

The Berean Christadelphian

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the exposition and defence of the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints, with the object of helping to make ready a People prepared for the coming of the Lord. Opposed to the unscriptural teachings of the papal and protestant churches of the world.

Edited and Published by:
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“They received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many believe”—Acts 17: 11.

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EDITORIAL

Thoughts As the Year Ends

When you read these lines, the year 1950 will have passed into history and the year 1951 will be in its early stages. The affairs of the world will not have been changed to any great extent, but we do expect that the movements of the King of the North will be accelerated as the time of the end draws nigh.

We use the term "King of the North" advisedly. It is the same phrase as used by Daniel. We learn from Young that the Hebrew word "Melek" signifies a king or counsellor and, therefore, does not necessarily refer to a crowned head. In the Bible Encyclopaedia it is stated that the closely related Chaldean word "mehlek" is used with great latitude of meaning, but basically indicates a chief ruler or one invested with supreme authority over a country or nation. No better term could be applied to the head of the Soviet Union. (In this connection we direct our readers' attention to the Signs of the Times in this issue.)

The true believers have watched the signs of the times in every age since Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. The apostolic writings show us that in the first century they "looked for his appearing." Time passed on, and the second century came, bringing with it the same characteristic among the believers. But they lived in a very difficult period because it was the time of the great persecutions. They, too, died in faith. Some in fires at the stakes; some torn to pieces by wild beasts in the public sports of Rome, and many starved in vile dungeons amidst filth and disease.

ARE WE MISTAKEN?

Year after year passed by until we come to the present, but still he has not returned. Are we mistaken about the manner of his coming? No, we are not, for what God has promised He will certainly fulfil. Though our faith may weaken and our hope become dim, it will never alter the divine plan.

We must, however, be on the alert and observe the lessons of the past. One of them comes to us from the days of Nehemiah. When the walls of Jerusalem were being repaired, Sanballat and Tobiah conspired against Nehemiah and endeavored to break down the morale of the people. They ridiculed the work that was being done, saying that "If a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall!"

In some ways times have not changed much, for even in our day there are many Sanballats and Tobiahs who would undermine our work and overthrow the faith of some. One of them says that our method of baptism is wrong and that we do not understand the true significance of the breaking of bread. Another, who is making a great appeal for leadership, says we do not understand the nature and sacrifice of Jesus, that we are completely astray on the subject of God-manifestation, and that the teachings of John Thomas are false.

GROUNDING AND SETTLED

If we are weak in the faith and unstable as water, we may be moved away from the hope of the Gospel by the subtle reasoning of such men. But if we are grounded and settled in the Faith, we will not be moved by any of these things, but after the way they call heresy, so will we worship God, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.

Examine the writings of these members of the demolition squad and you will observe that they are characterized by Pharisaical fastidiousness and smug self-righteousness. But let us not be alarmed, for there were such characters in the days of the apostles when many followed their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the Truth was evil spoken of.

Let us, therefore, be on our guard, like Nehemiah, and make our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night. We have the Truth, and we do not intend that anyone shall take it from us. —EDITOR.

1951 Subscriptions

We would like to receive these now. As mentioned earlier, Jan. & Feb. are included in the 1950 subscription (because there have been only 10 1950 issues), so all RENEWALS for 1951 will be \$2.00 or 10/-. NEW subscriptions will be, as usual, \$2.50 or 12/-.

If possible, please send subscriptions DIRECT to bro. G. Growcott, 15586 Normandy, Detroit 21, Mich., U.S.A. He is looking after the mailing. Those in sterling areas will probably find that they will be able to send SINGLE (or SMALL group) subscriptions to U.S.A. If they cannot (because of monetary restrictions), but can send to Canada, please send to bro. Gibson. If neither is possible, please send to bro. G. H. Denney, 47 Birchington Rd., London N. 8, England.

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Why Are Some Ages More Favored?

By BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

(In reply to a question: "Why are the people of one age more favored than those of another, in hearing the Gospel and being saved? See what numbers were converted during the apostolic age; and again in millennial times what multitudes will be blessed and saved under divine knowledge and government.")

Because one generation of flesh and blood happens to live contemporary with the times appointed in the original plan, while other generations do not. No injustice is done to the nations and generations that never heard the Gospel. Before they were born into the world they were nothing. After they died they went to nothing, so they became as though they had never been.

They had no hopes, and now they have no regrets. Why then need we burden ourselves with sorrowing for them that know nothing and care for nothing? "The dead know not anything" (Eccl. 9:5).

Men were not ushered into being for the purpose of being saved or lost. GOD-MANIFESTATION, not human salvation, was the grand purpose of the Eternal Spirit (Rv. 4:11). The salvation of a multitude is INCIDENTAL to the manifestation, but it was not the end proposed. The Eternal Spirit intended to enthrone Himself on the earth and, in so doing, to develop a Divine Family from among men, every one of whom will be spirit because born of the Spirit, and that this family shall be large enough to fill the earth, when perfected, to the entire exclusion of flesh and blood.

ENOUGH LIGHT FOR HONEST HEARTS

God will take out from the human race as many for His name as His purpose requires. The more light, the more RESPONSIBILITY. It is, therefore, a merciful dispensation to leave the "veil of the covering" over the intoxicated nations until the appointed time to teach them righteousness by the only means that can effect it—by the argument of DIVINE FORCE.

"WHEN Thy judgments, O Jehovah, are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9).

This is the only remedy for our rebellious race. God has given light enough and ample means enough for the taking out all needed for His Name. The light is strong enough for an HONEST AND GOOD HEART to see by, but it is not strong enough to bring men to obedience of a contrary description. Men who do not think, and dare not reason or act lest they should jeopardise their social position or be wounded in the vested interests, can never see the kingdom of God. The light is not strong enough for THEM, and their constant exclamation is: "I do not see it in that light"—"I cannot so understand it."

"WILLING" BUT NOT "COMPELLING"

"God does not "WILL all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the Truth" in the sense of COMPELLING such a result. The original words of Paul to Timothy do not sanction such a supposition. Speaking of God, he says—

"Who is willing that all men be saved and come to the exact knowledge of the Truth; for there is one God and one Mediator of God and men, Jesus, a man anointed, who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony in its proper times" (I Tm. 2:4-6).

The proof of God's willingness is seen in His sending an invitation to all men, offering them the Kingdom, power and glory of which the Gospel treats, with eternal life at the resurrection. When His willingness shall have found its full development and the fruits shall be gathered in, they will sing—

"Thou hast purchased us for God with thy blood OUT OF EVERY kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rv. 5:9).

He is WILLING that ANY man—Jew, Turk, Protestant, Pagan or Papist—should be saved on the terms He has appointed, for "He is no respecter of persons." But He will not FORCE men to be saved, nor will He PERMIT them to be saved if they will not believe His promises and do His commands.

"LONGSUFFERING TO USWARD"

In 2 Pt. 3:9, the word rendered "willing" is not the same as used by Paul above. Peter said:

"The Lord is longsuffering to us ward, not desiring (or wishing) that any perish."

The "any" are related to the "usward" in the phrase immediately before. He is willing that the incorrigible perish, but He does not desire or wish that any of the saints should perish. There were certain before Peter's mind who had obeyed the Truth, but had "forsaken the right way" (2:15) and who were about to fall into that furnace of fire that was shortly to devour Judah.

It was the Lord's longsuffering toward such errorists that caused the seeming delay with which the apostles were taunted. He did not wish any of them to perish, but that they might all come to a change of mind.

EXPERIENCE—We must have experience if we are to endorse Solomon's verdict in Ecclesiastes. We cannot, however have his experience; neither is it necessary. God has given us his case and his verdict to consider, and we shall be saved some distressing pain if we can appropriate it to ourselves.

Eating and Drinking in the Kingdom

By Brother Robert Roberts

"I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom" Matt. 26:29).

Here is a remark having a future bearing. As such, it cannot fail to contain much that is of deep interest to those who shall be mustered with the apostles in the day of the Kingdom of God.

Some people have a difficulty in receiving the idea that Christ and his people will literally eat and drink together in the Kingdom. Perhaps some who believe the Truth may experience this difficulty. Such a difficulty is due to the bias inherited from orthodox religion. According to this religion, it is a matter of impossibility that Christ should drink wine again. Its idea of Christ excludes it.

This idea perhaps is not very definite. So far as it can be defined, it may be described in the phrase—a "spectral" Christ—a bright "shade"—a luminous form of human shape without substance or tangibility—a "something" that could not drink wine. The wine would fall through it, so to speak, as through a sunbeam.

POPULAR "GHOSTISM"

This idea of Christ is **TOTALLY FOREIGN** to the Scriptures. It is part of the **GHOSTISM** of popular theology. Popular theology makes man an immortal ghost to be saved, and therefore conceives of its saviour after the same manner. But the **SCRIPTURES** show us man a **BODY**, as we find him to be. And they give us in Christ a **REAL** Christ—a Christ of flesh and bones who can be handled, who can exhibit marks of bodily identity, and who can **EAT** (Luke 24:38-43).

