of the fourth kingdom of Daniel's vision. It teaches us of the rapid approach of the end of the age, the destruction of all the polities of the earth, the bitter disillusionment of the surviving populations, and the bankruptcy of every form of human government. It is the function of the present governance to so mis-conduct the world's affairs as to tread it down and break it in pieces.

XXXIX—A World Distracted and Impoverished.

Gen. Smuts said in a recent speech that perhaps the world is facing one of the greatest revolutions in human history. It is. It is about to witness the collapse of all human arrangements and the coming of God's everlasting kingdom of righteousness, plenty and peace for all men. The great South African goes on to say "the people are seeking once more for a cause and a code to blaze new paths and tracks to the future." The world's difficulties are easily explained in that it has departed from God's ways and God's laws, and therefore is doomed.

Russia is to-day trying to blaze new tracks to the future but those efforts will only lead to the still more ghastly destructions of Armageddon, and a place of burial in the Land of Israel. Those nations which follow her Communist-inspired policy, and those nations which oppose it, will all alike go down in shame and dishonour before the all-conquering arms of the Son of God, returned to take the inheritance of world kingship promised to Him by God.

The abrupt cleavage of the world into the Russian camp and the Anglo-American is well illustrated in current events. Mr. Marshall was conspicuously absent from the Russian Embassy party in New York on the occasion of the Bolshevik Revolution celebrations. Now, on the eve of the Four Power Foreign Ministers' Council meeting in London, Moscow radio screams a lengthy diatribe against British policy. There is not a conciliatory note anywhere in the concert of Europe.

Simultaneously, a prominent leader of the Socialist Unity Party in the Russian zone, and himself a Communist, is now appealing for an alliance between Germany and the Soviet Union as the only means of salvation for the German people. Truly, the people are looking for a "cause and a code" and to "blaze new paths and tracks to the future." Is it any wonder that sober-minded folk the world over and in all walks of life are desperately anxious as to that future? There is a definite and well-emphasised turn of European opinion toward the Russian social system. On the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the October Revolution, the Presidents of both France and Italy sent the warmest of greetings to their opposite number in Moscow.

And against this, there is the ominous warning from Sir John Boyd Orr, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organisation, that "further economic shocks on an already distracted and impoverished world may lead to a complete breakdown of the structure of human society."

These are the years which the locust is eating—Joel i.

XL.—The Common Responsibility of all Israel.

As recently and pointedly indicated in these notes the cascade of crime which has drenched the entire field of Jewish affairs in Palestine is slowly but surely recoiling in terrible nemesis upon the heads of the Jews themselves.

The following recent extract from the Times reveals a truly tragic state hardly credible and certainly incompatible with the lofty aspirations of the early Zionists:

"In the midst of the series of kidnappings, assaults, threats, and reprisals which for the last few days has been going on between the Hagana and the Irgun, Dr. Magnes, Rector of the Hebrew University, to-day made pointed remarks on the common responsibility of all Israel to root out crime and violence, when giving his address at the opening of the academic year at the university.

"The Zionists had always thought, said Dr. Magnes, that Zionism would diminish anti-Semitism, but they were witnesses to the opposite because of the use of force and violence. Many of their youth had been influenced by the knowledge that often they had been merely condemned in words or by those who themselves had engaged in similar activities, and perhaps had changed their tactics only because of the needs of the moment.

"Dr. Magnes said that all the American Jews who had sat with folded hands shared in the guilt of those in the United States who, by supporting terrorism, gave expression to pagan Judaism, but the teachers, rabbis, and leaders in Palestine were chiefly to blame. They raised the alarm with muffled voices from anxiety for national discipline, not discipline to the spirit of Israel. Among the new-fashioned Hebrews there was a Zionist totalitarianism seeking to subject the entire Jewish people. The terms 'dissenters' and 'dissidents' were applied to those using violence, but 'killers' was the right name. Everyone was responsible, because the foul deeds were done in an atmosphere countenancing the terror."

Zionist violence, as Dr. Magnes says, is a guilt in which all Jewry is implicated. Its sole result is to foster the very spirit of hatred and lust which, bred in Nazism, produced the very terror which sent some six millions of their ill-fated race to the gas hells of the Reich.

Jewry is reaping as it has sown.

Dark and terrible are the events the Bible foreshadows to the Jews in the near future, and a survey of Lev. xxvi and Deut. xxviii reveals to what extent the abandonment of the divine code and the seeking after new paths has brought the people of Jahveh face to face with the terrors of Zech. xiv.

The lesson for spiritual Israel is equally demonstrative.

CARMI.

"Human action is the basis of divine supervision in human affairs"—Ways of Providence.

TERRIBLE AS AN ARMY WITH BANNERS.

Song vi. 4

Then the Lord of the earth His ensign unfurled,
And lifted His spear in the face of the world;
All crushed and in silence the race stood aghast,
For the Elohim of God in their splendour passed.

There rolled the chariot and there shone the shield,
The immortalised host on the armed field,
Gone fresh from the honours of Sinai's height,
To win yet more glory o'er stained human might.

And out of the darkness the thunders did shake,
And reeled the earth in the grip of the quake,
And laced was the sky with the flash of His form,
For Shiloh had gathered the strength of the storm.

The armies of goyim were shattered and torn
As Israel swept onward out into the dawn;
And far in the East, where Judah's Captain trod,
Emblazoned the Arm of the glory of God.

—Dibon

CLUTCHING THE SHADOW.

On the busy political world, where high honour is reaped, and rich prizes secured in the arena of intellectual prowess, we can calmly look with the recollection that it is destined shortly to pass away with a great noise, and the elements thereof to melt with fervent heat; and that the only enduring politics are those of Jesus of Nazareth, Who, in His day, submitted to be a stranger and a pilgrim, but Who, at His return in power and great glory, will look around for His faithful stewards to share with them the honour of universal empire to be enjoyed in the unspeakable luxury of an incorruptible body. We can say to the whole throng of bustling aspirants and successful competitors, and established possessors, who, with great airs of self-consequence, divide among themselves the honours and fat things of the present kosmos, "We can wait. You have clutched a shadow. Your world passeth away; the Kingdom of God, which will be here in due season, endureth for ever. He gives it to child-like believers in His Word. Ye cast His Word behind you. Woe unto you that are full now; for ye have received your consolation!"

ROBERT ROBERTS.

Re-Union Prospects.

