

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 believed”—Acts 17: 11.

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CHRIST IS COMING AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

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"RESIST NOT EVIL": WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

What Christ does in this discourse in Matt. 5 is to give commandments. He does not deal with motives. He tells us what we are to do and not to do. It is a legitimate question to ask what commandment he means to convey by a given form of words; but it is not legitimate to go behind the commandment and ask his reason for enjoining it, WITH ANY VIEW OF GETTING AWAY FROM THE COMMANDMENT ITSELF.

There is doubtless much of figure in Christ's mode of teaching. At the same time, we must not allow our perception of the figure to obscure discernment of the thing figured. Turning the other cheek, as a figure, cannot mean smiting your neighbor's cheek, as a figure. As a figure, it must mean SUBMITTING TO FURTHER INJURY instead of inflicting injury in return.

To go to law is to break all these commands. The Corinthians offended so much in the matter as to go to law with brethren. Paul, condemning the greater crime, does not need to mention the lesser one of bringing law-suits against the unbelievers. To argue—from his silence about going to law with strangers—that he sanctioned it is to ignore all the precepts given to guide us in our intercourse with both men and brethren.—Bro. Roberts, 1889.

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EDITORIAL

“Praise, Brethren, Praise!”

The last 7 Psalms open with words of praise: "Blessed be the Lord"; "I will extol Thee"; and 5 times the opening injunction— "Praise ye the Lord," culminating in the 13-fold repetition of the final Psalm: "*Praise Him . . .*"

Praise is therefore a basic duty of all of us. Four times in Ps. 107 we read these words:

"Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"

It is the only frame of mind acceptable to God. A saint who directs his life in the way of Truth, and strives with all the power he possesses to pattern his life after the first commandment, will be filled with a constant urge to praise and glorify God for His marvellous love and wisdom.

As he reads the Word daily—with care and reverence, he will soon become conscious of the fact that to be acceptable of God, his praise must not come from his lips but from the very depths of his being.

The whole purpose of his life will be devoted to the service of God and His beloved Son Jesus. Realizing that God is now taking out of the Gentiles a people for His Name, it will be his strong desire to be associated with the Name, both in this life and in the Age to Come.

That Name is to be *God in manifestation* and to embrace all His attributes. The character that is required to enable one to partake of the Name is of a very high standard. It must embrace great humbleness based upon a recognition of the Majesty of the God of heaven, Whose greatness is unsearchable and He is exalted above all.

A saint who is striving to build up such a character will accept the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus with simplicity of heart and mind. As a steward in the service of Christ, he will understand fully that "*It is required in a steward that a man be found faithful,*" and to complete such a character he will realize that he must be obedient in all things.

A character of that high quality is not easily obtained in this age—an age when the ambitions of the flesh and mind are encouraged and cultivated in all channels of social and political life. But such a character is a treasure in the eyes of the Lord and will form one of His jewels in the Age to Come.

If we are among those who choose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, then let us come and sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving and make a

joyful noise unto Him with Psalms. We have a wonderful opportunity to do so with our hymns and songs of praise. Hymn 40:—

"Hallelujah! (praise Yah) raise, oh raise
To our God the song of praise;
All his servants join to sing
Loud the praises of our King!"

And the majestic words of Hymn 42:

"Oh worship the King all glorious above,
And gratefully sing His power and His love;
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendour, and GIRDED WITH PRAISE.

"O, measureless might, ineffable love;
While angels delight to hymn Thee above,
The humbler creation, though feeble their lays,
With true adoration shall lisp to Thy praise."

And finally, Hymn 138:

Almighty Maker of my frame,
Short is the measure of my days:
Give me to know how frail I am,
And spend the remnant to Thy praise.

Let us, with all our hearts, enter joyfully into these sentiments. It is through such a medium that we can speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord.

To do this there must be a wholehearted joining in ecclesial singing, for it is an *essential part of worship ordained by God*. It is written—

"Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Zion."

We should not let our heavenly Father wait for our praise, but we should be there on time and do the best we can. In fact, everything we offer God should be our best. The words and the right notes are necessary, but *enthusiastic singing from the heart* is far more important.

It stirs us with sadness to see some in our assemblies not singing and some only half trying. Do you think God will be pleased with that kind of service? Do you think it glorifies and honors Him?

No, our meetings should produce an inspiring, closely-knit unit of zealous, warm-hearted praise, in order to lift us above the mundane things of this life and bring us near to God. Therefore in the words of our second hymn let—

"All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice,
Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell,
Come ye before Him and rejoice.

"O enter then His gates with praise,
Approach with joy His courts unto:
Praise, laud and bless His Name always,

For it is seemly so to do."

As we sing such majestic hymns as these, *do we seriously consider the words?* And do they become our own words, which truly express our thoughts and desires?

And not only so but when we entered this room today, did our hearts burn within us and did we really feel that we were "Entering His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise"? And did we bow our heads and give thanks unto the Lord for His great wisdom and mercy?

But you may say, "I have so much sorrow in my life that I cannot rejoice and be glad." Oh, yes we can, for regardless of passing sorrows, the overall picture of God's people is eternal joy. We sing:

"Why should His people now be sad?
None have such reason to be glad."

As Paul expresses it:

"Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation."

And the words of David:

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

If we examine the matter, we will find that sorrow has an essential purpose in preparing character for the joy to be revealed, and so we learn of Jesus, who "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross and despised the shame."

On one occasion Paul declared that he was exceeding *joyful in all his tribulation*, thus showing the glorious power of his faith; and again he says:

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution or famine? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

"*But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?*" Heart-searching words, are they not? David asks a similar question,

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place?"

David answers these questions too, and his answer causes us to think—we pause—we consider the qualifications. He says:

"He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity."

What a standard! As we think upon it, the question of the disciples comes up before us:

"WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?"

Yes, the standard is high—*it has always been high*. Israel experienced it from the days of Sinai. Let us stop for a moment and listen to Jesus as he answers the scribe who asked him which was the greatest commandment:

"Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord: and 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. The 2nd is like: Thou shalt love thy neighbor AS THYSELF."