All this **AFTER** his resurrection—a Christ as **REAL** as he with whom the disciples walked and talked and kept company for 3½ years. Yea, **MORE** real, for as Christ was **THEN**, he was a weak Christ and a mortal Christ—a Christ who was of the seed of David according to the flesh, made in all points like unto his brethren (Rom. 1:3; Heb. 2:16).

But as he **NOW** is, he is an immortal, strong man, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9)—one in whose substance is focally condensed the power from which creation has sprung.

WHAT NEED FOR IMMORTALS TO EAT?

Realising **THIS** view of Christ, it is an easy matter to receive what he has promised, that we shall eat and drink with him at His table in his Kingdom. But some may feel affected just the other way. They may reason that if Christ is glorious and real and immortal, then the act of eating seems the more incongruous, because it has to do with the sustaining of life and is associated with the process of corruption.

They may ask, What NEED of an immortal to EAT? What place in an incorruptible body for a process involving chemical decomposition? There is an answer. First, we must not govern POSSIBILITY by OUR experience. The works of God are without measure and without limit in their diversity. It does not follow that because WE depend upon eating for living that therefore the act of eating has no HIGHER function in higher organizations.

It does not follow that because eating is associated with corruption in OUR experience that therefore corruption is a necessary accompaniment of eating in whatever nature of body that act takes place.

ALL SUBSTANCE IS SPIRIT

Even our present observations of nature would forbid narrow conclusions on the subject. We see even now that the power of chemically absorbing the elements of food is in proportion to the functional vigor of the constitution. An enfeebled organization will scarcely take half the nutriment out of the food, while a powerful organization will absorb it pretty completely.

Is it impossible to conceive of an absolutely complete absorption? It is evident that there is an ascending scale of power in this respect in even the animal organization of present experience. And by analogy, it is a matter of irresistible conclusion that in the spiritual body—which is powerful (1 Cor. 15:43)—this power exists in perfection, and can assimilate food to the last grain of substance.

We must remember that ALL substance is SPIRIT AT THE ROOT, for out of God all things have come, and in Him they subsist. What WE call "matter" is His energy made concrete in limited forms and conditions according to His wisdom. Consequently, a spiritual body will presumably possess the functional capacity of reducing all substance to its first element—SPIRIT—and assimilating food to its own spirit-nature possessed by the eater.

SPIRITUAL JOY AND FRIENDSHIP

This excludes the very idea of corruption, and at the same time it preserves to us the act of eating without the association of corruption which belongs to PRESENT experiences. Such a view of the case enables us to realize the act of eating and drinking in the spirit-state as the occasion of much spiritual joy and friendship among those who partake together.

But finally, even if we were unable to see a satisfactory conception of the matter, we should not be justified in shutting our eyes to the TESTIMONY of God. It is Christ's parting promise that we SHALL eat and drink with him in the glorious company of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the precious section of mankind of which they are the heads. It means the day of gladness that awaits the sons of God: gladness such as they can never know in the flesh: the gladness of a LIVING union with Christ—a living union with God. Not a union by faith, but of ACTUAL, manifest, and exhilaratingly-experienced FACT.

We do not know what gladness is now. We have NEVER tasted the REAL joys of existence. It is with difficulty that we barely pull ourselves along, so to speak, by reason of our own weakness, physically and mentally; and by reason of the coldness and darkness of the present evil world.

THE SAME CUP—A NEW MEANING

But joy is appointed nevertheless. IT WAITS. "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." God never purposed that gloom should always reign. "Everlasting joy" is the END OF THE MATTER.

In that glorious day of comfort and gladness, the cup will be once more on the table, but with a DIFFERENT meaning. Now it is a cup of bloodshedding, a cup of suffering and death—a "cup of

blessing" truly, because of the blessedness opened to us by its means. But still a cup pregnant with a significance of evil—speaking to us of sin and affliction and the triumph of the wicked.

THEN it will be the symbol of pure joy and the center of a ceremony having a thrilling interest for the vast assembly that will surround the Lord Jesus on the day of the new celebration. What a glorious prospect! Feast your heart upon it. Men in the weariness of constant disappointment may whisper that it is "too good to be true," but wise men will remember that weariness and weakness are conditions of the present transient state only.

They will pass away. God—the strength of all—remains. And His mighty purpose WILL prevail at the last, and fill every waiting, sorrowful and obedient soul with gladness. Christ is our hope. He is God's pledge to us of the glory to be revealed. We call him to mind, and thank God with all our hearts for him while we take this cup into our hands, concerning which he has said—

"I will drink it new with you IN MY FATHER'S KINGDOM."

Salvation Conditional on Obedience to the End

"SAVED ALREADY" NOT BIBLE TEACHING

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

This was the Apostle Paul's answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" What then is implied by "believing"? Does it simply mean an acceptance of the fact that Jesus died and rose again for the sins of the world? Or is it a far more comprehensive matter of UNDERSTANDING, and only PART of a process? It is the LATTER, as may readily be seen.

BAPTISM NEEDED

"Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved," is only a short form of saying much more. If we regard belief as ALL that is required, then we eliminate BAPTISM. But Christ Himself said in Mark 16:15-16,—

"He that believeth AND is baptised shall be saved."

Peter on the day of Pentecost, in reply to the question, "What shall we do?" stated,

"Repent AND be baptised," Acts 2:38.

Paul's declaration to the Philippian jailor involves more than just an affirmative statement. It includes baptism, AFTER a knowledge and belief. Certain facts had to be made known to him before belief could take place. So Paul preached unto the jailor the Word of God. Then baptism followed.

—AND FAITH, HOPE, AND ENDURANCE

Nor do the Scriptures stop there. We read further, concerning salvation being dependent also upon OTHER elements:

"Through the GRACE of the Lord Jesus we shall be saved," Acts 15:11.

"By grace ye are saved through FAITH," Eph. 2:8.

And further from Rom. 8:24,—

"We are saved by HOPE."

Again, Matt. 10:22,

"He that endureth TO THE END shall be saved."

Here are several things added to salvation besides belief and baptism: the grace of God, faith, hope, and endurance. And going still further, we find that Paul said to the Philippians:

"WORK out your salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. 2:12.

The writer to the Hebrews called the believers in Jesus, "HEIRS of salvation," not possessors of salvation, nor already saved—Heb. 1:14.

—AND WORK, AND PATIENCE

In the same epistle (Heb. 6:9), he shows that there are certain—

"Things that ACCOMPANY salvation, for God is not unrighteous to forget your WORK and LABOR of love, which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. Show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be NOT SLOTHFUL, but followers of them who through faith and PATIENCE inherit the promises."

Here 'work' and 'patience' are added to the list of items required as essential to salvation. These elements add up to a process of obedience to God which is continually going on during the lifetime of a servant of God; commencing with a knowledge of the way of salvation, and only terminating with death or the return of the Lord Jesus from heaven. The thoughts of patience and ENDURANCE are linked together by the Apostle Paul when writing to the Romans (2:6-7),—

"God will render to every man according to his DEEDS: to them who by patient CONTINUANCE in well-doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality—eternal life."

The book of Romans—yes, the whole Bible—clearly shows that before salvation can be attained, before there is any assurance of being saved, a life of obedient probation is required.

FORSAKING OF SIN

Paul's argument in Romans continues, and shows that even though we are sinners, Christ died for us, and through his righteousness the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. It is a free gift truly, but obtainable ONLY upon certain CONDITIONS. Certainly we cannot continue as sinners.

"What, shall we continue in sin that God's grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," Rom. 6:1-4.

WALKING AFTER THE SPIRIT

It is on this basis alone that God's gift is granted.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus . . . who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. 8:1-4.

Approval is based on walking pleasing to God. These verses clearly are speaking of those who have been baptised into Christ— who have put on Christ. Their salvation is only assured by walking

after the Spirit. Baptism has not assured it. This whole 8th of Romans is an exposition of the salvation which is TO COME; which is not yet in possession; which is greatly desired by those who are the true children of God. As the Apostle continues, he together with all the others (and surely if ANY could be classed as being already saved, HE could), he with others groaned inwardly—

"Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by HOPE," vs. 23-4.

He knew he wasn't already saved, and he continually struggled against the will of the flesh to do evil. As he said in Rom. 7:24,—

"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

He said in another place, 1 Cor. 9:27,—

"I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a CASTAWAY."

It is abundantly clear from this that Paul had no idea that he was already saved. And now as if to answer the very question of our subject, he adds,—

"Hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"

If we are already saved, where is the necessity for HOPE? We cease to be heirs, we are the possessors.