The Detroit Conference

On October 4th and 5th, 1947, in the City of Detroit, Michigan, there took place an important event in the annals of the Christadelphian body in North America. A goodly number of brethren and sisters from various parts of the United States and Canada assembled in one of the Detroit hotels to consider the possibility of uniting those who believe the same things as exhibited in the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith. The conference was not held under the auspices of the Detroit Ecclesia, nor was it representative of any particular ecclesia or fellowship. It was strictly informal, and unofficial, and those who attended were there at their own expense. They came because they were deeply concerned about a letter issued by the Birmingham Central, Ecclesia under date of June 7th, 1947, in which was set forth what that Ecclesia held to be the principles that should govern ecclesial

relationships. Many of those in attendance believed that the Birmingham letter reveals a new theory of a serious character regarding fellowship, and misapplied the teaching of Brother Roberts in the Ecclesial Guide.

Bro. W. M. Biggar, of Los Angeles, California, presided throughout the conference in a most dignified and efficient manner. The reading of the twenty-third Psalm opened the sessions, and this was followed by prayer. The deliberations were introduced by reading a lengthy letter from Bro. John Carter, Editor of the *Christadelphian Magazine*, dated September 22nd, 1947, and addressed to the brethren assembled in Detroit. It served a two-fold purpose—to defend the Birmingham position, and to answer a letter written by Bro. Biggar on September 5th, 1947. The defence of the Birmingham letter was thorough. The answer to Bro. Biggar intimated that he, Bro. Biggar, was in an extreme position, and suggested that we cease striving about words, and to define our beliefs in unambiguous phrases. The writer of these notes agrees with Bro. Carter about the use of phrases to which more than one meaning can be attached. We should all strive to be clear in what we write or say so that it will be intelligible to all. In defending the Birmingham letter, Bro. Carter seems to discount the seriousness of the Strickler doctrines. In this the letter was a great disappointment because it is not in harmony with the excellence of what he has written on the subject of the nature and sacrifice of Christ. The clear and scriptural expositions that he has produced during the past ten years led the brethren in North America to believe that at last they had one to champion their cause. Some felt that the road to union was now open, and announced their acceptance of the Central Fellowship position. They are now deeply concerned regarding the Birmingham declaration, and Bro. Carter's letter of defence.

Following the consideration of Bro. Carter's letter, Bro. H. Deakin gave a detailed history of our ecclesial position during the past twenty-five years, and made it perfectly plain that the doctrines promulgated by the late Bro. A. D. Strickler, and still supported by many in the United States and Canada, struck at the very foundation of our faith. The issue is a very real one, and not just difference of opinion in regard to constitutional procedure as some seem to think.

As one brother said: "*The term 'Berean' has come to be identified with a consistent twenty-five year stand of complete separation in fellowship from the destructive Strickler doctrine*"

Bro. Ralph W. Coy, of Canton, Ohio, addressed us on the subject matter of the Birmingham letter with special reference to the use of clauses 34 and 35 of our Constitution, and pages 32 and 33 of the Ecclesial Guide. Bro. Coy made it quite plain that the Berean position for the past twenty-five years related to a matter of difference on the first principles of our faith, and not a matter of judgment regarding some action as the Birmingham letter stresses.

The conference occupied all of October 4th and a good part of the 5th. A splendid spirit of reverence and good will characterised the proceedings throughout. Brethren of both the Berean and Central Fellowships took part in the various discussions, and it was generally felt that the meetings were a fine example of what Christadelphian assemblies should be. At the closing session, the following motion was adopted: —

That a committee be appointed by this conference to prepare and send to every member of the Central and Berean Fellowships in the United States and Canada a printed message to the following effect: —

1. A digest of what has been said at this conference.
2. A copy of the Ten Points. (See CHRISTADELPHIAN, December, 1940.)
3. A recommendation that the minds of the brotherhood in both the Berean and Central Fellowships in the United States and Canada be canvassed to learn how many would be willing to join in fellowship on the basis of the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith without reservation, and Scripturally enforced in fellowship, including the doctrines to be

rejected contained in the Birmingham Constitution, and will also agree to use the Ten Point definition of the Statement of Faith as a simple and all-sufficient test of belief in the case of applicants for our fellowship when the belief of the applicant is in doubt.

4. Please write your comments or send letter.

It is clearly understood that your response to this letter is not to be taken as a vote for or against re-union, but simply as an expression of your willingness to co-operate in the effort to bring about re-union, if possible, on Scriptural lines.

5. That, should a large number respond in favour, this meeting will be reconvened by the Committee, if the Lord will, in approximately six months to endeavour to consolidate the fellowship of all who are of one mind on the First Principles of the Truth.

6. In such happy event, when and if such consolidation has been completed, Birmingham Central, all British Berean, and all ecclesias in other parts of the world shall be advised and asked to join.

This is an independent report of the conference, and is submitted by the writer on the basis of his own understanding of what took place. There is now in the printer's hands a complete report and full text of the proceedings which will be issued by the Committee as mentioned in the above motion.

GEORGE A. GIBSON.

The Falling Shadow.

The Times' editorial for November 21st makes ominous reading. The Prime Minister outlined his scheme for Civil Defence. It will consist in part of civilian static and mobile services attached to and developed from the regular police, and these services will have at call for reinforcement where necessary military columns trained in the appropriate duties.

"The bulk of these services," says *The Times*, "must be founded upon house-to-house, village and street organisation."

Maybe, the People of God will be spared this further visitation upon modern Egypt, and take comfort and counsel in the words of the inspired servant of the Most High, who ruleth in the kingdoms of men. "Come, My People, enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpast. For behold the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity . . ." Isaiah xxvi.

The Book of the Revelation.

No. 22. The Two Witnesses

Revelation xi shows John in possession of a measuring rod wherewith to measure the time when the witnesses for God upon earth should be "trampled upon." The period so arrived at is 1,260 years.

The Papal temporal power carried out this trampling from A.D. 606-610 to 1866-1870. This power came to an end in 1866 to all intents and purposes; and 1870 saw its complete cessation.

It is also fair to observe that the period from the decree of Constantine against Donatus, in A.D. 312 until the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24th, 1572 (from which, incidentally, the present writer's ancestors escaped to Scotland), was 1,260 years. Thus in two ways the measuring rod showed its accuracy.

The two witnesses are the non-conforming bodies who refused the Papal yoke on the one hand and the political opposition to Papal power on the other. Among these two are to be found the Protestants, Dissenters, Infidels, Democrats, Anarchists, Communists, and other parties, all of whom have at various times been thorns in the flesh of the Popes.

From the destruction brought upon the Witnesses following the revocation of the edict of Nantes, until the French Revolution, was 105 years or, as Rev. xi. puts it, $3\frac{1}{2}$ lunar years = $3\frac{1}{2} \times 30$.