With such a high standard, who among us is qualified to praise Him and worship Him in the beauty of Holiness? Especially when we consider that—

"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Prov. 28:9).

There is only one way in which we can praise and worship God and that is "in Spirit and Truth." God is the Author of life and man has no authority to worship Him according to the dictates of his own conscience. *We cannot set our own standards.*

If we would find favor of God we must learn what He requires of us, and carry it out in our lives to the very best of our ability.

One of the greatest lessons in the Scriptures of Truth is that concerning the two sons of Aaron—Nadab and Abihu. They had been consecrated to the priest's office. They had the proper garments. Moses says that they did all the things which the Lord had commanded. They were therefore not wicked men, in the ordinary sense of the word.

But they made one mistake, they offered strange fire or strange incense which had been forbidden, *and they died before the Lord.* The comment of Moses was:

"This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I WILL BE sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I WILL BE glorified."

They had set aside God's standards and used their own. This was *unacceptable worship*. Paul, commenting on this, said:

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

"For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

We shall not escape if we neglect the Things of the Name. God is not mocked—

"For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption."

Those are sober words and deserve our serious consideration. The Truth is a serious business, therefore let us be serious as we ask ourselves a few questions:—

If I spend a lot of my time during the week enjoying pleasures of sin, do you think my praise and worship will be acceptable when we come together on the first day of the week? No, it certainly will not be, for it is written—

"They that forsake the law, praise the wicked."

Now, John says, "The whole world lieth in wickedness." Therefore if we set our hearts and minds on the things of the world, we are setting them on things that will lead us into the paths of death. What then are we expected to do? The answer comes to us from the Scriptures of Truth—

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:17-18).

This is not just a passing thought, nor is it an indefinite statement, but is clear in thought and understanding. We, who have obeyed the Gospel are obligated to walk in newness of life. We are commanded to "set our affections (or mind) on things above." Peter makes it perfectly plain that our calling is high and lofty:

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar (peripoiēsis-purchased) people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him Who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Pet. 2:9).

Think of what those words mean—a purchased people; we are not our own. We have no right to do as we please. Therefore, any action we take, or any move we plan, whether in religious or social matters, we MUST weigh the proposal with the utmost care because our eternal welfare is at stake.

The Truth is too great an heritage to barter for any consideration. We are not a social organization. We are not just another church or sect. *We are the ecclesia of the Living God.*

If we attempt to set up our own standards we will be offering strange fire and will be destroyed, even as Nadab and Abihu.

And are we walking in a newness of life as we have been commanded? Does our walk and conduct distinguish us from the people of the world by whom we are surrounded? These are not idle questions. We are speaking seriously. For example—

If I use tobacco like the majority of people—
If I can be seen going in and out of theatres—
If I waste my time watching various games of sport—

Then, to all appearances I am just one of the crowd. No, we cannot afford to offer strange fire, nor shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation.

When the Passover was instituted, the children of Israel were protected from death by the sprinkled blood of the Lamb. That was their identification mark. Some day, and surely not very long, history will be repeated when the angel of the Lord comes to summon His people to appear before the Master of the house.

What will be the mark on our homes—the sprinkled blood of Jesus, or just a television aerial? May wisdom direct us to refuse the evil and choose the good. To walk worthy of God requires a great effort, but as Paul says:

"I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

When we think of it, we are compelled to say with the Psalmist:

"Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!"

More *would* do so if they would only realize and keep before their eyes one of the greatest promises of God—a promise so great that we are unable to fully comprehend the depth of its meaning. Look about on every hand and see the results of sin, disease and death, then consider that some day soon it will all be swept away,

"And the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

Think as we read—God's glory *to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea!* No wonder the Psalmist says:

"Praise ye the Lord! Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise in the congregation of saints. Let them praise His Name, for the Lord taketh pleasure in His people: He will beautify the meek with salvation. Praise ye the Lord!"

"Praise is comely *for the upright*," but the "Hallelujah Chorus" as sung by professionals or by any group of worldly people, who sing it in ignorance of God's great purpose, is an abomination to God. They are taught to sing it without understanding, as one might teach a parrot to give thanks.

Isaiah speaks of the time when God shall swallow up death in victory—when He will wipe away tears from off all faces:

"In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; we have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates that the righteous nation which KEEPETH THE TRUTH may enter in" (Isa. 26:1-2).

Then those who have kept the Truth will sing another new song:

"Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9-10).

And finally—

"They sang, as it were, a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the elders" (Rev. 14:3).

This is the last new song, but it is not the last song, for once again the redeemed sing, and this time an old song:

"And they sing the SONG OF MOSES the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb saying, Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou king of Saints. Who shall not fear Thee O Lord, and glorify Thy Name? For Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee" (Rev. 15:3-4).

This same thought is most beautifully expressed in Psalm 96:

"O sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Bless His Name; show forth His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all people. For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised. Honor and majesty are before Him: strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

"Give unto the Lord the glory due His Name: O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before Him, all the earth.

"Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for He cometh to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth."

Is it any wonder that Paul spoke with such beauty of expression:

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

As Jesus came to the end of his ministry and concluded his beautiful and instructive discourse with his disciples, he said,

"These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that YOUR JOY MIGHT BE FULL."

They must have been greatly impressed with what Jesus said that night and during the forty days from his resurrection to his ascension, because after he left them:

"They returned to Jerusalem WITH GREAT JOY; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God."

It is worthy of note that under the Israelitish dispensation, there was a literal Temple in which to worship, but in Christ the literal gives way to the figurative. To this Paul directs our minds:

"Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the Temple of God, Him shall God destroy; for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are."

Surely it is not possible to listen to more impressive words than these. They make us realize that *to be related to the purpose of God* as we are, is something greater than our minds are able to appreciate fully.

A temple is a place in which to worship and praise God. Let us therefore do all in our power to see that we do not worship God in vain by "teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." But let us love and read the Word prayerfully as though Jesus were literally speaking to us, for God has magnified His Word above all His Name. Therefore, says Peter:

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God, in all things, may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever" (1 Pet. 4:11).