OBEDIENCE ESSENTIAL

It was not of the works of the old Mosaic Law that salvation comes, as some in Paul's day expected, and which he is arguing against. It was the heart of obedience. True, the Law carried its lessons. But the HEART OF OBEDIENCE to God's expressed commands was what God desired. Saul, the king of Israel, learned this to his shame. Being commanded by God to destroy the Amalekites and all they possessed, because they had afflicted the children of Israel in the wilderness, Saul spared certain things of the best of the spoil, and the king of the Amalekites. His excuse was that they had saved the best to sacrifice to the Lord. God's words to him for disobedience are,

"Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE, and to hearken than the fat of rams," 1 Sam. 15:22.

The result of this disobedience on the part of Saul was that he lost his throne and his life.

"FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD"

It is entirely of the mercy and grace of God who has shown such love in opening up a way of salvation that we have hope. Christ is the expression of God's love, and is the way opened. BUT—God will only give us the reward if we strive for it on the basis of "patient continuance in well-doing." James says (2:17) that,

"Faith without works is dead, being alone."

These two elements LINKED TOGETHER form the life of a faithful servant of God. James here gives us the example of Abraham, the father of the Jewish race. Abraham was called out from the land of the Chaldeans—idol worshippers. Heb. 11:8,—

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed: and he went out, not knowing whither he went."

This required a belief in God put into ACTION. Then James (2:21-24) shows that he was called upon by God to offer his son, Isaac, as a burnt offering,—

"Was not Abraham our father justified by WORKS, when he offered Isaac his son on the altar, and the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that BY WORKS a man is justified, and not by faith ONLY."

"MY FRIENDS, IF YE OBEY"

Abraham was called the FRIEND of God because he DID WORKS of righteousness. Jesus said,—

"Ye are my friends, IF ye DO whatsoever I command you," John 15:14.

If we are to be classed with righteous Abraham it is obvious we must DO his works of righteousness—

"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom, but he that DOETH the will of my Father," Matt. 7:21.

The Jews of Christ's day claimed to be the children or heirs of Abraham. But Christ told them that their natural descent did not help them, because they did not have the working faith of Abraham,—

"If ye were the children of Abraham, ye would do the WORKS of Abraham," John 8:39.

PROBATION—AND JUDGMENT

God has set forth a period of probation for all those whom He hath called. Until that probation is completed there can be no reward. The nature—good or bad—of the probationary career is manifested at the judgment seat of Christ. This we have seen from Rom. 2:6-16,—

"God will render to every man according to his deeds . . . In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ."

And again, 2 Cor. 5:10,—

"We shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things in body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad."

The view which would save mankind at baptism or belief makes void the necessity of any probationary sojourn, and makes a mockery of the thought of judgment. How can that which is saved already be brought into judgment? Webster defines "saved" in the religious sense as, "Being delivered from sin and its penalty." Paul told the Romans (6:23) that,—

"The wages of sin is death."

Therefore—according to Webster—the religious view is that baptism or belief saves from death. Judgment then ceases to be an element to be feared.

"SAVED IF" and "BELIEVED IN VAIN"

But this is not the teaching of Scripture. Paul told the Corinthians that we are saved by the GOSPEL—1 Cor. 15:2. But here again it is a matter of PROCESS,—

"I declare unto you the Gospel by which ye are saved, IF ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain."

It is obvious then that there must be a KEEPING IN MEMORY of the things preached. We also see that it is possible to believe IN VAIN. So how can we have assurance of salvation while there remains the possibility of our forgetting and turning from the gospel, or of believing in vain?

THE WORKS OF FAITH

Works on the part of a servant of God are a visible manifestation and evidence of a LIVING faith in God. As the writer to the Hebrews stated (11:1),—

"Faith is the substance of things being hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

It is an outward token of the inward trust in God, that He will accomplish that which He has promised. This becomes doubly clear as we peruse this well-known Heb. 11—the list of those who have lived faithful lives. Early in this chapter we notice a comparison between the WORKS of two men,—

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous," v.4.

John (1 Ep. 3:12) shows that this sacrifice by Abel was considered by God as WORKS. And also Cain performed works, but of the wrong kind. He wasn't obedient to previous commands.

"Cain slew his brother, because his WORKS were evil, and his brother's righteous."

This shows that the word "faith" in Heb. 11 refers to a LIVING faith, just as James states that—

"Faith without works is DEAD, being alone."

If we have faith in God we will DO whatever He has commanded. This will become a manifestation to God that we do believe in Him.

"Without faith (a LIVING faith) it is impossible to please God, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that DILIGENTLY seek Him," Heb. 11:6.

Noah spent over 100 years preaching to his generation of the coming of God's judgments on the earth, the while building an ark to the saving of his family. He believed God and manifested it by what he DID. How could he have been saved without the ark? His WORKS certainly brought him salvation from God's judgment of overflowing rain. An extensive list of other faithful men and women—together with some of their works—is outlined in this chapter.

JESUS SAVED BY OBEDIENCE

And what of the Lord Jesus Christ himself? He came under the same rule of probation before exaltation. OBEDIENCE to God was of supreme importance in his life. THIS was what brought his

salvation. This is what makes his life of obedience the pattern we should strive to follow. Heb. 5:7 states,—

"In the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared. Though he were a Son, yet learned he OBEDIENCE by the things which he suffered."

Then—and only then—was he made perfect. He was given immortality after the resurrection from the dead. It was then, as Paul states in Rom. 6, that death ceased to have dominion over him. Christ's baptism and acclamation by God as His well-beloved Son, did not save him. His life of service, even unto death, was what brought his salvation. But even here God's mercy is the crowning feature, for God had to prepare him and provide the Son who could succeed where all others have failed in perfection.

DEMAS—"SAVED ALREADY"?

We must continue steadfast in God's service unto the end of our lives to assure salvation. One of Paul's most faithful followers failed in the end—Demas, to whom he refers as "my fellowlaborer" when writing to Philemon. He sadly had to recount in writing to Timothy,—

"Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world," 2 Tim. 4:10.

If Demas was "saved already," how could he FALL AWAY? The Bible teaches that God is calling out from the earth's inhabitants a people to honor and glorify His name, and that He will give immortality to those who are obedient to His commands UNTO THE END. Therefore a life of probation comes in every case BEFORE salvation.

"Ye are saved by GRACE through FAITH."

Here is a linking together of the two main elements of salvation. Surely it is of the grace of God that we are saved. All our works could never save us. That is why it was necessary for the Father to provide a way of salvation. For as Jesus said,—

"When ye have done ALL, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done what it was our duty to do," Luke 17:10 . . .

"It is not of works, lest any man should boast," Eph. 2:9.

Though we can never attain unto the perfection of Christ, God requires us to come as CLOSE TO IT as we can. God desires PERFECTION in His servants. It is because we can never attain to a perfect service that our works—no matter how good—will never give us a RIGHT to salvation. However, if we strive to do our BEST in conforming to God's requirements, He will forgive us our failures for Christ's sake. Christ's perfect life becomes a cloak for those things wherein we, though trying, come short of perfection.

"He that OVERCOMETH, and keepeth my works UNTO THE END, to him will I give power over the nations," Rev. 2:26.

—E. F. H.

Night Unto Night

"I, Yahweh . . . will speak unto him in a dream"—Num. 12:6.

Joseph had dreams—dreams of distinction and honor, confirmatory of the pre-eminence with which his father's partiality had seemed to invest him. And he not only dreamed, but he recounted his

dreams. Even Jacob—who easily interpreted these dreams to refer to himself, his wife, and his 11 other sons—was not altogether pleased. And as for the other brothers, these dreams strengthened into positive hatred the dislike with which Joseph was already regarded.

DREAMS IN PRISON

The chief butler and chief baker were among those brought to the prison while Joseph had the management of it. One morning Joseph noticed that they looked unusually sad and depressed. Their minds had been troubled during their sleep by dreams. They were disturbed because their dreams were so connected and coherent and had respectively such relation to their different employments as to show that they were not the mere wanderings of a distorted imagination.

The butler's dream involves some points of interest. He saw a vine with three branches which—while he looked at it—went through the process of budding, blossoming and producing ripe grapes. These grapes he took in his hand and pressed the juice into the king's wine-cup, which he then presented as befores.imes.

The baker's dream was no less remarkable. He was carrying on his head 3 wicker baskets. In the top one were various baked meats for the king's table, but as he went along the birds came and ate them out of the basket. This boldness of the birds may seem strange to us, but it is common in Egypt where kites make nothing of carrying off large joints of meat wholesale.

In Egypt the birthdays of the kings were celebrated with great pomp. Such a day came around at the end of the 3 days to which Joseph, in explaining the dreams, had limited their fulfilment. Pharaoh made a feast to all his servants, and the absence of 2 such eminent officers could not fail to be noticed.