Then the witnesses ascended up to the heaven of political power. Graphically does John describe how the aristocracy of France, both priestly and political, was destroyed in the great "earthquake" of 1789. In the earthquake were slain 7,000 notable men (or men with titles) and those who remained were affrighted. Of the effects of the French earthquake much might be said. "Liberty, equality and fraternity" were the watchwords of the time. Democracy as it is now termed grew out of it.

Our Lord fittingly spoke of this as "the sea and the waves roaring." But he did not hold out the hope that the democratic urge would bring about the "glorious realisation of the ideals of the men who sought the good government of the people by the people for the people." This quotation from Abraham Lincoln was used by the present Labour Premier in England in this way in 1945, but it is open to very serious question if the lot of the people has been "improved" by Socialist reformers. Rather do we lean upon our Lord's own definition of its results. "Men's hearts shall fail them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth. For the ruling powers shall be shaken."

Following our Lord's exhortation to heed the prophet Daniel, we conclude that the work of the two witnesses against the former Papal dominance has for one of its results "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," *i.e.*, since Babel.—Gen. ii.

G.H.D.

F.-M. Viscount Montgomery on Moses.

By permission of "The Standard" we publish the following extract from Lord Montgomery's article on "History's Greatest Leaders"

Moses

"I will first consider Moses. He was already old when he was called to lead the Children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. His task was an immense one. He had first to inspire his people to cast off the yoke of the Egyptians. This was no easy matter; Israel had been living for about 400 years as slaves of the Egyptians; they had lived in the Nile Delta, a bad and enervating climate and one which tends to sap energy and initiative. But they lived where food was plenteous, while all around were deserts which could barely support life. Moses must have had to overcome the most tremendous initial inertia to persuade Israel to launch out into those deserts with all the risks of famine, disease, and the necessity to fight. His power to inspire and to dominate his fellow men must have been of a very high order.

"Without doubt Moses realised that, when he led Israel out of Egypt, they were useless as a fighting people; they had been slaves for some 400 years. He therefore set to work to train them for the task, and to forge the weapons which could conquer Canaan. I believe that Moses intentionally kept Israel for forty years in the desert—for two generations—in order to breed and train a fighting race capable of undertaking the task of conquest which lay ahead. And in that forty years he taught them gradually how to fight and to conquer.

"He took meticulous care over their training; and it is most interesting to note his refusal ever to risk any failures in action. We read of him soon after leaving Egypt asking if he might lead Israel through the country of another people; on being refused permission, he marches round by another way. But later when the same situation arises, when Israel is better trained to fight, he leads his people straight through the middle of that country, and destroys his enemy utterly. He was a good judge of what Israel was capable of doing and what Israel was not capable of doing, and as a result he had an unbroken record of military successes. He had the wisdom and the insight into human nature to realise that the best way for a leader to gain the confidence of his soldiers is to give them victories. If a commander gives his soldiers victories, they will follow him anywhere.

"But Moses was not permitted to see the fruits of his own work. He sinned; by claiming, as his own, powers which did not belong to him; and for this sin of presumption he was forced to hand over to Joshua the final conquest of Canaan for which he had so well trained the Children of Israel."

Our comment is that the Field-Marshal does not sufficiently recognise the over-ruling Providence of God. He speaks of the sin of Moses but himself is guilty of the same kind of presumption when he gives Moses all the credit for his success in leading the children of Israel to the border of Canaan.

WORLD CHAOS.

This is what the *Times Pictorial* said recently: —"In his search for peace, man has made over 2,000 peace treaties, yet history shows that the average life of them is only two years. In fact, from 1469 B.C. to A.D. 1930 the world had been at peace for less than 300 years. The other 3,000 odd years were spent at war. According to statistics, too, 7,000,000,000 had been killed directly in battle up to the middle of the nineteenth century. As for the cost, the Great War (of 1914-18) total expenditure was £80,000,000,000, and there is no doubt the 1939 war will reach a much bigger figure than that, although it is estimated that another twenty years will elapse before we know the exact amount: Incidentally, Britain has been at war for 56 per cent, of her history . . . "

To-day, as we witness world chaos all around us, fear on every hand, and still mightier preparations for an even greater and more terrible universal conflict, we can thank God for His wonderful message of Hope. He has not left His earth, nor abandoned His people, nor will He allow the nations to destroy His heritage. The Signs are knocking on the world-door. JESUS IS NEAR.

AN EXHORTATION

Bottles in the Smoke.

Ps. cxix. 83

I think it is commonly recognised that trouble, distress and affliction is not the sole experience of the wicked; and that terrible times of sorrow and deep distress come upon many who are striving to serve God with all their heart and mind. This is a serious difficulty to many of God's saints. It is in relation to this fact that I wish to base my words of exhortation. I find that the cxix Psalm, to the eighty-third verse, is perhaps the most instructive, especially if we consider it as God has caused it to be written in the Hebrew tongue: —

*"I am like a skin of wine in the smoke,
Because I do not forget Thy Statutes"*

This does not, like the ordinary version, suggest a glass bottle, but a skin such as they used to contain any fluid; in this case containing wine and hung in the smoke. These wine skins could only be used once, because they became dry and of no further use. As Christ said, they could not put new wine

into old wine skins—the old wine skins would burst. In those early days they lived mostly in tents, and in cold weather had to make fires. The smoke and heat could not get away, and hung round the top of the tents. When the new wine was put into the new wine skins, it was hung at the top of the tent, so that the new wine might mature, become perfect, more quickly. While this process made perfect the wine, the wine skins became dry, ready to crack and useless for any other purpose by the time the wine they contained became perfect.

This drying and perishing of the wine skin in the dry smoke became a symbol of suffering and affliction. Whether the verse applies to the Psalmist himself or not, there can be no doubt about its applying to that Glorious One Who is the central theme of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms—Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. It can also apply to all those who strive to follow His wonderful example. The words foreshadow the thoughts that would come into the mind of Him who was destined to become the Lamb of God, slain for the sins of the world: "I am become like a skin of wine hung in the smoke." Not because of any wickedness, but because He did not forget God's statutes. Because God knew how perfect His heart was; that through suffering that glorious character might become absolutely perfect and able, like very good, perfect wine, to bring joy and gladness into the hearts of mankind. It is *because* He did not forget God's statutes, that God caused Him to become like a wine skin to hang in the smoke.

To illustrate this wonderful truth, which the Psalmist declared by the Spirit of God, I wish to bring before you the most perfect characters ever recorded: that servant of God, the man Job, and the absolutely perfect Man, Jesus the Christ. Their suffering came upon them because God found them perfect, and because their suffering, their being hung up in the drying smoke, like wine skins, developed characters which have become a perfect delight to the whole human race.