Let us also remember that God did not create things for us, but "for *His pleasure* they are and were created." How impressive are the last words of the Psalms—

"Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord! Praise ye the Lord!"

The first section of these words is general, but the final words are personal. The whole purpose and destiny of the creation leads to God—His praise and glorification. When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, everything that has not contributed, and does not contribute, to the glory and praise of God, will be swept away and "*God will be all in all.*"

The only worthwhile purpose of this vain life is to fit ourselves to become part of the TRUE "Hallelujah Chorus" who will sing the New Song in the land of Judah, which was foreshadowed at the birth of Christ by the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest."

"Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth God. Praise ye the Lord!"

—Editor

The Sealed Book

By brother John Thomas

In Rev. 5:1, the Apocalypse is represented as a book in the right hand of God completely sealed up. When John saw the book, he heard a loud voice inquiring,

"Who is worthy to unroll the scroll, and to loose its seals?"

But no man or angel came forward. Says John:

"And no man in the heaven, nor upon the earth, nor under the earth, was able to unroll the scroll, nor to see it" (v. 3).

John was exceedingly distressed at this. The words and the book that Daniel had been commanded to shut up and seal (Dan. 12:4-9) no one in the heaven, earth, or grave, was found worthy or able to open. Therefore John wept exceedingly.

"I wept much because no man was found worthy to unroll and read the scroll, nor to see it" (v. 4).

The book remained thus concealed with God until the time of John's residence in the Isle of Patmos. He was there, he tells us,

"On account of the Word of God, and the testimony of Jesus."

He was "in tribulation", and doubtless "wept much," both on account of his sufferings, and his inability to say "how long to the end of the times" (Dan. 12:6-8) when the Lord Jesus should appear in his kingdom (Rev. 1:9).

But, at this crisis, a Messenger reached his place of exile, whom he styles "one of the elders," a constituent of the symbolic 24 (4:4; 5:8-9) and who said to him (v. 5)—

"Weep not: Behold, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to unroll the scroll and loose its seals."

Thus "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," is brought before the reader as the only personage from among the dead, or among the living, who could open the words and unseal the mystery of God, as He hath declared the glad tidings to His servants the prophets (10:7).

That mystery required the cutting asunder of a covenant for the covering of iniquity; and for causing to come in a righteousness of Aions (Dan. 9:24). In other words, "Messiah the Prince" had to be cut off; and so to be made a covenant of, as God hath said—

"I will give thee for a covenant of the people" (Isa. 42:6; 49:8).

Until this were accomplished no practical solution could be given of the end. Had the Second Adam, like the First, failed to establish his worthiness, John's weeping would never have been assuaged. But Jesus did "prevail"—for, though in all points tempted as we are, according to the likeness of his nature to ours, yet he did not sin.

Though a Son, he "learned obedience by the things which he suffered." He was "made perfect through sufferings," having been obedient unto death. He kept his body under, triumphing over its lust; and, though sorely tried, he yielded not, but evolved a character that was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners (Heb. 2:10, 14, 16; 4:15; 4:2, 7, 9; 7:26).

When he died, he was delivered from death, and now lives for evermore. Death hath no more dominion over him. For he had power to lay down his life, and to take it up again; a commandment which he had received of the Father. This he did; and in so doing, abolished the power of death, having led captivity captive, and brought to light the life and incorruptibility of the Gospel of the Kingdom (Psa. 68:18; Eph. 4:8; 2 Tim. 1:10).

Having established his worthiness in this mortal conflict with the world and flesh, God accepted him as the most excellent of all the intelligences of His universe; and in consequence gave to him what no one else possessed, namely, power to unroll the scroll and to loose its seals.

The Apocalypse is therefore styled, "A Revelation of Jesus Anointed *which the Deity committed to him* (Rev. 1:1). Now, Jesus Anointed is Power, or Spirit, manifested in flesh, and justified in Spirit (1 Tim. 3:16), or:

"Made of the seed of David according to flesh; and constituted Son of God in power, according to the spirit of holiness, out of a resurrection of dead ones" (Rom. 1:3-4).

—and therefore styled "the Lord the Spirit," or "a life-imparting Spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17-18). Here are Spirit and Flesh. The Spirit is Theos, or Deity; the Flesh was the Son of Mary, and named Jesus; and when anointed with Spirit again at his resurrection, became Jesus Christ, or the Anointed Jesus. This anointing was his begetting of Spirit by which he became Spirit; as he said to Nicodemus,

"That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit" (John 3: 6).

The Eternal Spirit, then, imparted to Jesus, after his glorification, the times, and seasons, and mode, and circumstances of his reappearance upon earth; all of which constituted a revelation such as he had not yet been the subject of. It is a *revelation of Jesus Christ* very unlike the revelation of the man of sorrows acquainted with grief.

This latter was a revelation of the Son promised to Israel and David's house, as a helpless babe, born in a stable and cradled in a manger; as a fugitive in the earth, escaping from the sword of power; as a mechanic, laboring at the bench for his daily bread; as a preacher of righteousness, denouncing the hypocrisy and blasphemy of the clergy; and calling upon the people to renounce the traditions of their blind guides and to become enlightened in the wisdom from above; as a man persecuted for righteousness' sake by the pious and the powerful of the Church and State; as a man accused of blasphemy, sorcery, and perversion of the people; as an alleged enemy of God, and a traitor to kings reigning by His grace; as a man, in fine, adjudged "guilty of death," and worthy only of being "numbered with transgressors," and ignominiously executed with thieves.

Such was the revelation of "Messiah the Prince" in Heaven's gift of him "for a Covenant of the People," which has now for many centuries been presented to the nations in New Testament history, and memorialized in the ecclesiasticism of the Beast.