So the king at once enquired into their case, with the result Joseph had predicted: the butler being restored and the baker hanged. To the butler Joseph had said, "Pharaoh shall lift up thy head"; to the baker, "He shall lift up thy head FROM OFF THEE." The first of these phrases occurs also in the original in Exod. 30:12 & Num. 1:49 in the sense of "numbering." We note the margin here gives "reckon thee". The butler was again being "numbered" among the servants; the baker was "numbered and found wanting."

PUT NOT TRUST IN MAN

At the time that Joseph interpreted the butler's dream, he requested that he might remember him when he was restored to favor, but the record says, "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him." To Joseph's sad experiences at the hand of his brethren and of Potiphar was thus added another lesson regarding man's faithlessness and ingratitude. Surely there is no security in trusting in men.

The cause of Joseph's ultimate release was another dream—Pharaoh's dream. The most prominent object in both aspects of the dream was the river. The existence of Egypt depends upon the river, there being little or no rain. If it were not for the river, which periodically overflows and so renders the land fit for cultivation—fertilizing it by its deposits—the land would be a barren, sandy and uninhabitable desert. It is singular that the name of Egypt's river nowhere occurs in the Bible, though many other rivers are named. There does not appear to have been a special name given it. It was THE river. Though the Euphrates is named, we find its pre-eminence similarly indicated by its being often spoken of simply as "the flood" (nahar—river), as Josh. 24:2.

IMPENDING EVIL

The animals in the dream were kine—cows for milk—a very suitable symbol for plenty. It was quite natural that when the lean kine came up they should stand beside the others, but it was quite

unnatural and most surprising that the lean ones should in their hunger fall upon and devour the others. This would leave with the royal sleeper a deep and troubling impression of some strange, impending evil.

In the second half of the dream, the appearance of 7 ears of corn (wheat) upon one stalk was not an extraordinary circumstance in Egypt where, unlike the single-eared Palestinian wheat, the grain was normally of the many-eared variety (an incidental mark of scriptural accuracy). The wonder lay in the exceptional fullness of each of the 7 ears, and also in the significant recurrence of the number seven.

The 7 blasted ears "devoured" the 7 full ears. How this would be represented to Pharaoh we do not know, but in horticulture we continually see something of this nature taking place—one plant being consumed and destroyed by another being planted too near it and so exhausting its nourishment. If Pharaoh saw such happening rapidly and with extremely destructive results to the good wheat, it would be a very striking companion dream to the other.

The nature of the dreams was such that—though Pharaoh and his wise men could not fathom the meaning—they would be very forcefully impressed and convinced when the meaning was pointed out to them.

It is remarkable the extent to which God used dreams in the life of Joseph not only to reveal His purpose, but actually to bring that purpose about. Joseph's dreams brought about his brothers' hatred and their selling of him into Egypt; the butler's dream brought Joseph before Pharaoh; and Pharaoh's dream made him ruler of Egypt. And at the end of this strange chain of events the dreams which had started it were fulfilled, to the shame but also the blessing of the brothers whose malice had set it in motion.

"How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

—H. F. W.

Los Angeles "Nature of Man" Debate

INSTALMENT 13

Bro. Aue's 8th Address (Closing Speech of 4th Night)

Mr. Wilson was very cagey in reply to my query: "WHAT part —spirit, soul or body—constituted Christ when he died?" I did NOT ask which part of Christ died. So we press the question again for Mr. Wilson to give us the scriptural answer.

Furthermore we have time and time again asked Mr. Wilson to tell us if he believes Scripture teaches that God is a being. Why does Mr. Wilson evade answering these questions? And this is the SIXTH time I have asked Mr. Wilson these questions: Is a spirit a being? Are angels mortal or immortal? Are the angels material or immaterial?

GOD CAN RESTORE THE DEAD

Mr. Wilson put much stress on "The dead know not anything" of Eccl. 9:5—reasoning that they NEVER then could account for anything, being dead. Mr. Wilson did not take into account that God hath power to raise the dead to life and make them conscious so that they WOULD know things and be able to account for their deeds done during mortal life to determine whether they were worthy of bodily transformation to eternal life.

This the power of God CAN do. Yes, "the dead know not anything"—that is, WHILE DEAD in the grave they know nothing. And again, the same applies to "the memory of them is forgotten"—that is, the memory of them is forgotten while dead.

FLESH CAN THINK

Mr. Wilson missed all the points brought out about animals, and the Scripture testimony that the FLESH is conscious and can think. It would appear that Mr. Wilson purposely evaded any reference to these matters. Scripture is definite that the flesh DOES think and know and is conscious until death strikes.

"MORTAL" AND "CORRUPTIBLE"

When Mr. Wilson referred to 1 Cor. 15:53-54, he intimated there is a difference between "mortal" and "corruptible," and between "immortality" and "incorruption." This is NOT SO. That which is mortal is corruptible, and that which is immortal is incorruptible. The mortal is perishable; the immortal is everlasting. So when we read this Scripture: "This mortal (present nature) must put on immortality; and this corruptible (present body) must put on incorruption," we can readily see that this change is necessary (read the two preceding and two following verses). This change is necessary if we are to participate in Christ's coming kingdom.

"SPIRIT" AND "BREATH"

Mr. Wilson has been maintaining that "spirit" and "breath" are two separate things. There seemed to be a triumphant note in Mr. Wilson's voice when he drew our attention to Job 34:14 and declared that here Scripture shows it to be so. Well, let us see if it IS so.

Job 34:14—"If He (God) set His heart upon man, if He gather unto Himself His spirit AND His breath . . ."

Mr. Wilson claims these are two separate things, and wants to know HOW these can be the SAME thing. He declares they are NOT the same, and that their being mentioned together in the same verse indicates this. We disagree with Mr. Wilson. We say Scripture teaches God's spirit and breath ARE one. This is so in Job 34:14.

A SCRIPTURAL FORM OF SPEECH

It is not unusual for Scripture to mention in two ways in one verse things that are the same. For instance, Rom. 2:7—

"To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and IMMORTALITY, ETERNAL LIFE."

Here we have "immortality" and "eternal life" mentioned, which are one and the same thing, as we previously showed that Scripture testifies. Again, Phil. 4:20—

"Now unto God AND our Father be glory for ever." And 1 Pet. 1:3—"Blessed be the God AND Father . . ."

Here we find Scripture expressing ONE person (Deity) in TWO ways in the one verse. They are one and the same Being. Abraham said (Gen. 18:27), "I am but dust AND ashes." Did Abraham mean he was TWO SEPARATE THINGS? Decidedly not. Abraham was conveying the idea that he was of the earth, earthy.

These illustrations show that it is Scriptures' way—in many cases—of expressing or describing one thing or one person in a twofold manner. So, Mr. Wilson, you cannot accept anything other than that God's SPIRIT and BREATH (Job 34:14), refer to one and the same thing.

SPIRIT AND BODY

Mr. Wilson has been asking for a Scripture that teaches "the spirit without the body is dead." Let us refer to 1 Kings 10:5—

"And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, etc., THERE WAS NO MORE SPIRIT IN HER."

Here we find the body is conscious when the spirit had left the body. The queen of Sheba (when she saw all these things) had no more spirit in her. No, the queen did not die; she later returned to her own land. Mr. Wilson likes to say the spirit is the "intelligent entity." Now let us read it again Mr. Wilson's way—

"When the queen of Sheba had seen all these things, there was NO MORE INTELLIGENT ENTITY in her."

The queen of Sheba was still alive and conscious and able to think without any spirit in her. But Mr. Wilson maintains the spirit is the intelligent entity and never perishes. How could the queen of Sheba be alive and conscious then if her spirit were gone? And how could the spirit be anywhere else so long as the queen lived? Mr. Wilson, you are in difficulties here. Your problems will continue to arise so long as you fail to QUALIFY the word "spirit." Refer also to Josh. 5:1—

"When all the kings of the Amorites, and all the Canaanites, heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel, their heart melted, neither was there ANY SPIRIT IN THEM ANY MORE."

Here we have another instance where not just one person but many people lived without spirit in them. Your insistence, Mr. Wilson, on the application of the word "spirit" as "intelligent entity" is the cause of your difficulty. The word "spirit" in these two instances has reference to "disposition of mind, courage." It was THIS that was no longer in them.

Now, Mr. Wilson, since we have complied with YOUR request, we would like YOU to produce the Scripture that teaches that the spirit of man is conscious after it leaves the body.

(To be continued, if the Lord will, next month)

Notes from Bro. Thomas' Journeys

The Ecclesia is the light of the world, and the salt of the earth. But if the light become dark, and the salt insipid, then putrefaction reigns, and judgment must follow. The brethren in are responsible for the Truth there, for they have believed and accepted it. It was for them to say whether they had been faithful to their trust, not for me.