No one need be told that the man Job suffered intense and cruel suffering. Yet these sufferings did not come upon him for any wickedness. God declared him to be a perfect man. It was for this reason that the terrible afflictions came upon him; he became like a wine skin hung in the smoke.

God tells us plainly what He, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, thought about Job. The Angel who spoke for God, to the adversary (a man who met with Job and others to worship God, but who hated Job because God blessed him) said unto this man, "Hast thou considered my servant, Job? That there is none like him in the earth? A perfect and upright man. One that fears God and departs from evil."

A year later the Angel repeated these words to this man, who was an adversary to Job, and added, "Thou hast moved me against him without cause." Then God allowed the desires of this evil-minded man to come upon Job, and the words of the Psalmist became very true in relation to Job.

He became like a wine skin (of wine) in the smoke because he did not forget God's statutes. The result shows how perfect was God's judgment as to this man's character. As this man who had become an adversary to Job desired, everything that Job had was taken from him, in a moment of time; yet we learn how good was the wine, the inner man, a character built upon God's desires. The words came at once from this man Job: "The Lord gives, the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord."

Then his wife became to him like the dry smoke upon the wine skin. She said, "Now bless God and you will die. You blessed God when He took away all we had; now bless Him once more and there is only one thing to happen—death." Again the quality of the wine shines forth: "Shall we receive good and not evil?"

Then the effect of the drying smoke became more intense. The adversary answered the Angel of the Lord: "Touch his skin and he will curse Thee to Thy Face." A dreadful disease then came upon Job, which not only ate away the flesh, but affected the bone also. The wine skin began to perish, to dry up, but the wine still became more mature, more perfect.

Then another source of intense agony was added. Three of his friends accused him of all kinds of vile crime, and declared it was because he was vile that these afflictions had come upon him. Finally, that *all-wise* young man, to use God's words, added the final touches to his affliction, even harder to bear than the gibes of his friends. The heat of affliction became more intense, and Job was driven to distraction. Still no word against the God he so loved. The terrible effect of the heated dry smoke upon the wine skin is seen in the words of Job, chapter vi. 6-13: —

"O, that I might have my request,
That God would grant my desire.
That it would please God to destroy me; put an end to me.
Yes, let Him spare not and I will leap for joy.
For I have not denied the words of the Holy One.
What is my strength that I should hope?
Or, what my end, that I should prolong my life?
For Reason is utterly driven from me."

The wine skin was losing its grip upon life, yet in the same process, the wine, the character formed, through believing God's Word, became more perfect.

The perfect wine speaks. Job xix. 23-27: —

"O: that my words, even now, were written down,
That they were engraved upon a table,
With a pen of iron and with lead.
That they were sculptured on the rock, for ever.
For I know that my Redeemer liveth,
And shall stand on the earth, at the last.
And after my body is destroyed,
Yet from my flesh, I shall see the Mighty One.
Mine eyes shall behold and not another.
Whom I shall see as a friend and not as a foe.
For this the reins within my bosom
Are consumed with expectation."

The wine skin was perishing in the process. Chapter xxx. 27, 30, 31: —

"My bowels boil and cease not;
The days of my anguish press upon me.
My skin is grown black upon me,
And my bones burst with the heat.
My Harp is turned to lamentation,
And my Pipe to the voice of wailing."

So the process continued. Job endured, but did not know the reason why: that it was "because he did not forget God's statutes"; that his wonderful character might be made more perfect, and apparent to all; that the wine, the inner man, might bring joy and delight to the hearts of all mankind, and set us all a gracious example. The wine became perfect in the process. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job and have seen the end of the Lord."—James v. 11.

Again, in Ezek. xiv. 14, this wonderful character is pointed to as an example of righteousness. "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they should only deliver their own souls, by their righteousness, saith the Lord God." In those days when he was like a wine skin in the smoke he did not understand why, but near the end of his days God must have opened his eyes, because we learn, concerning his end: "He was old and *fully satisfied with his days*." He could look back and thank

God for those days when he was like a wine skin in the smoke, which enabled him to develop, and make known to all ages, that glorious character, that perfect wine, developed in that drying and—to the skin—destructive smoke.

Then we come to a more glorious character, of whom the Psalmist specially speaks, and who became more perfect, became a wine that will give joy and gladness to vast multitudes, even to all eternity; that Man, Jesus the Christ. We have brought before us the perfect Man, the most perfect man that has ever lived, and spoken of as a wine skin full of wine and hanging in the smoke, because He did not forget the statutes of God.

Again, like God's servant, Job, God does not leave any room to doubt the fact that it was a perfect Man, Who was to endure suffering that He might become more perfect, and give joy, hope, and life to the vast multitude of the redeemed. "*This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.*"

Unlike Job and all other men, Jesus knew from His childhood the terrible experience that He would have to pass through, and the awful things that would mark His early end. It is hard to experience various troubles as they come upon one as Job's did, and thank God; yet Jesus knew all things to come; He knew that even in the Garden of Eden He was foreshadowed as the Covering for sin, the One slain. Again, all the sacrifices before and during the Law of Moses pointed to Him—especially the Passover Lamb.

Then all the prophecies contained in the Psalms and the Prophets were all known to Him that they spoke of Himself. That chapter of Isaiah would be as familiar to Jesus when yet a child as the nursery rhymes are to children of to-day. Let us look at it again in this light. Here Isaiah gives details of the experiences which the Psalmist describes in other language, "Like a skin of wine in the smoke." "He is despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from Him. He was despised and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison to judgment; He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of My people was He stricken. He made His grave with the wicked, with the rich in His death. Because He had done no violence, neither was deceit found in His mouth, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, He put Him to grief." "Because He poured out His soul unto death and was numbered with the transgressors and bare the sins of many, and made intercession for transgressors."

Perhaps the climax of His sufferings—the time when the drying smoke affected the already decaying wine skin—was in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus was about to face His bitter end. He could even now see those terrible things that were to happen to Him; that horrible thing nailed to a tree with dropped head, those cries and curses that came from the people He had come to serve. He was then to become a criminal in the eyes of the Law, He Who had done no sin. "Cursed is He that hangeth on a tree."

As we read in Luke, He prayed "If it be possible let this cup pass from Me, nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done." We read of the intensity of His suffering, the effect of that drying smoke on the tender wine skin. "Being in agony, He prayed earnestly and sweated great drops of blood, which fell to the ground." Then came the betrayal; the horrors of the crucifixion; the taunts of the mob; and, finally, He lost all touch with the realities of life and cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" *Then the wine skin could no longer endure and perished. The wine, which had now become glorious in the eyes of God, angels and man, was not lost.* Three days afterwards God raised Jesus from the dead; afterwards gave to Him *Divine Nature*; instead of the old perishing wine skin. He was given a glorious body which could not change, never perish, but exist perfect to eternity. A new holder for the wine, which would never perish. The wine had become absolutely perfect and will continue to bless all nations, vast multitudes, throughout the ages.