Now, though the world has witnessed this revelation which Light and Power gave to David's Son in the days of his psychical, or soul-body, commonly styled "his flesh;" it has never seen the revelation predetermined and recorded for manifestation through the spirit-body, begotten from among the dead. *This* revelation has been imparted to the glorified Jesus, to the once-dead body now anointed with spirit with which God has sealed him (John 6:27).

"A revelation of Jesus anointed which God gave him"—not to be held as a secret with himself, which no other intelligences should know until the things revealed should burst upon the world and take even the saints at unawares. This was not the purpose for which it was given to him—simply, as it were, to make the Son equal in knowledge with the Father, and more intelligent than the angels in heaven.

It was given to him as "*The Head of the Body* (the Ecclesia); the Beginning, the first begotten from among the dead, that he might be among all pre-eminent; for it pleased that in him all the fulness should dwell" (Col. 1:18). He was to be the depository of wisdom, knowledge, and power for the heirs of the world.

The apocalypse of his future was given *to him for their benefit*, that they might know the things which must be accomplished speedily. The inscription therefore reads,

"A Revelation of Jesus anointed which God gave to him, to show to his servants things which must come to pass speedily."

The revelation was only intended for these. It was not communicated for the information of the wicked; for it had long before been noted in the Scriptures of Truth that—

"None of the wicked should understand."

To the wicked, God saith,

"What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldest take My covenant in thy mouth?—seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest My Words behind thee" (Psa. 1:16).

FELLOWSHIP

Consider the messages to the 7 ecclesias of Asia Minor, and we shall find that it is particularly important that we shall be careful in regard to matters of fellowship.

A loose fellowship is convenient and easily becomes popular with inexperienced believers, or with blunted believers of long standing. It is agreeable to human feelings, but it is out of harmony with the apostolic standard which demands the whole counsel of God and unity of the Faith.

The loose basis admits of larger cooperation with man and a little more friendship with the world that is possible with those who accept the stranger-ship with God which the Truth always brings with it where it is earnestly and fully received.—Bro. Roberts.

The Prince-Priest of the Age to Come

By brother Robert Roberts

PART TWENTY-FOUR

OBJECTION 19: Does not the phrase "as he is able," in reference to the offerings of the Prince (Eze. 46:5-7-11) imply restricted or limited means, which of course would be out of harmony in reference to the Lord of the whole earth?

The phrase would not imply restricted or limited means, even if we imagined a mortal Prince to be intended: for no mortal Prince with a domain containing thousands of square miles could be of restricted or limited means. The sense of the phrase is "without restriction"—as he is able—as he pleases. The ability in the case is unlimited on any supposition, and therefore the regulation is at the discretion of the Prince.

Why it should be left open we may discover when we see the use to which the Prince will turn the meat offering of the 6 Sabbath day lambs and of the other feasts.

OBJECTION 20: In your argument to prove vs. 15-17 of Eze. 44 to be parenthetical, you quote Matt. 27:32, as a similar illustration. But is there not a great difference? Whereas the context in Matt, clearly shows the verse to be a parenthesis and (as you remark), "entirely excludes such an absurdity" that Simon was crucified; does not the context in Eze. almost as clearly show the reverse? Does the Scripture afford a better illustration? Apart from such, does not the insertion of such a parenthesis afford a rather dangerous precedent for tampering with the Word?

Matt. 27:32 was not cited as a "proof" of the Ezekiel parenthesis, but as an *illustration* of the same form of speech; that is, of a previous subject being resumed without formal intimation. The only difference is that the fact is more immediately obvious in the one case than in the other.

Only perversity could make the mistake in Matthew. Candor might make the mistake in Ezekiel. But that it *is* a mistake all the same is shown by the context when thoroughly worked out. This has already been shown.

Duties are attributed to the priests spoken of after the parenthesis that belong only to those spoken of before it, and that are excepted from those spoken of in it. Therefore the parenthesis and what comes after cannot apply to the same.

To save repetition, we must refer back to the argument in detail (Jan., 1952). There may be better illustrations than Matthew 28:32; but the validity of the discrimination in the case of Ezekiel is not affected by other illustrations. It would stand by itself if there were no other.

It is not a case of "tampering." It is a case of *recognising an inevitable conclusion*, or of what is expressed as "rightly dividing the Word of Truth." If any man in any case can show similar reason for observing a parenthesis in other parts of the Word, well and good. If a parenthesis were contended for without a good reason in the thing itself, Ezekiel could be no "precedent."

OBJECTION 21: Do you exclude the Zadok priests from the prohibition of Eze. 44:21? If so, do you do so on any grounds found in Ezekiel?

As the prohibition refers to "the Levites that are gone away far from God" (14:10) from whom the Zadok priests are exclusively discriminated (v. 15), it cannot refer to the latter. The discrimination in question is found in Ezekiel and nowhere else.

OBJECTION 22: Seeing that the Priests who have to change their attire are those that "approach unto the Lord" (Eze. 44:17-19), and that only the Sons of Zadok will do this (Eze. 42:13-14), does not v. 18 of ch. 44 clearly imply flesh and blood?

There is a mistake in the statement of this question. The mistake is in the postulate:

"The priests who have to change their attire are those that approach unto the Lord" (that is, the sons of Zadok).

The reference to Eze. 44:17-19 does not bear out this statement. These verses apply to the *second* order of priests as shown by the statement in v. 19 that—

"They go forth into the outer court TO THE PEOPLE."

This is the function of the second order as shown by v. 11:

"They (the Levites that are gone astray) shall stand before them (the people) to minister unto them."

The sons of Zadok . . .

". . . come near to Me to minister unto Me, and they shall stand before Me, saith the Lord God" (v. 15).

The reference to chapter 42:13-14, is equally wide of the mark. The question assumes that these verses refer only to the sons of Zadok. That this cannot be—that part of them refers to the sons

of Zadok and part to "the Levites that are gone astray"—seems to follow from the fact that both north and south chambers (or ranges of chambers) are coupled in the general declaration touching the offices of the priesthood.