God had visited them in judgment, and reduced them from affluence to poverty. Would they not turn over a new leaf; and for the future live less for themselves, and more unselfishly for the Truth, and for the widows and orphans and needy of the Household of Faith? On my leaving them, they confessed their shortcomings with tears. They thanked me for my visit, and acknowledged the truth and justice of all I had said.—Bro. Thomas, 1865.

EXHORTATION

Friendship

The Spirit of God uses a word (agape) to denote the Divine meaning of friendship and love, that is not found in any of the standard Greek literary writers (although it has been found in the contemporary non-literary papyri—it is a characteristic of the Spirit of God to discard the polished but empty phrases of self-glorifying men, and to give great depth and beauty to a common, simple word). This word is translated "love" 60 times in the New Testament, and "charity" 23 times.

The meaning is a love and friendship that is the result of actual choice with discernment and understanding. It is well known to all that there is a certain natural feeling which takes hold of one when meeting another for the first time—either liking, or disliking, or mere indifference. Natural man is ruled by his natural, fleshly feelings, but in OUR association together we have to subdue the human impulses, and to bring our feelings into harmony with the rules governing the family of God.

"WE ARE MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER"

Therefore while the Gospel net brings along all kinds of fish, there must be no human discrimination between one another. Our duty is to bear patiently with each other's peculiarities in the light of the unity of our hope and the possession of the Truth. Eph. 4 points to this—

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ . . . speaking the Truth in love (agape) that we may GROW UP in all things (RV: in every way) unto him which is the Head, even Christ . . . for we are members one of another."

There seems to be an opportunity here to plead for "friendship" as between brethren and sisters. True, some divisions necessary for purity have been obstructed and hindered by a friendship between brethren which was not in line with the Divine Rule. On the other hand, occasion has been taken to separate because of jealousy or dislike of others, rather than any scriptural reason. Solomon says (Prov. 10:12)—

"Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins."

We do not quote this, of course, in advocacy of indiscriminate fellowship of "all sins"—we speak to scripturally-grounded brethren who can "rightly divide." But love and true friendship, we believe, could have saved the brotherhood from some of the unhappy experiences of the past. At the same time, less feeling and more careful discrimination could have secured a larger appreciation of some of the issues involved.

THE SUPREME EXAMPLE

Friendship and love demand unselfishness. True love cannot be built upon selfishness and self-seeking. Love gives without restraint, and seeks only love in return. The supreme example is our Lord Jesus. He told his disciples just before his crucifixion (John 15:13)—

"Greater love (agape) hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his FRIENDS."

In his supreme love for us, he therefore set before us the supreme ideal—he DIED for us. Paul told his beloved friend, Timothy (1 Tim. 1:5)—

"The end (that is, the objective) of the commandments is LOVE (agape) out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of an unfeigned faith."

And to the Colossian ecclesia he said (Col. 3:14)—

"And above all things put on love (agape)—it is the bond of perfectness."

There is another lesson in his letter to the Corinthians which Paul would have us learn. It has to do with the relationship of doctrinal rectitude to the standard of mutual behavior (1 Cor. 13:2)—

"Though I have the gift of prophecy (teaching, exposition and exhortation), and understand all mysteries, and have all knowledge, and though I have perfect faith so that I could remove mountains—and have not love, I AM NOTHING."

We know he does not belittle the vital necessity of faith, "without which it is impossible to please God." But he reminds us that faith and knowledge MUST bring forth the fruits of LOVE, or else they stand barren and self-condemned. All things must be done "in love" —both love of the Truth AND love of the brethren. Where EITHER of these is lacking, there will be failure—either unfaithful looseness or bitter, unnecessary strife. The whole idea of our Lord's teaching in Matt. 18 regarding withdrawal had at its base to GAIN the brother, and not to LOSE him. So important is this that the lesson was pointed out just before by the parable of the lost sheep, and just after by that of the unmerciful creditor, both in this same chapter—

"There is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine that went not astray . . . Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?"

But it is love that dictates the search for the lost one, and it is love that restores the repentant wanderer to the fold. Friendship for one another is therefore one of the greatest things that the Truth provides. In the bonds of friendship we can do much that we could never do alone. The final bond of our friendship will be seen in our unity in the Kingdom of God soon to be established in righteousness on earth. We all need the strengthening encouragement of true sympathetic friendship. The friend who never fails is Jesus, and the all-embracing love of God our Father through him takes all the fear and loneliness out of isolation.

ZEAL WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE

It has often been pointed out by thoughtful worldly observers that "Christians have burnt each other, quite persuaded that all the apostles would have done as they did." What a perversion this is of the gospel of love, and what occasion it gives the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme! When the Jews crucified Jesus, they were persuaded that they "did God service." But there was no kindness in their hearts, and no trace of the other qualities of love. True, they had a "zeal for God," but it was a blind, self-satisfied, egotistical zeal. So let us be on guard within ourselves against the deceptiveness of human pride. Pride MUST be rooted out—not just camouflaged, but truly detected and destroyed. We have very real personal responsibilities. It is a life-time task. How true are the words of Paul (1 Cor. 8:1)—

"Knowledge PUFFETH up (an insubstantial, impermanent structure), but love BUILDETH up."

The judgment-seat of Christ at the last day applies both to DOING good, and to REFUSING to do good, when the words are pronounced

"Inasmuch as ye have DONE IT unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it UNTO ME."

We must then be very careful in all things we do unto our brethren, guided by humility, meekness and love. Let us therefore, activated by our Great Example's loving sacrifice, follow in the paths of friendship—true and staunch—until he come and all the loving hearts of all time be united in hymns of praise to him "who gave himself for us." G. H. D.

SUSPICION—In an evil world like this we are apt to acquire the habit of suspicion to a degree that will actually prevent good that would come. It will hurt ourselves as well as others. Check its growth. It is better to be bitten a few times and go to the grave with good expectations, than to live a croak and die a fool.

Straight Words to the Colossians

From Col. 1:2 we get our name—"Adelphois en Christo"—Brethren in Christ. And this epistle well defines those who rightly bear this name. IF we truly ARE conforming ourselves to the marvellous spiritual picture it presents, we ARE Christadelphians.

Paul first thanks God for the joy and courage that their faith and love gave him. How COULD he have carried on if there had not been SOME evidence of success to his labors—some VISIBLE working of the Spirit, transforming natural, animal men and women into spiritual children of God? There are always a FEW faithful, carrying forward the divine purpose and bearing evidence—amid disappointment and distress—that that great purpose is still alive in the earth.

In v.6 Paul speaks of the Gospel BEARING FRUIT in them— spiritual fruit to God's glory—the pure beauty of the divine mind and character gradually beginning to glow among them, distinguishing them from common, ugly, perishing clay. The details of this fruit and character are brought out throughout the epistle.

FRUITS ARE REAL, MEASURABLE THINGS

The tree that does NOT bring forth fruit, said Jesus, will be cut down and burned (Matt. 7:19). These fruits are real, MEASURABLE things. In the last day God will measure them. He is no respecter of persons.

Treasure in HEAVEN is just as real and PRACTICAL an affair as treasure on earth. It is simply a matter of time, and effort, and desire. In NATURAL things we get results in direct proportion to how long, and how hard, and how carefully we work. When the books are opened at the last great day of account, exactly how LONG and how HARD we have worked for SPIRITUAL things will be found recorded in clear, impartial, unchangeable figures. There will be no argument or appeal. The full record will be there.

The first spiritual acquisitions that Paul mentions (v.11) are "patience and longsuffering." How is weak, natural, evil flesh to develop spiritual patience? By keeping the mind firmly FIXED ON GOD—His love, His desires, His greatness, His ever-presence beside us—and upon that man who perfectly manifested Him. God's great plan is being worked out with infinite, divine patience. If we are to be co-workers with God in developing a holy, eternal community for His glory, PATIENCE is essential.

SPIRITUAL PATIENCE

The Spirit through Isaiah, speaking of Christ, gives a wonderful picture of spiritual patience (42:2-4)—

"He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the dimly-burning flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment and truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged TILL HE HAVE SET JUDGMENT IN THE EARTH: and the isles shall wait for his law."

A quiet, loving, persistent, IRRESISTIBLE determination for good—never rough, never discouraged. Infinite care to avoid injury, and yet an unswerving adherence to divine principles. That is patience, as exemplified by the Great Example. Paul continues (v.11)—

". . . patience and longsuffering WITH JOYFULNESS: giving thanks unto the Father."

Paul—beaten with many cruel stripes and chained fast in the inner dungeon at Philippi—could still at midnight JOYFULLY sing praises to God. He had the true and healthy outlook. God does not want a brooding and self-pitying patience. Paul KNEW that ALL things—in the eternal, ultimate reckoning—work together for GOOD for those that truly love God. He KNEW he was faithfully doing God's will and helping forward His purpose and that—regardless of the present—time would reward his efforts and justify his joy.