We, to-day, take the bread which represents the body, the outward visible man, the wine skin, which has now passed away. Then we take the wine, representing the inner man, that glorious character made perfect through suffering. It is to us a continual remembrance of these things, of that glorious Being, Who, because He held fast and obeyed all God's statutes was made to become a wine skin, full of wine; to endure the warm, drying smoke; a wonderful prophecy and a glorious fulfilment. And with what beauty of eternal grace does it not speak concerning the future for His brethren.

SHAAL.

"The very best experience at present is only a state of divinely regulated evil"—Robert Roberts.

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.

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BRISTOL. —Druids Hall, Perry Road. Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 3 p.m.; Bible Class, 5.15 p.m. Wednesdays: Bible Class, 7.15 p.m. at Shirehampton.

On October 26th we were cheered with a visit from Bro. E. H. Bailey, Sis. Southall and Sis. I. Turner, from Birmingham. Our brother exhorted us at the Lord's Table referring to the great example of the faithful Prophet Daniel.

Bro. and Sis. R. Bath, late of North London, now that they have settled down near Bristol, are able to meet with us more often. We appreciate their help and encouragement. Also our faithful Sis. Acock still comes in most regularly from Bath, 12 miles away, when health and weather permit. Although few in number, and by the "worldly" "despised" and "forgot," we plod along, trusting to receive that rich reward that has been promised to all that are the friends of God. —A. V. Bailey, Rec. Bro.

LONDON, N., WINCHMORE HILL. —The Adult School Hall, Church Hill, Winchmore Hill, London, N.21. 4 and 6 p.m.

We would take this opportunity of thanking all those brethren who have assisted us in the proclamation of the Truth in the past year and cheered us by their presence.

Also we would again express our gratitude to our brethren and sisters in Australia, U.S.A., Canada and New Zealand for the gifts of parcels of food and clothing we continue to receive from them. They are much appreciated by us all.

The withdrawal from Sis. Betty Sharpe announced in the October issue should have read Sis. Betty Shafe.

In the hope that the time of the lecture will be more suited to the stranger, we propose to change to 6 p.m. from the first Sunday in January, 1948.

NEWPORT (MON.). —Clarence Hall, Rodney Road (opp. Technical College). Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 11 a.m.; Lecture, 6.30 p.m.

Since our last report we have not anything of importance to state from this part of the Vineyard.

We have been pleased to receive a parcel of clothing from the brethren, and sisters of the Philadelphia Ecclesia, U.S.A. We thank them for their kind thoughts on our behalf. —David M. Williams, Rec. Bro.

NEW TREDEGAR.

We once again wish to thank our brethren and sisters of overseas Ecclesias for their kindnesses. We are in receipt of parcels from Philadelphia and Worcester, U.S.A.; Sydney, Australia; and Whangarei, New Zealand; and they all contained those things which we see little of to-day. We also wish to record the adding to the pool of foodstuff parcels of the one received from Bro. Stanley Gallier, of Brisbane, by Bro. Lambert.

We also have to announce that Bro. T. Davies has again resigned from our fellowship and will no longer meet with us. We rejoice that there are those ever occurring signs of the nearer approach of our Lord and Master— i Peter iii. 8-17.—Ivor Morgan, Rec. Bro.

CORRESPONDENCE

I was very interested in the article on "The Evidence of Archaeology" in the September BEREAN, and, further to the writer's remarks *re* the grapes in Egypt, I would like to refer to the writings of Grosart on this matter.

Infidelity sought to raise the "loud laugh" against the word of God from such passages, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes" (Song of Solomon ii. 15) because "the fox" and "the vine" are therein introduced into Syria centuries before, as was alleged, either was known there. Infidelity maintained, quoting Herodotus, and for long triumphant that neither was the grape-bearing vine nor the fox known in Syria or in Egypt till many hundred years subsequent to the so-called books of Moses and of Solomon.

It is only within the past few years comparatively, that the truth has been affirmed on this point. The explorers of Egyptian antiquities, in the course of their researches among the ruins in the East generally, disinterred a multitude of galleries and temples, even household walls, contemporary with the earliest Pharaohs, and so admittedly long anterior, not posterior, to Moses and Solomon; with therein and thereon, to the utter confutation and confusion of the scorner, vivid-hued representations of trellised and festooned "vines" while peering through the bough-twisted fences is seen the sharp and mobile nose of the "fox," stealthily stealing towards its favourite repast. Various of these pictured slabs are in our museums and they have been faithfully reproduced in the great works of Wilkinson and other Egyptologists.

Ever since infidelity has been silent upon this anachronism ("mistake in time") of Scripture. Not Moses or Solomon, but Herodotus is found to be mistaken.

W. S. BLAKE.

Palestine House.

A brilliant party was given on December 10th to celebrate the recent decision of the United Nations to establish a Jewish State. The many Jews present listened with all attentiveness to Sir Andrew MacFadyean's opening speech from the chair, and gave Mrs. Dugdale, the well-known niece of Arthur James Balfour (of Balfour Declaration fame) a very fine reception indeed.

Mrs. Dugdale recalled in the course of her remarks that the determination to develop the Nation Homeland of the Jews was really the work of three very notable men—her uncle, Mr. Lloyd-

The Beginning or the End? Bible or Bomb?

What are things really coming to?

In view of the grave developments arising out of the conflicts of the last forty years, the question is being asked "Are we at the beginning of a new age or are we being called to the funeral of the present age?"

The discovery that atomic energy can be used for such destructive purposes as may result in the immolation of the human race and all its works, certainly calls for very serious thought. It is being pressed home now to the minds of men that human government in every form in which it has been tried has resulted in failure. Call it Conservatism, Radicalism, Reform, Labour Party, Socialism, Communism, or what you will, it does not produce peace, love, contentment or happiness.

Stop here then and ask: "Can we expect perfection of government and of conduct from the present race of men under its present rulers or any other that may arise?" "Is it right to put God, as the Creator of all men, out of account in the matter altogether?" Questions like these can only be answered with the strongest possible negative.

We submit that there is no true merely human answer to the three questions we propound at the head of these remarks.

Who can safely guide us in the present world to an understanding of the implications in the final sense of the question, "Are we at the beginning or the end?" Who can foretell the awful potentialities of the atomic bomb? Who can or will tell us that the Bible at last will conquer world thought?