Now, concerning these N. and S. chambers (or "ranges of chambers," which bro. Sulley shows to be the proper sense of the word translated "chambers"), it had been said, in ch. 40:45-46, that the N. chamber (or range of chambers) with prospect towards the south, is—

". . . for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the HOUSE,"

—that is, the Levites that are gone astray (44:14); and the chamber or range of chambers whose prospect is towards the north (that is, the S. chambers) is—

". . . for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the ALTAR: these are the sons of Zadok among the sons of Levi, which come near unto the Lord to minister unto Him."

Here are the 2 orders of priests allotted respectively to N. and S. chambers. Now, ch. 42:13-14 is a statement concerning *both sets of chambers*:

"Then said he unto me, The north chambers and the south chambers . . . be holy chambers where the priests," etc.

Consequently, the statement of duties following must include *both orders of priests*, according as the duties mentioned belong to one or the other. Accordingly in v. 13 mention is made of—

". . . the priests that approach unto the Lord."

—that is, the sons of Zadok as those whose part it is to receive and eat the most holy things *in the holy place*; and in v. 14, there is the second order who "enter therein," bringing from the outer court the things offered by the people, and who are—

". . . not to go out of the holy place into the outer court"

—in the garments they minister in, but must lay them aside and—

". . . put on other garments when they go forth to the outer court to the people" (42:14; 44:19).

No doubt 44:18 "clearly implies flesh and blood," but the expression refers to "the Levites that are gone astray"—not the "sons of Zadok" who are distinctly separate from and above them.

OBJECTION 23: If the "Sons of Zadok" be a figurative description of the Saints, how can we find fault with those who say Mt. Zion is the Church?

The answer to this is, that the 2 cases are not quite parallel. When the Apostasy applies Mt. Zion to "the Church" it appropriates the name to the wrong community. Zion is not used for either the false or the real Church in its present state, but it cannot be denied that it is used to represent the nation of Israel:—

"Say unto Zion, Thou art My people" (Isa. 51:16).

The name has both a literal and a figurative meaning, and if we recognize each in its proper place, we do no violence to Scriptural language. The Apostasy fails to do this; it substitutes the figurative for the literal and thereby makes void the literal. In applying the term "Son of Zadok" to the immortal Saints, the literal is in no way nullified. On the contrary the literal is used for the purpose of explaining the figurative. (TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH, IF THE LORD WILL)

INDEPENDENCE

A man who loves God will do His will, whether anybody know it or not. The man who loves God will be found doing the right thing for God's sake—not man's. Such men are noble men. There will be a multitude in the earth—a noble multitude. We shall see them by-and-by.

God has not forgotten the earth, though it may seem so to a superficial view. The finish will show that He has remembered all the time, and has had His eye all the time upon those who fear Him and hope in His mercy.

He will at last make up His jewels—but they must be PRODUCED first. There are some kinds of precious stones that require darkness for their production, and the bowels of the earth for their workshop, and extreme pressure and the fire of intense heat to develop them.

After a long time men dig down and find them and bring them to the light, and show their sparkling colors.

Tried and chosen men are compared to precious stones. They require days of evil and darkness for their preparation. The darkness does not prove forgetfulness by God, but the reverse.

When the days of darkness have fulfilled their mission, the multitude of God's chosen will stand revealed, and they will prove to be those who have DONE THE WILL OF GOD FOR GOD'S SAKE.

Such a character may seem to some to savor of cold independence. It has independence certainly, but not a cold one. A man of God is a warm man, but he certainly is an independent one.

Surely this is necessary. We must not be influenced by man, but look straight to God. This is the independence. You may be influenced by human praise or censure to go off the right path. If you look straight to God, you will consider His way only.—Bro. Roberts.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah

PART TWO

"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth"—Heb. 12:6.

This is a divine principle pervading all God's dealings with His people. The operation of the Spirit of God is not capricious, but is exercised in wisdom and love and mercy; having the final result always as a basis. It is so, whether we look at the chosen people nationally, or spiritually, or in the case of the Lord Jesus.

The circumstances which God brought upon Judah caused anguish not only for those who experienced them, but for those who, though spared the trial, yet witnessed the calamities. But we are assured that the extreme nature of the trials was no greater than the sin of Judah required, and was designed to the end that the spirit should ultimately be saved.

Jeremiah takes up his lament, placing himself in the position of his erring countrymen, assuming their Iniquities and transgressions as his own. Many of the trials which he personally experienced are illustrated as the workings of the hand of God in the affairs of Israel nationally. The purpose is to clearly define the object that God had in the judgment He brought against His erring people. In 2 Peter 3:9 we read,

"The Lord is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

* * * *

"I am the man that hath seen affliction" (Lam. 3:1).

Israel had seen affliction as the son of God, as His firstborn. If they were not His son they would have been discarded and completely destroyed, as other nations had been. But they were a chosen people to be witnesses of Divine attributes. They were to manifest His glory, His lovingkindness and His truth in the fulfilment of His Word. They portrayed His longsuffering and mercy and forbearance, in His rising early and sending all the prophets unto them.

And finally they manifested the justice and judgment of their Heavenly Father in their national destruction, dispersion and captivity. If God had winked at their waywardness as the other nations, they would have been strangers and not sons. In this sense also their afflictions speak of hope and not despair.

The exceeding love of God for His people is well shown in the words of Isaiah. Ezekiel says (33:11)—

"As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live."

—so it is natural that we should read of God,

"In all their afflictions He was afflicted, and the angel of His Presence saved them" (Isa. 63:9).

These things give us courage to endure our light affliction which endureth but for a moment. It should make us ever cautious in our actions that we do not cause the Creator grief in any way we can avoid, for—

"As a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him" (Psa. 103:13).

The same process of correction is designed for the faithful of all ages. In the Psalms we are told the righteous will undergo many afflictions, but the Lord will deliver them out of them all.

We find also that the Son of God was not exempt. The very purpose of his coming was to illustrate a way to eternal life through suffering and patience. The things which happened unto him were not chance. Isaiah tells us,

"He was smitten of God, and afflicted" (Isa. 53:4).