TOO BIG IN OUR OWN PERSPECTIVE

Joy and thanksgiving are the normal state of the spiritual mind. Depression is self-pity and a perverted form of self-glorification. We are too big in our OWN perspective. If we realize that God is ALWAYS in full and active, wide-awake control, overlooks nothing, makes no mistakes, and is steadily bringing to pass His glorious purpose of good, then we shall not be tempted to indulge ourselves in the destructive fleshly pleasure of self-pity.

Are we discouraged by our failure? There is nothing wrong with us—at the worst—that faith and hope and love cannot cure, and there is an abundant fountain where these may freely be found. There is no state of mind that a quiet meditation on God's Word will not improve. "Get thee up! Wherefore liest thou on thy face?" said the Lord to Joshua (Josh. 7:10).

If there is something wrong, then there is something that can be DONE about it. The Scriptures leave no room for discouragement. The great purpose of God is too grand and triumphant. If, like Paul, we FILL our lives with LABOR on behalf of this purpose, and our hearts with THANKSGIVING that we have been offered a place in it, we shall find no room or time for discouragement or self-pity.

HOLY—UNBLAMABLE—UNREPROVABLE!

In the next few verses, Paul centers our attention on Christ, the Head of the Body, in whom and through whom the whole purpose exists. It is HIS mission (v.22) to present us holy and unblamable and unreprouvable in God's sight. HOLY—UNBLAMABLE— UNREPROVABLE! The goal is very high. The POWER is God's but the APPLICATION of it is up to us. Complete devotion to His Word is the way. The power lies there in abundance, waiting for the few wise who will heed, but He will not force it upon any.

V.28: "Warning every man, that we may present every man PERFECT."

To the Ephesians he said (Acts 20:31) that for the space of THREE YEARS he had ceased not NIGHT AND DAY to warn everyone WITH TEARS. There certainly must be very GRAVE DANGER of failure, if such incessant and urgent warnings are necessary! Are we SURE we are fully alive to the deceptiveness of the danger that threatens us? "Narrow is the way, and FEW there be that find it"—but those few DO find it, and all others COULD if they were willing to make the necessary effort.

NO EASY SLIDING INTO GLORY

The warning is to seek FIRST the Kingdom of God—to make SURE of that ONE thing to the sacrifice of everything else. It is quite possible to ALL—but only with the utmost effort. There will be no easy sliding into glory. A constant, tearful warning is needed against the Truth-choking concerns of this life and the deceitfulness of treasure on earth.

2:2—"That your hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love."

The only thing in which there is TRUE comfort, and the only thing that can effectively knit ANYONE together is—as he continues—"the riches of the full assurance of UNDERSTANDING . . . the treasures of WISDOM and KNOWLEDGE." How much of this divine treasure have WE laid up?

FOOL'S GOLD

There is a mineral called "fool's gold." It resembles gold in glitter and appearance and is often gathered by inexperienced miners. This thought strongly presents itself to the mind when the scriptural picture regarding wisdom and treasure is considered, as also do the searching words of Christ—

"Thou FOOL, this night thy life shall be required of thee: THEN whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Lk. 12:20).

HEAVENLY treasures knit brethren together in love: EARTHLY treasures separate them, as they did Abraham and Lot (Gn. 13:6-7). Lot's choice of Sodom was the result of this separation. Trouble followed, then disaster. Was the wealth worth it?

V.5—"I am with you in spirit, joying and beholding your ORDER, and the steadfastness of your faith."

Harmonious order and steadfast faith present a beautiful picture. The spiritual mind will delight in orderliness. All God's vast creation, from infinitely great to microscopically small, reflects the beauty of ORDER. Disorder is destructive, and alien to God. Voluntary and mutually-agreed order—faithfully complied with—is essential to spiritual growth together. As Paul told the Corinthians (1:14:33, RV)—"God is NOT a God of confusion."

AN EASY, BUT UNHEALTHY, WAY

The larger an ecclesia is, the more order is necessary—IF all are to take a part. Of course, if the work is left to a FEW, then, forms of procedure and detailed arrangements may be greatly reduced—this is an EASY, but UNHEALTHY, state. ALL should work while it is day.

V.16—"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the SABBATH days: which are a SHADOW of things to come, but the BODY is of Christ."

This is a clear charter of freedom from the ordinances of the Law of Moses, of which the most ardently advocated element today is the Sabbath. But God does not go backwards. If He THEN, in days of shadow, required one full day in seven for His service, He certainly requires NO LESS today. As Paul clearly shows later in this epistle, the ONE-day Mosaic sabbath has become the SEVEN-day Christian sabbath (3:17-23)—

"WHATSOEVER ye do in word or deed, do ALL in the name of the Lord . . . WHATSOEVER ye do, do it HEARTILY to the LORD, and not to men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward."

To what extent do WE consciously do ALL things as to the Lord? The COMMAND is clear enough. Its PURPOSE is self-evidently good and fitting. It gives ALL an opportunity for limitless service to God—regardless of circumstance. It fixes the mind ALWAYS upon God. Properly followed, it would completely eliminate from our lives all activities that could NOT be sincerely done as service to God, and it would ennoble all others and give the meanest task value and dignity.

"WHATSOEVER YE DO, DO IT HEARTILY"

God HATES half-heartedness. There is no pleasure in it to Him, or satisfaction to the doer. It is a burden on both sides. God requires our enthusiastic BEST in all things—lovingly given—because the only frame of mind that is pleasing to Him is that which is ever eager and ANXIOUS to give Him its utmost. Jesus said,

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with ALL thy heart, and with ALL thy soul, and with ALL thy mind, and with ALL thy strength: THIS is the FIRST commandment" (Mk. 12:30).

The accent is on the "all." Its essence lies in its COMPLETENESS, because unless it is complete and all-embracing, then it is not the genuine thing at all. Unless it consistently dominates the whole life, it is a mere EXTERNAL "form of godliness," lacking the living power.

EVERY DAY A SABBATH

Unless we are truly keeping ALL days as holy sabbaths to God, and doing ALL things heartily as unto Him, we have a very unconvincing case against the sincere but misguided advocates of the old Mosaic "shadow" sabbath.

3:1—"IF ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are ABOVE."

Paul is referring back to their baptism, mentioned in 2:12. The reasoning is this:—By your symbolic submission to death in baptism, you signify a willingness to die to all the things belonging to the world, and to attach yourself unreservedly to the things related to Christ, and you entered a solemn covenant to set your heart and interest on heavenly things. ARE YOU LIVING UP TO YOUR WORD? A covenant with man is a solemn obligation—a covenant with GOD is infinitely more so.

V.2—"Set your affections on things ABOVE, and not on things on EARTH."

Jesus tells us HOW—"Lay up treasure in heaven and not on earth, for where your TREASURE is, there will your HEART be also." That is, arrange your LIFE in harmony with your PROFESSIONS—accumulate nothing on earth to hold your attention and desires. Conduct your affairs so that ALL your prospects and pleasures and advantages are bound up with the FUTURE and not the present. Jesus' way is very simple—IF we wholeheartedly accept it. It is the ONLY way.

V.3—"FOR YE ARE DEAD"

A dead man has no worldly cares or attachments. The believer—in baptism—voluntarily dies to the world. There is no greater break that can be made than DEATH, yet how difficult it is to realize ALL that is implied in this symbolic action! Paul is pleading for the REASONABLE necessity of a WALK consistent with the position we have professedly taken—a position we voluntarily took in hope of great personal gain. If you are dead to the world, he reasons, WHY are you concerned with its empty, perishing possessions and customs and interests?

In the following verses he lists several things to be put away, most of which, fortunately, it is not necessary to mention among us. But the final crowning item in this list of ungodly vices is such a subtle part of our sin-flesh as to ALWAYS be a problem—"COVETOUSNESS, which is

IDOLATRY." The Spirit could use no stronger expression of abhorrence and condemnation than "idolatry" in describing covetousness.

'THE DESIRE TO HAVE MORE'

Covetousness—"the desire to have more," as Young's Concordance translates it. Why does God HATE it so? Because it is so DESTRUCTIVE of ALL the principles of the heavenly teaching of Christ upon which salvation depends. "Having food and raiment, therewith BE CONTENT" is the command—the PLAIN command— of our Master. The world is ENTIRELY given over to covetousness and greed. It is the root, says Paul (1 Tm. 6:10) of ALL EVIL. Jesus (Mk. 7:22) associates covetousness with theft, wickedness and deceit. Again he says (Lk. 12:15)—

"BEWARE of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

It is an evil, consuming disease, a mocking waster of time and lives. Because of the infection in the Brotherhood of this universal malady, countless hours are spent in getting worldly things that could be given to the service of God. When the Lord comes to demand an accounting of his servants, WHAT SHALL WE SAY? Shall we proudly show him our houses, our clothes, our cars? It will be difficult to explain to the Lord of heaven and earth that, OUR standard of living and worldly possessions during our probation had to be so vastly greater than HIS. "The servant is not above his master."