The true answer has been on record for many centuries and can be read as a child's first reading book. The answer is in the Bible, the most widely circulated and the least read of all books.

The Bible declares that God did not make the earth in vain: He formed it with a definite purpose in view, and this great Book graphically describes that purpose. There has been no change of plan: for the one outlined at the outset is carried right through to the end.

It entails not the perpetuation of human government, political or ecclesiastical, but its destruction, and the setting up in its place of a Divine universal authority that will fully and finally realise the purpose of Earth's creation, and bring perfect peace and happiness into being for all time.

It is true that the message put forward by the Christadelphians now is not popular and is not one that can be heard in Catholic, Episcopal or Non-conformist churches, but it is absolutely certain and admitted by every authority that the message they bear is exactly the same as the one propounded to the world by our Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles.

A BIBLE STUDENT'S CAROL.

Christ, the Prince of Peace, was born
In a truly humble way,
History has lost the date
So they make it Christmas Day.

Isaiah ix. 6.

Luke ii. 12.

Daniel vii. 25.

Christ was born in Bethlehem,
Loved and served His parents well,
And to all who gathered round
Sounded out the Gospel Bell.

Matthew ii. 1.

Luke ii. 51.

Luke ix. 11

Galatians iii. 8.

Christ with his disciples sailed On the Lake of Galilee, And those fishermen in Him Did their true Messiah see.	Luke viii. 22. Luke viii. 26. Luke ix. 20. Matthew xvi. 16.
Christ with miracles did work, Proving that He came from God; Taught in synagogues and fields; Wisdom flowed where e'er He trod.	John vi. 2. John iii. 2. Matthew ix. 35 & 41. John vii. 46.
Christ by enemies was mocked And the Lamb of God was slain— After three days in the tomb God restored His life again.	Matthew xxvii. 39 & 41. John i. 36 & Revelation v. 12. Matthew xii. 40. John x. 11 & Ecclesiastes ix. 5.
Christ to joy eternal rose, When the time of death was o'er, Victor over sin and strife Proved and true, to die no more.	Matthew xxviii. 6. Mark viii. 31 Revelation i. 18. 1 Peter ii. 22.
Christ ascended up on high, Saying "I will come again"; When the harvest home is nigh He will come again to reign.	Acts i. 9. John xvi. 16. Revelation xiv. 15. 1 Corinthians xv. 25.
Christ in righteousness will rule; Peace on earth will come through Him; Health and happiness for all, This then is our Christmas Hymn.	Isaiah xxxii. 1. Luke ii. 14. Isaiah lxv. 20/22 Ephesians v. 19.

Hitchin.

The End of These Things.

The Prophet states that the Jews are God's witness, that He is God and that He rules over all His Creation—Is. xliii.

Our keen interest in the development of the land of Palestine and the return of the Jews is based on the fact that these things are inseparably linked with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Those Jews who anticipated the coming of a Messiah just prior to the birth of Christ looked for redemption in Israel—Luke i and ii. After three and one-half years' association with the preaching of Jesus the Disciples looked for a re-establishment of God's kingdom over Israel—Luke xxiv. "But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel; and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done." Then, after a further extension of preaching in their midst, the Apostles asked the question of Jesus as He was about to be taken up into heaven. "Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel"—Acts i. He did not say He would not restore the kingdom to Israel. But simply said it wasn't for them to know the times and seasons which God had reserved in His own power. He did, however, leave them with the assurance through the Angel that He would return. "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Thereafter the return of Christ to restore the kingdom to Israel constituted part of the preaching of the Apostles.

Peter, in Acts iii, states that Christ would stay in heaven until the time of restitution or restoration of all things had arrived as the prophets had declared.

Paul preached to Jew and Gentile alike that he was a prisoner for his conviction that God would remember the hope of Israel or Jacob and send Christ as the future King over all nations.

He told the Romans that God had not cast away his people. . . . But blindness had happened unto Israel until the time of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Then all Israel shall be saved—Rom. xi.

The hope of the Gospel was born with Abraham as God called this faithful individual from idolatrous Chaldea—Gen. xiii. It became a burning hope in the hearts of his descendants. In subsequent years they were driven by famine into Egypt, from whence they were brought several hundred years later as a great and mighty nation. At Mount Sinai they were constituted God's especial people, as a witness unto all nations that God was working in their midst, and He gave them laws and commandments which made their possession of Canaan contingent upon obedience.

Succeeding years in Canaan showed them to be unworthy of God's blessings, and in a line of wicked kings after the reign of Solomon, with the empire divided into two kingdoms the people sank into idolatry. The kingdom of Israel was removed into all nations of the then known world by the Assyrian monarchs. The kingdom of Judah was taken captive by the Babylonians shortly after for a servitude of seventy years, only to return for a period of national existence in their own land under the varying mercies of Persia, Greece and Rome. Thereafter they were dispersed throughout all nations by Rome from which they have not returned for 1,900 years. It is the termination of this long night of Israel's wandering which forms the greatest sign of our times that Jesus will soon return to the earth to restore the kingdom to Israel. The Jews and the Land of Palestine are God's two greatest witnesses to the truth of the Bible. These two points of testimony speak clearly and without the shadow of a doubt that God is unerringly working out a purpose with the nations of the world.

"Surely the Lord God will do nothing but He revealeth His secrets unto His servants the prophets"—Amos iii.

The fulfilment of prophecy in harmony with the revealed purpose of God brings us even to our present days. Our days have not been overlooked by God in His plan. They are the most momentous days of the earth's history; the very days unto which all the prophecies have been tending.

In Luke xxi Jesus speaks of events which were to happen to the Jews, to their City, Jerusalem, and to their temple. . . . "And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, He said, 'As for these things which ye behold the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.'"

When they asked Him when these things should be, He outlined many things which had to come to pass and gave clear indicative signs for all men to see their place in the Divine plan. These same things show us now that the coming of Jesus is in the very near future.

First, there should come the destruction of Jerusalem. "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the destruction thereof is nigh. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."

What things were written?

Moses, the great leader of Israel, warned them what God would do unto them if they were not obedient unto His laws. He had chosen them for His especial people, and He wanted them to be an example to all nations. But they proved wicked and perverse and God's judgments fell heavily upon them. Deut. xxviii: "The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies; thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of

the earth." Read at your leisure. The descriptive prophetic detail of the siege of Jerusalem in this chapter should be compared with the graphic account of its fulfilment in minutest detail in the writings of the Jewish historian Josephus.