He himself stated of his enemies,

"Ye could have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above" (John 19:11).

While the Apostle Paul says,

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb. 5:8).

The word "rod" has become synonymous with punishment, correction and tribulation. It is used in these 3 senses in well-known passages of Scripture; and illustrates in these instances the purpose God has intended. They show us that wisdom and love pervade all God's utterances and

actions. In the book of Job we find Elihu speaking of the controlling of the elements by God, manifesting a concern for all mankind (Job 37:11-13):

"By watering He wearieth the thick cloud. He scattereth His bright cloud, and it is turned round about by His counsels, that they may do whatsoever He commandeth upon the face of the world in the earth. He causeth it to come—whether for correction, or for His land, or for mercy."

The word translated as "correction" in v. 13 is the same as translated "rod" in Lam. 3:1. We therefore see the overriding thought of Divine wisdom in those things which He causes to come in the universe. The clouds in a natural sense for the watering of the land and causing it to spring forth for man's benefit and the glory of God in the hearts of the thankful, are also in a typical sense the agents of His wrath.

Isaiah speaks of Assyria coming against Israel at the bidding of God—a dark cloud, blotting out the sunshine of Divine favor:

"O Assyrian, the rod of Mine anger; and the staff in their hand is Mine indignation" (Isa. 10:5).

Here was a nation directly spoken of as God's "rod." But though the nations may feel their own exercise of power and prerogatives, they do not pass the bounds which the Creator has set for them. Isaiah (10:15) asks this question,

"Shall the ax boast itself against him that heweth therewith? Or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? As if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up."

It is manifest then that the nations are in the hollow of God's hand and are exercised in their activities for corrective or instructive purposes, even as the natural clouds perform His bidding.

In Rev. 11:1 we find reference to the "rod" again. It is here symbolic of a period of tribulation brought upon the servants of God by the system of iniquity enthroned in Rome. It was a period of 1260 years, stretching from A.D. 312 to 1572.

"There was given me a reed like unto a rod. And the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the Temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein" (Rev. 11:1).

Bro. John Thomas has clearly outlined these symbols and the associated events in *Eureka*, Vol. II. The word "rod" in this verse comes from the Greek "*rhabdos*," and implies in the prophecy a *measured period of dntreading and tribulation* for the development of the true servants.

In v. 1 of Lam. 3, the "rod" intended was the nation of Babylon. *God* was wielding the rod, and it would accomplish that which *He* intended. It was for punishment and destruction of the wicked, but as a refining and humbling and developing of the real sons of God. Such men as Jeremiah were tried and purified and made white by the events of those dark days in Israel's history.

To those who saw beyond the immediate pain, who saw the end of the matter, the Psalmist's words (23.) were a source of comfort:

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

We come to recognize the comfort of the presence of God, as His staff leads the way for us through the darkness of the night, and we feel the correction of the Divine rod, and accept it as the chastening of an Almighty hand which is most necessary for us.

"My flesh and my skin hath He made old; He hath broken my bones" (Lam. 3:4).

The natural things of life, the things in which mortal man generally glories, were of no avail to Israel when the Lord turned against them. Regardless which way they turned for strength and assistance they met the sword of the Lord, outstretched against them. They had trusted in the arm of flesh, first of Syria, then of foreign gods, and finally upon the broken reed Egypt.

But their arm of flesh profited nothing. God broke all their bones and dried up all the strength of their associates. Those things in which they trusted for honor and glory—which their greatness as a nation in the past had brought upon them—was now faded and withered. In its place we find only,

"He hath covered me with ashes" (Lam. 3:16).

How vain is the help of man, when the arm of God is set against him! Certainly the lesson of Israel's history is unmistakable. They missed the basic point of acceptability to God—

"Without 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 diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).

From the outset we have seen that Israel preferred the arm of flesh to the staff of God. Let us not make the same mistake in this our day of probation. We are instructed to study the history of God's people, that we may be guided away from the same pitfalls and snares. Christ exhorts us to place our confidence in God—

"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:20-21).

God had brought Israel out of Egyptian darkness into the glorious land of promise, had provided for their every need and furnished a table for them in a miraculous manner. Their Law was designed to bring about a glorious acclamation of the wonderful works of God, and to cause their hearts to overflow because of His goodness. As saith the Psalmist—

"O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and His wonderful works to the children of men!"

But they despised His goodness, and appropriated His blessings for their own wealth and splendor. Yet God was not unmindful. Their seeking worldly ways and the companionship of other nations was not unnoticed. Israel, entering through the gate of other peoples in friendship and association, soon found that they were hedged in.

"He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out; He hath made my chain heavy. He hath inclosed my ways with hewn stone; He hath made my paths crooked" (Lam. 3:7-9).

Hosea the prophet (2:6-7) uses the like figure of his people confined by a thorny edge, a boundary, which they found impossible to circumvent. It was the same issue that Jeremiah raised. God (said Hosea) had given them corn and wine and oil, and multiplied their silver and their gold. But what was the result? "*They prepared these things for the worship of Baal*" (v. 8).

"He was as a bear lying in wait, and as a lion in secret places. He pulled me in pieces" (Lam. 3: 10-11).

The prophet Amos also associates these two predatory animals, the lion and the bear, in the judgments of God. When we look at the history of Israel's captivity we see the applicability of the

language. The Lion was the symbol of the Babylonian power and the Bear of Medo-Persia, the predominant nations by whom the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were pulled in pieces, see Daniel 8.

Assyria (as the forerunner of Babylon, coming under the Lion symbol) dispersed the ten tribes of Israel to the utmost bounds of the then known world. Babylon removed a portion of Judah to their land, and a remnant fled into Egypt. Medo-Persia (though a type of the Deliverer of God's people) also would have exterminated them if the wicked devices of Haman had not been restrained by a merciful Divine hand.

Hosea said (5:14) God would be as a lion unto Israel and as a young lion to Judah, who would tear and go away. Again the prophet is speaking of Israel resting on other nations who could not assist in time of calamity:

"When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian—yet he could not heal you, nor cure you of your wound" (Hos. 5:13).