"Covetousness, which is IDOLATRY: for which things' sake the WRATH of God cometh on the children of disobedience."

RENEWED IN KNOWLEDGE

V.10—"Put on the NEW man which is renewed in KNOWLEDGE after the image of Him that created him."

KNOWLEDGE is the key to the whole process. Knowledge is a matter of learning and effort. We should ALL know the Scriptures FAR better than we do. Daily we are reminded of our ignorance in this direction—of the countless wasted opportunities for learning and study. In v.16 Paul says—

"Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs."

There is much material for reflection in the hymns we sing, on this matter of KNOWLEDGE, as on others—"O, how love I Thy law! It is my study ALL THE DAY." But IS IT? Or are we just mouthing meaningless words?

DO WE MEAN IT?

Again we sing: "Firm to the fight I stand! What terror can confound me?" and "Thy way, not mine, O Lord." Noble words! But IS God's way, and not our own, always the paramount consideration with us? "Not mine, not mine, the choice, in things or great or small." Truly godly sentiments—IF they are consistently followed out. Our hearts can say.

"'Tis not for present power or wealth, or worldly fame we look to Thee" . . . "All I ask for is enough." Do we, as we sing, consider the REAL MEANING of these things, and frankly examine our own activities in the light of them? "Life's fleeting treasures I resign." Does it come from the heart—or just the lips?

There are many subjects in which we can find scriptural admonition in the hymns. "We should learn the rather free from wrath and strife to life, FAR REMOVING ALL THAT MIGHT OFFEND

OR GRIEVE." To what extent can WE declare before God that we sincerely try to avoid ALL things that offend and grieve others? We can all think of several things among us—Some quite easily dispensed with—which grieve our brethren. Even if these things were right in themselves, it is clearly evident that the spirit of Christ is lacking in us if we persist in them when we know they trouble others. Some day God will ask us just WHY we followed this course. WHAT SHALL WE SAY?

‘PURE RELIGION BEFORE GOD IS THIS—’

Then we sing so heartily to each other, "Work, brethren, work!" But are WE working? A cardinal element of TRUE religion is to visit the afflicted (Jm. 1:27; Mt. 25:43). How much visiting do WE do? In other words, how much true religion do we actually possess? And to the alien we take pleasure in singing: "How long your strength and substance waste on trifles light as air?" Let us make sure that EXAMPLE corresponds with PRECEPT.

The whole of Hymn 170 is a searching indictment of a common failing—"The thoughtless still with levity and mirth delight to dwell." Paul says "Foolish talking and jesting are not befitting" (Eph. 5:4 RV). And in this very epistle v/e are considering (4:6)—

"Let your speech be ALWAYS with grace, seasoned with salt."

The important word is the "always." To mean anything, it must be a CONSISTENT principle of life, faithfully applied in all circumstances.

IS THIS US?

V.12—“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved . . .”

These are very exalted titles. They define a people of a character, disposition and purpose far removed from the world. "Elect of God, holy and beloved." A rare and different kind of people who are strikingly outstanding—as the apostle continues—for "kindness humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering." IS THAT US? Does the description fit?

V.15—“And let the PEACE OF GOD rule in your hearts.”

We are told, "Great peace have they which LOVE THY LAW, and NOTHING shall offend them." Peace is a precious gift of God, bestowed ONLY where HIS conditions are complied with. We are told "the work of RIGHTEOUSNESS shall be peace" (Isa. 32:17). And conversely (Isa. 48:22), "There is NO peace to the wicked."

Peace is spoken throughout the Scriptures as a supreme divine blessing. Like many blessings, it requires a certain amount of spiritual discernment to even RECOGNIZE its desirability, and usually too, a certain amount of previous worldly disappointment. Peace is a spiritual quality that has little appeal to the pride and ambition of the flesh.

PEACE WITH GOD

It is not just abstract peace, as such, that is the promised blessing. It is "peace WITH GOD through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rm. 5:1). It is a living, personal relationship of joyful unity and harmony with the Eternal Creator.

Jesus laid the foundation for this peace in the bitter road he trod that culminated in Calvary. Peace with God is clearly not a lightly-won privilege. Nor is it lightly HELD. Its requirements are summed up in the following verses (16 and 17)—

"Let the word of Christ DWELL IN YOU richly in all WISDOM—whatsoever ye do, do ALL in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Here again, "all" is the key. Bound up with this "all" lies life and peace. Short of that, there is only conflict. Again we sing: "Yet while I seek, but find Thee not, NO PEACE my wandering mind shall see. When shall all my wanderings cease, and ALL my steps to Thee-ward tend? Is there a thing beneath the sun that strives with Thee my heart to share? Tear it thence and reign alone the Lord of EVERY motion there."

HOW MANY FIND IT?

When we ACCOMPLISH in our lives that of which we SING in our hymns, THEN—and ONLY then—have we "peace with God." Paul, who said "Be ye followers of me," said also (Phil. 3:8)—

"I count ALL things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of ALL things, and count them but refuse that I may win Christ."

And he continues, a little further on, "Be careful for nothing" —we sing that, too!—"Be careful for NOTHING: in everything rely on God, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." In very similar terms our Great Example said (Mt. 11:29)—

"Learn of me, for I am MEEK and LOWLY: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

THAT is peace. HOW MANY FIND IT?

—G.V.G.

Signs of the Times

THE PRESENT WORLD POSITION

With no desire to be called alarmist, we feel that the extreme seriousness of the present world position should be deeply emphasized upon the consciousness of every brother and sister. The world has never—even in Napoleon's or Hitler's time—been in such a terrible dilemma as at present.

We expected Russia to antagonize Britain and her young lions in the last days and we also anticipated from Joel 3, etc., the arming of all nations. But surely none of us expected the present situation. Here are the facts as given by the British government—

In Europe Russia has 175 fully-equipped divisions ready for action. She has taken control of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Poland, Albania; she rules East Germany and half of Austria. She has a strong column in every country—much more potent for mischief than anything ever conceived by the Nazi regime.

Communist Strength and Determination

Evidence of the strength and determination of the Communist movement throughout the world comes to light every day. In Korea, for instance, when MacArthur had conquered the North Korean forces, he found himself suddenly faced with a huge new army of fully-equipped Chinese and Manchurians. The equipment was Russian, and so also was the direction. The world awaits the sinister outcome.

Now as against the 175 divisions in Europe, the U. S. and Britain and France have only 10 divisions. If therefore Russia moved West she could be on the coast across the Channel from Britain in a week.

Russia's present very clever and successful policy seems to be to sap the strength of the "capitalist" and "bourgeois" countries by starting wars in various distant parts of the Asian continent, and thus calling for the dispatch of troops away from Europe and the Middle East.

Shocking Revelations

At the same time her spy system has been showing great results. The western world has been repeatedly shocked by the revelations that atomic scientists at the highest levels in Britain and the U. S. have sold out to the Russians.

But one factor must cause a great seriousness to enter the lives of all true Christadelphians. It is that of Turkey and Palestine. Attention is being drawn away from the Middle East by all the Russian manoeuvres in the U. N. Assemblies and elsewhere. The Russian newspapers and radios talk of many things but seldom if ever do they now speak of Palestine, Jordan and Turkey.

A state of fear—leading to preparedness as far as possible—exists in Turkey. But suppose that Russia continues in her present course and provides all these aggressions and unrest throughout the world. She is most certainly getting herself into a position wherein she could overwhelm Turkey and go south as well as east at a moment's notice.

At the Door!

This therefore is the present position as succinctly as we can put it. Read again Eze. 38, Zech. 14 and Dan. 11 & 12 in the light of these events. Read bro. Thomas' masterly analysis of the whole matter in Elpis Israel, and then WAKE UP to the fact that the Lord Jesus is verily AT THE DOOR.

In the past 120 years of latter-day preaching since bro. Thomas began, we have seen the whole of the events we expected fulfilled EXCEPT ONE. The exception is the return to earth of our Great Leader, to call his saints to him. We have always earnestly longed for the Day to come, and so often have let our wishes beget our thoughts and words. But now the Advent, beyond any question, is VERY NEAR!

All the world expects the coming clash between Russia's Communism—a far worse tyranny than Czarism—and the nations aiming at different forms of "democratic" rule. Britain and the U. S. and the British Commonwealth are tied fast together in the coming struggle. The whole situation calls therefore to us who know the Truth to be VERY, VERY alert and ready!

"Be ye READY, for ye know not in what hour your Lord will come" . . . "Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come!"

—WATCHMAN.

Correspondence

FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP

We commend the editorial for June, especially the opening remarks as to the work of Dr. Thomas which are heavily discounted these days, both by young and old, doubtless for the reasons given, coupled with a lack of historic background of Christadelphian teaching throughout the years. The brethren everywhere are in need of a stirring up.