"Thou shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth." How truly this has come to pass. It was started in the eighth century B.C. by the Assyrians. It was completed by the Romans with the destruction of Jerusalem in the first and second centuries A.D. The last 1,900 years have born testimony to the truth of Moses' words in verse 65. "And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life."

Thus followed the long and sanguine history of the wanderings of these people over the earth, unwanted, spoiled, persecuted, and killed. There was the terrible Spanish Inquisition, the purges of Poland and Russia, the horrible blot against Germany and her allies of six millions of slaughtered Jews, even in our days. But God, Who decreed such terrible persecutions against the Jews and Who brought them to pass, caused the following words to be inscribed for all time: "Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee, yet will I correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished"—Jer. xxx. 11.

It may be thought by some that this prophecy refers to the Babylonian captivity of the Jews. Truly it has a partial fulfilment in that epoch. But its far greater fulfilment has stretched for the last 1,900 years as these people have wandered homeless far and near, outcasts from Zion's hallowed ground. These prophecies cannot be separated from the other prophecies and time periods. They harmonise with the overall picture afforded by the entire word of God. Daniel was shown a vision of things which were to happen to his people in the latter days, a view of history concerning the land of Palestine for 2,500 years, a period of wars and conquests, nation rising against nation, upon the mountains of Israel. But he was told the vision was for many days. This was recorded two years after the famous decree of Cyrus, king of Persia, had gone forth commanding the Jews to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem—chapter xi.

Hosea, through the spirit of God, foresaw the national death of Israel. But the prophet saw beyond this period of downtreading and oppression. "Come and let us return unto the Lord for He hath torn and He will heal us; He hath smitten and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight"—vi. 1-2. Two days in prophetic language is 2,000 years, on the principle of a day for 1,000 years, as God counts time. Peter stated: "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day"—ii Epis. iii. After 2,000 years, during the third such period, God would revive Israel nationally. They would live in His sight. It is just over 2,500 years since the Jews were taken captive by the Babylonians. They have not ruled themselves (except for a short period during the time of the Maccabees) from that time until the present. The words of the prophet spoken to the last reigning king of Israel have proven true "Thou profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God, remove the diadem, take off the crown, I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more until He come whose right it is, and I will give it I will give it Him"—Ezekiel xxi. And that is the right of Christ Who must shortly come.

Jesus, continuing in Luke xxi, discussing the destruction of Jerusalem, spake of the duration. Jerusalem should not be downtrodden forever. "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

With the exhausting of the Gentile nations there comes into being once again the Kingdom of God. This is the hope which is set before the believer of the Bible, and concerning which many signs are given when it is about to be accomplished.

Together with the signs in the political heavens, the darkening of the sun and moon, and general distress among nations, there should also be the sign of the budding fig tree. Jesus had previously referred to the Jewish nation as a fig tree, in Luke xiii. He had compared the tree to the Jews who had been chosen by God but brought forth no fruit unto righteousness. Now, the tree was to be trodden down for a measured period, but when there were signs of a sprouting of the tree again, then the faithful should lift up their heads for their redemption was near. This was the answer to the question, "When shall these things be?" Then also there should appear the sign of the coming of the Son of Man in power and great glory.

For 1,900 years the prophecy has held true. Now the picture of desolation is changing. The "fig tree" is sprouting. Life is coming into the Jewish nation again. As the nations of the earth have become more confused in their relations one with another the Jewish desire for their homeland has increased in tempo.

In Ezekiel xxxvii we are given a picture of the resurrection of the nation of Israel. In vision he saw a valley full of dry bones. He was caused to prophesy upon these bones and the bones came together and breath came into them and they were represented as living. "So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of Man, these bones are the whole house of Israel." "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." All the Jews shall be joined together as one nation. In the days of old they were separated into two kingdoms. When they were regathered from Babylonian captivity it was but the kingdom of Judah which returned. But in the future it will be the whole house of Jacob. "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all."

What are the signs of the budding forth of Israel's natural fig tree? What signs are there of resurrection in Israel upon the mountains of the land? The first move in the plan of God toward such a change in the Jewish picture was the French Revolution; the bringing about of civil and religious liberty to many peoples of the world. The Jews who had for centuries suffered a depraved existence, now became a recognised people and a true effort to understand their condition and needs was set in motion by Napoleon. However, it was a slow process as men count time. Yet the barriers were gradually being removed over the period of the last 100 years. The Turk was still in the Holy Land, and showed no inclination toward permitting the use of Palestine by the Jews.

In 1827, Sir Moses Montefiore, an outstanding figure in Jewish circles, found upon a visit to Palestine that there were but 500 descendants of Abraham in the land. He gave what assistance he could to these few, but his efforts to establish a homeland there for his brethren were unsuccessful. But though the Turks were in possession of the land, and the British Empire was supporting the Turkish occupation of Palestine as a bulwark against Russia, the word of God had previously decreed that the nation of Israel should come to life again. The Bible shows that there must be a regathering of the people to their own land, there must be, too, a prosperous existence in the land as a prerequisite to the Russian confederacy of nations in the time of the end casting covetous eyes upon the land. Ezekiel xxxviii gives us this picture of the Russian Gog: "After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them." The Scriptures speak of this people being at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls and having neither bars nor gates. The former desolate places are spoken of as being inhabited, and the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, dwelling safely in the midst of the land.

The unrest in Palestine does not contradict the prophecies. Palestine is a land of prosperity and has been for twenty-five years . . . since the Balfour declaration gave impetus to the settlement of the

land as a Jewish homeland. Despite repeated clashes, Jews and Arabs work peaceably together, the Arab greatly benefiting by the remarkable Jewish enterprise.

The fruits of Zionism have shown forth remarkably in recent years. Jewish population in Palestine has increased from 50,000 in 1919 to 600,000 at present. Colonies have sprung up all over the land, and agriculture is flourishing on an intensive scale. The land which has enjoyed her sabbaths for so long is now yielding an ever-increasing production. The parts which had become marshes and wilderness are being reclaimed. What a few years ago were desert, sands and malaria-infested swamps, are now producing oranges and citrus fruits in abundance. All through the efforts of a zealous people and the working out of the sure plan of God. "And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded. . . . O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to My people of Israel." Is this not partly fulfilling before our very eyes? —Ezek. xxvi.

Outstanding engineering enterprises are constantly transforming the land—roads, bridges, and railways, farms, drainage and water supply are a few of Jewish works in their homeland. Electricity provided by a large dam on the Jordan River (the Rutenberg Dam) is giving new life and energy to a once sterile waste. Factories and workshops are springing up in the cities and among the colonies.