By these things God's people were brought very low. They became a proverb and derision to all nations, a song and a byword among all lands. And *yet through it all the supreme love of God was in evidence*. His hand was directed toward the SAVING OF A REMNANT.

All the prophets illustrate this crowning thought, and its intent is to make the righteous of all ages considerate of the correcting hand of the Creator in the affairs of His people (Lam. 3:20-21)—

"My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope."

We read of the pitiful plight of Judah by the rivers of Babylon, expressed so plaintively in Psalm 137. The voice of mirth and rejoicing was gone, the harp was silenced as the people weep over what they had brought about by their sin.

"If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy."

This was the desired effect God intended in all these calamities.

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH, IF THE LORD WILL)

"GOOD WORKS" and "RELIGIOUS MADNESS"

Good works consist of doing that which is good according to GOD'S rule. Man is no judge here. Some works are good by the divine rule which are bad by the human rule. Preaching the "narrow" way, "contending earnestly for the Faith," is bad according to modern man, but good according to the commandment of God.

Things are good according to man which are bad according to God—sparing Agag, to wit, by Saul; holding your tongue about religion in our day, according to etiquette. There are many other examples.

We must have God's rule for the estimate of the "good works" of which we are to be "zealous." When people are zealous, their hands don't hang lazily and helplessly down. They are prompt, and active, and earnest. And it is an earnestness about what the natural mind has no affinity for—they are considered mad by merely natural men of every kind and variety. Well, this is not nice, especially as there IS such a thing as religious madness.

But are we going to be scared out of zeal for good works, just because there IS such a thing as religious madness? No, No!

There also IS such a thing as that which is holy, and just, and good, and true—and the truly enlightened mind will hold on to this with all the heart and soul and strength, whatever odium it may bring.

Remember what Christ says: "What have they said about me?—'He hath a demon, and is mad; why hear ye him?' What have they called me? — Beelzebub. If they so speak of me, what are you to expect?"

If we are going to be called mad (or "extremists"—ED.) because we strive after holiness, let us count it an honor, as he said—"The disciple is not above the Master, nor the servant above his Lord."—Bro. Roberts.

A Woman on David's Throne

PART THREE

Having comprehended the purpose of God involved in this kingdom, it is of absorbing interest to know all things concerning it— past, present, or future—and if we admit that God *has* a purpose with it, we thereby make a connection between past and future.

If this purpose were not fulfilled during the past existence of the kingdom, it follows that its past is a certainty of its future; it indicates it, pre-figures it, and becomes a type of it. Having a prophetic character, its history is mixed with prophecy, and supplies us with information relative to the greater future.

The times of David and Solomon are eminently typical, shadows of good things to come to be fulfilled in David's greater son; and shall we say that these 2 kings *alone* are of a typical character and all the subsequent history affords no information of the future?

We think that *many* of them have this character. It may be said they are undesigned coincidences; but it is not human history we are considering, it is divine.

"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of kings to search out a matter" (Prov. 25:2).

We apply this scriptural principle to Israel's history, and its truth is evidenced: With this view interest is heightened, the past is but a reflector, throwing the light far ahead to the future. We look for a time when these things, realities though they were, will be finally consummated "in that day" when the events of which these were shadows will be fulfilled. They form part of those "things written aforetime," that through them we might obtain patience, comfort, and hope.

It is from this aspect of *historic prefigurement* that we are considering the position of Israel's history from Jehoshaphat to Joash.

Continuing our history of Athaliah—we left her reigning and ruling Queen in Jerusalem. *Where was God's kingdom?* The people truly were there, as was the land, but kingdom there was not. The name of Jehovah—regally and ecclesiastically was no longer in Zion. Neither—as was supposed by Athaliah and the Baalites—was there *any representative of David's line living to trouble them.*

The worship was to Baal; the ruler, a Canaanite; and the authority of Deity usurped by a woman. This is the condition of things today; God has no kingdom on earth. His power and authority are usurped by a "woman" who has climbed to this high position as Athaliah did, through blood.

In teaching us things spiritual from things natural, the Spirit employs one or more persons or things, as the case requires, to typify but one antitype. The many things Mosaic all converge upon one antitype—Christ.

So also in establishing the kingdom; 2 kings are required— David and Solomon—they are the 2 halves of a perfect whole; what is foreshown in the one could not be in the other. Yet they are both one in Christ, *the man of war and the prince of peace*.

As 2 men—though representing one—are the instruments in setting up the kingdom, so also 2 *women* are instrumental in setting up an idolatrous apostasy in the very seat of God on David's throne, casting the truth to the ground and prospering.

Athaliah completes the half-type of Jezebel as Solomon did that of David; and we consider the two as one, in the result of their operations. Athaliah's birthright is the curse pronounced upon her father and mother; *it is her inheritance and will overtake her at the right time*.

The diversity in operation—though one in spirit—seen in the mother and daughter, is that their operations are respectively against the two great "estates" of the kingdom—kingly and priestly. Jezebel perpetrates her animosity against the prophets and the Lord's people, and the saints in Israel; the land was hunted for them, they were hid in caves from her ferocity.

An easy solution of their difficulties would have been to serve Baal and receive his mark; but they were faithful and true. They were specially preserved by Jehovah who had reserved to Himself 7,000 that had not kissed Baal. *So completely was the Lord's people suppressed that Elijah thought himself the last one left*.

Though Jezebel could thus operate against the prophets, she was powerless against the royal line. Not so with Athaliah; having by marriage got amongst the seed of David, it required but the opportunity to strike a blow at the royal line; with the result already seen. Here then we have a political and ecclesiastical, idolatrous, sanguinary power, doomed to extermination, usurping the highest position on earth; to which she has no shadow of a claim; and obtained through the blood of God's saints and princes.

We have no difficulty in pointing out the living fulfilment of this prophetic personage and power. She calls herself a woman and a mother, thus indicating her own identity. The Spirit has branded her with the name of her infamous type—"*that woman Jezebel that calleth herself a prophetess*."