In regard to keeping the pages of the Berean open only to those who are wholeheartedly with it, I suggest you reinsert a notice to that effect similar to that at the heading of Ecclesial News for, say, July 1943 or January 1943. It is not enough for one to say he repudiates the wrong teachings in question, if he goes back and fellowships those wrong teachings. This would break down any dividing line between Truth and error. The dividing line must be strictly observed and the wall built up and kept in good repair by the "Watchman." With love in the One Faith,

K. R. Macdonald, Box 55, Whangarei, New Zealand.

* * *

THE PURPOSE OF THE "BEREAN"

We note the item in the July-August issue about "The Berean and Interested Friends," and we would like to express our view. We agree with our brother and sister that our magazine is well-written and could easily be understood by those of other denominations, but feel that the CHIEF purpose for its publication is for those of the Household of Faith. We look upon the magazine as a medium of association and friendship and fellowship between those of like Faith, and have always held the view that there is ample material in the other publications of the brethren for interested friends, without sharing in our somewhat private matters.

As our editor says, "We are compelled at times to deal with sad and distressing matters concerning doctrine, conduct and fellowship," and we may add—things that pertain to our stand with the powers that be. We therefore take the view that in a general way the Berean Christadelphian should be kept strictly for those in Christ. The editor speaks of the personal and family aspect of our most holy Faith, which is illustrated in our Breaking of Bread meetings and—we trust—will be in our magazine. Those in Christ are called to sanctification, which means a position of separateness and holiness. Let us uphold this standard. With love, your brother,

Fred G. Jones, Box 30, Richard, Sask., Canada.

(We assure bro. Jones that the principal and primary purpose remains as he describes; the other is a secondary thought. There are 2 aspects: (1) To make the magazine a credit to the Faith and to the Brotherhood, so that any friends who may read it will be edified and will glorify God, and (2) To choose SOME of the subjects and word ALL of the articles with interested friends also in mind. We believe all will agree with (1). We would like the views of others on (2)—ED.)

* * *

Another year is nearly completed. As we look back, only the scoffer would say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" So many prophecies are fulfilled and being fulfilled that only one seems still to remain—"And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives." In these trying times the magazine is a wonderful spiritual uplift, providing that glorious link with our brethren and sisters whom we know not now personally, but hope to know hereafter. We are thankful to know what is going on in the ecclesial world and how our brethren are faring. Take courage and continue, and may the God of all comfort bless you. Your brother in the hope of eternal life,

W. J. Pickford, 412 7th Ave. S., Lethbridge, Alta., Canada.

* * *

SOLEMN AND STIRRING TIMES

Greetings to the Household!

Surely these are stirring times! The world situation today is beyond the power of man to rectify. The return of Christ is the only hope for the establishment of lasting peace and goodwill among men. The world today is trying to make a patch-up peace. If they do, it will not last long, for the "King of the North" will not have it so, for he must fulfil his role as determined by the Almighty.

As it is written—

"And thou shalt come up against My people of Israel as a cloud to cover the land: it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against My land that the heathen may know Me when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes." Eze. 38.

The Russian nation is growing stronger and stronger from day to day. She is the world's most dreaded foe. The King of the North will stop at nothing to gain his ends. (But we who read our Bibles KNOW that "He will come to his end and none shall help him."— Dan. 11:45.) The opportunity is still ours to "make our calling and election sure." The time is short. The Master may return very soon. May we all make the best of the glorious opportunity that has been placed before us! May the God of all comfort be with you.

Robert Crawford, Box 53, Onoway, Alta., Can.

Ecclesial News

BRANTFORD, Canada—44 George St. — Sundays: School 9:45 a.m.; Memorial 11 a.m.; Lecture 7 p.m.

DETROIT, U. S. A. —2610 Ewald Circle—Sunday: Memorial 10 a.m.; Bible Class 11:30; Lecture 7:30 p.m.; Thursday 8 p.m.

HAWLEY, Penna.—O. F. Hall, Main & Rivers Sts.—Sundays: Lecture 10:30 a.m.; Memorial 11:30 a.m.

LAMPASAS, Texas—1604 Ave. "I" East Memorial 11 a.m.; Sun. School 10 a.m.

We are happy to report that on Aug. 13, bro. Atlee D. Stewart of Florence, Tex. (now of Lampasas) was received into fellowship after a good confession. He had been absent from the Table of the Lord for many years. He was interviewed on all points and found to be straight in the Truth.

Also we were rejoiced by a visit from bro. Olen Tunnell and family of Wichita Falls, Tex. They came down on Sat., Dec. 2. That afternoon his two eldest daughters were examined for immersion. After passing a good examination they were immersed in a stream of water nearby. Their names: VIVIAN MAXINE TUNNELL (18) and SYLVIA LaVONNE TUNNELL (17). May they continue faithful to the coming of the Lord.

The following Sunday our little meeting-place was packed full. Bro. S. S. Wolfe (Lampasas) gave 2 stirring talks during the day. We had visitors from Mason, Wichita Falls, Houston, Turnersville, Stonewall, Hico, Eden, Fredonia and Voca, Texas. All spread lunch together at noon.

We have had the following visitors: bro. & sis. E. Banta, C. Banta, E. Frisbie, J. Burkett, M. Edwards, E. Eastman, O. Tunnell, P. Cassidy, L. A. Hill, U. Edwards; sis. Dora Tinsley, Avis Tinsley, Lara Edwards, Mary Cooper, LaVonne Tunnell, Vivian Tunnell, Frank Martin, Margaret Martin, Evalon Hunt; bre. J. Banta, Mack & Duane Lucas, Alvie Stewart. We are thankful to God for the association of these brethren and sisters.

On Oct. 15, bro. & sis. Pat Cassidy came here from Florida. We hope to have them with us permanently, they are a great help to us.

We have been asked to report the death of our dear sis. Sterling Price, of Austin, Texas. She fell asleep Aug. 9. We missed her at the Fraternal Gathering; she always helped in the musical arrangements. She died in full assurance of the hope of the soon-coming of the Master.

—Erby Wolfe (rec. bro.).

MONTREAL, P. Q., Canada—YMCA Bldg., 1000 Gordon Ave., Verdun —Memorial 11 a.m.

**NEWPORT, Mon., England—Clarence Hall, Rodney Rd. (opp. Tech. Col.) —Sundays:
Breaking Bread 11 a.m.; Lecture 6:30 p.m.**

It is with pleasure we report a visit in the service of the Truth of bro. A. Nicholls of the Birmingham Edmund St. ecclesia, on Oct. 29. Our brother exhorted us unto all good works, and lectured in the evening. Yours fraternally,

—D. M. Williams (rec. bro.) 3 Constance St., Caerleon Rd.

ST. ALBANS, England.

With sorrow we record the death from heart failure, of bro. Arthur Cattle, on Oct. 29 at the age of 51. He was laid to rest at the St. Albans cemetery. Bre. G. H. Denney, P. Collier & W. Goodwin performed the service.

WICHITA FALLS, Texas—Box 343.

Greetings to the Household! With much pleasure we report the obedience of 2 of our young Sunday School scholars to the command, "Repent and be baptised." They are our daughters Vivian and Sylvia; we pray that they may successfully run the race and receive the prize of Life Eternal in the Kingdom of God— soon to be set up here on earth!

We would like to again express our appreciation to the Lampasas ecclesia for making our visit so pleasant on this special occasion!

Your bro. in Christ,

—H. O. Tunnell.

(See Lampasas News for details).

**WINCHMORE HILL, England—Adult Sch. Hall, Church Hill, London N. 22—Breaking Bread
4 p.m. Public Lecture 6 p.m.**

—C. H. Bath (rec. bro.) 15 2nd Av., Bush Hill Pk., Mdx.

"Tormented Day and Night Forever"

It must be observed that Rev. 20:10 is part of a SYMBOLISM in which the beast stands for a system of confederate nations (Rev. 13; 17:9-12), and the false prophet for an ecclesiastical polity maintained among them. The beast and false prophet being symbols, it follows that the things spoken of them must be similarly symbolic in character.

Torment day and night forever and ever (or more strictly rendered, "the ages of the ages) must be taken as the symbolic representative of the FINAL COMPLETENESS of the result symbolized. That result is the infliction of God's destroying judgments on civil and ecclesiastical Europe. This judgment will break in pieces the kingdoms of the continent and entirely destroy the blasphemous system of religion which they have helped through many centuries to maintain.

There will be no remedy. It will be God's work. And because the judgment will prevail forever over all human resistance, therefore the infinitude of time is chosen as the symbolical area over which the process operates. The SYSTEMS of iniquity represented by the beast and false prophet, now prosperous in the earth, will FOREVER be subject to the judgment that destroys them—that is to say that when they fall at the divine hand, THEY WILL RISE NO MORE.—Bro. Roberts, 1865.

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