Palestine, which in past years was not noted for good shipping facilities such as harbours, has changed this picture under Jewish efforts. The only port heretofore in the whole of the Palestinian coastline was Jaffa. In recent years the ports of Haifa, now one of the best in the Mediterranean, together with the recently completed all-Jewish port of Tel Aviv have been built.

There is the great engineering works at the Dead Sea, Palestine Potash, producing potash, bromine, magnesium and other minerals in large quantities.

Finally, there is the famous Irak oil pipe line, which has its terminus at Haifa on the Mediterranean Sea. The importance of oil in our age of machinery has placed Palestine and the Near East as prize number one of the political and strategic maps of nations all over the world.

Such is the scene which meets our eyes as we view the land that is brought back from the sword, which has gotten cattle and goods.

The stage is just about prepared for the coming of the Northern Host against the land of unwallled villages. The question is asked of this invader "Art thou come to take a spoil?" But it is not the Jews who ask the question. It is another power, and such a power as is in the land, for them to use the expression, "Art thou come." This power is represented in Ezekiel by the terms, "Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish with all the young lions thereof"—Ezekiel xxxviii.

If we can identify these powers, we add evidence to the truth of the prophecy that the Jews are returning in fulfilment of God's word and is thus a proof that Christ's return is imminent.

Who are Sheba and Dedan? These names both come from the Noahic families of Shem and Ham. Those who descended from Ham settled in what is now the British Soudan, around the upper reaches of the Nile. Those who descended from Shem settled in Arabia among the coasts. Sheba particularly at the western end. Britain here has planted her standard and Aden stands in as vital a position at the eastern end of Britain's life line as does Gibraltar in the west. Dedan again forms a key position in British hands, lying as it does at the entrance to the Persian Gulf, and was of invaluable service in the recent war in supplying the beleaguered Russian armies. The territory of Oman is now a British protectorate. The mention of these two names identifies the defenders of Palestine with Britain. These two positions are keys in the hands of the protector. But the evidence does not rest on these alone.

"The Merchants of Tarshish." Tarshish is a name appearing frequently in Scripture. Two examples will illustrate our point. In the days of King Solomon of Israel, he had a navy which sailed from the Red Sea at Ezion Geber which went to Tarshish and returned with cargoes of gold, silver, ivory, apes and peacocks. Ivory, apes and peacocks are products which identify India and Ceylon—countries now in the hands of Britain. Here is one of the merchants of Tarshish.

Jonah, the prophet, sailed for Tarshish from Joppa or Jaffa, on the west coast of Palestine. A westward Tarshish is thus implied and in proof we find that the Phoenicians had among those who traded with them in the products of silver, iron, tin and lead. The Phoenicians called the British Isles the Baratanic Isles, or, as some believe, the land of tin. Britain has been pre-eminently a land of merchants who sends her ships across the seas, whose very livelihood has depended upon merchant trade; a land of shopkeepers had been her nickname. To-day we see her far-flung empire built upon sea commerce—the British East India Company, the Hudson Bay Company of Canada, the British South African Company, the commerce with Australia and New Zealand. Truly there can be no doubt that Britain is the protector of the Jews in the time of the end, in the end of Gentile times.

"All the young lions thereof" is another identifying feature. The Lion is the universally-known symbol of Great Britain, and it appears on her standards together with numerous of her colonies. During the first World War and the recent war we have seen how the colonies of Britain rallied around the old Mother Lion, which feature was pictorially set forth in cartoons at the time of the war, showing the young lions coming to the aid of Britain—Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India.

But how does Britain happen to be in the land defending the Jews, when only 100 years ago she supported Turkish occupation of Palestine. *"I know not whether the men who at present contrive the foreign policy of Britain entertain the idea of assuming the sovereignty of the Holy Land, and of promoting its colonisation by the Jews; their present intentions, however, are of no importance one way or the other, because they will be compelled by events soon to happen to do what, under existing circumstances, heaven and earth combined could not move them to attempt. The finger of God has indicated a course to be pursued by Britain which cannot be evaded, and which her counsellors will not only be willing, but eager, to adopt when the crisis comes upon them."* "The decree has long since gone forth which calls upon the Lion of Tarshish to protect the Jews." (Elpis Israel.) And Dr. Thomas wrote that in 1848!

In 1869 the Suez Canal was opened, but Britain was against the project. But when it was made available for her fleet and merchant service, she interested herself in the Near East. Through the brilliance of a Jewish Prime Minister of England, Benjamin Disraeli, Britain obtained large interests in the Canal. Yet the Jews were not returning to the land. But God was still working with his people and Britain.

God in years gone by commanded the king of Babylon to destroy the city of Tyre. It was necessary in the working out of His Plan. Though he was not aware of it, he did God's bidding and was thus His servant. Ezekiel, the prophet, recorded God's word, "Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus, yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it"—Ezekiel xxix. "Therefore I have given him the land of Egypt for his labour wherewith he served against it, *because they wrought for Me*, saith the Lord God." Babylon took Egypt some years later. But God, Who rules in the kingdoms of men, permitted it so to be. God still rules among men. And He had decreed that He would give Egypt again as wages, to the nation who would deliver His people in the end. Isaiah recorded, in prophetic manner, "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob I have redeemed thee, I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee"—xliiii. 1-3. John Thomas also wrote, *"The Lion Power will not interest itself in behalf of the subject's of God's kingdom, from pure generosity, but upon the principles which actuate all the governments of the world—upon those, namely of the lust of dominion, etc. God will bring her rulers to see the desireableness of Egypt, Ethiopia and Seba, which they will be induced by the force of circumstances probably to take possession of."* "The possession of ascendancy of Britain

in Egypt, Ethiopia and Seba will naturally lead to the colonisation of Palestine by the Jews." (*Elpis Israel.*) And it has!

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SPECIAL EDITION

We regret to say that, owing to the orders received to date not being sufficient to enable us to continue printing the special edition of our MAGAZINE at a reasonable cost per copy, we shall have to suspend its publication as from January, 1948. We will resume as soon as sufficient demand ensues.

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Berean Committee. —Copies of Final Statement can be had from J. L. Mettam, Heath Cottage, Bulls Green, Knebworth, Herts.

Jewish Children's Relief. —We have received £39 from Detroit Ecc., Glasgow Ecc., £5; Plymouth, £3 18s. 0d.

Will Rec. Bre., etc., please forward at once any corrections, or additions to addresses.

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Ecclesial parcels are not included in this arrangement and will be sent direct as hitherto. We hope the arrangement will give greater efficiency in our service, and we are grateful to Bro. Growcott for undertaking it. The subscription rate in U.S.A. will now be two dollars per annum.

This arrangement does not apply to Canada.

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