There she sits usurping the authority of God upon earth, claiming both regal and ecclesiastical authority over all men, sitting as a God, claiming to be possessor of the attributes of God, with no more right to her exalted position than had Athaliah. The high authority of king and priest belonging to the Prince of the House of David has been usurped by her, and the right of Christ to this position in the earth is consequently unknown by her followers.

She has attained to this position through the same means employed by her forerunner, scarlet with the same blood, the blood of priests and princes of Deity; for they are "a royal priesthood" hated by her. These faithful ones, who protested against both her abominable practices and right to authority, were put to death; their extermination was necessary in order that the throne be hers.

Thus has she attempted to destroy all the "seed royal." Not only has the seed of the kingdom been the object of her hatred and destruction, but also the "*incorruptible seed, the Word of Truth*."

As in Athaliah we had a Gentile usurper downtreading the Holy City, so again is there a downtreading by a Gentile persecuting power, which can be identified in this same second Jezebel.

The resemblance is continued in the time allotted; they are both limited to prophetic periods, both are alike doomed to the same end.

The description of the latter-day Athaliah is also equally applicable to the former. We see them seated on their thrones arrayed in purple and scarlet, drunken with the blood of saints and martyrs, and of their own children; drunk also with pride (Rev. 18:7):

"I sit a queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow, she saith in her heart. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day—death and mourning and famine—and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her."

Although the King of Israel who sitteth in the heavens had thus given over His city to a Gentile down-treading, yet had He not forgotten Zion or the covenant made with David. Should a Gentile woman be the means of breaking it by destroying the line royal and usurping the Throne? No; God will realize His plan. Jehosheba, sister to the late king, took his infant son—

". . . and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and they hid him and his nurse in the bedchamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain, and he was with her hid in the house of the Lord 6 years" (2 Kings 11:2-3).

Here was a seed *secretly and surely preserved by God in His house* for the purpose of bursting forth at the appointed time and consuming the idolatrous usurper.

So will it be with the latter-day fulfiller. Power has been given into her hands for a set time to tread down the truth and usurp the office of Christ. During the time of her oppressing, a seed has been developing *unknown to her and her Baalite daughters*.

The members of that seed are not only in the Temple of God, but *are* the Temple. There can be no more connection between this Temple and "Jezebel" than there could have been between Athaliah and Jehoiada, the High Priest; for the Spirit saith to them:

"Ye are the Temple of the living God, and what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols?"

These have been specially prepared by that Word of Truth she has striven to destroy; these whom she thinks she has destroyed are alive *to Him*; they live under the altar crying day and night against her for the blood she has slain, and to them are entrusted the execution of the "judgments written."

The Gentiles' dogs also shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh even as the Samaritan dogs ate the flesh of her predecessor under the walls of Jezreel.

The infant prince thus divinely preserved may be regarded as a *new seed in the earth*. His aunt, who had stolen him, was wife to the High Priest Jehoiada. Apparently his existence was kept secret from all others, probably through the state of things in Jerusalem.

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH, IF THE LORD WILL)

The Strange Jewish Story

PART THREE

7. FINALLY REGATHERED TO THEIR LAND

The Jew is finally to be regathered to his own land. Eze. 37:21,

"Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and will bring them into their own land. I will set My sanctuary in the midst of them for EVERMORE" (Eze. 37:21, 26).

And in Jeremiah 31:10-12—

"He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock. And they shall not sorrow ANY MORE."

It will be seen from the context in both cases that these prophecies have never yet been fulfilled. Now, if it was highly improbable that this one particular nation—or even any nation—should be taken from its own land and scattered throughout the whole world; if it was much *more* improbable that so scattered and separated, they would remain one distinct people; then how *superlatively* improbable is the fulfilment of this third prophecy that some day—after ages of homeless wandering—they should *at last return home!*

"NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM!"

Every year for 2000 years the Jews throughout the world have—on the solemn Passover night—raised their hands together in the prayer, "*Next year in Jerusalem!*" The world has long since accustomed itself with callous indifference to this wandering people and their pitiful, age-old dream. And now, after 2000 hopeless years, within our own generation, *before our very eyes*, the strangest chapter of all begins to unfold. The long-locked doors of their ancient home have mysteriously swung open to them, and they have gradually begun to flow back. Could we ask for a more magnificent manifestation of God's limitless power and knowledge?

FIFTY YEARS AGO—HERZL'S "HOPELESS" DREAM

Fifty years ago, as many readers will remember, there were but a few Jews scattered throughout the land, living in poverty and in subjection to the grinding despotism of the Turk.

Before me is a magazine, "The Christadelphian," dated *April, 1896—57 years ago*. It speaks of a young Jew named Theodor Herzl who had just startled and amused the world with the publication of a wild dream about establishing a modern Jewish state in the old, barren, desolate land of Palestine. Herzl said:

"We are One People. We have honestly striven everywhere to merge ourselves in the social life of surrounding communities—it has not been permitted us. In countries where we have lived for centuries we are still cried down as strangers.

"I am introducing no new idea. On the contrary, it is a very old one. And therein lies its power. It is as old as the people which never—even in the time of bitterest calamity—ceased to cherish it. This is the restoration of the Jewish State.

"It is remarkable that we Jews should have dreamt this kingly dream all through the long night of our history. WE SHALL LIVE AT LAST, AS FREE MEN, ON OUR OWN SOIL!"

And he adds, significantly—

"I know full well that I am laying myself open to derision. It will be said that our enterprise is hopeless."

100 YEARS AGO—THE PROPHETIC BEACON DISCERNED

Before me is also another magazine, dated June, 1852—*101 years ago—nearly 50 years before Herzl's "hopeless" dream*. It is a Christadelphian publication entitled "The Herald of the

Kingdom and the Age to Come." Therein the editor, John Thomas, on the basis of a study of Bible prophecy, says:

"Before Messiah returns there MUST BE a lifting up of an ensign upon the mountains of Judea. There MUST BE a resettlement of the land by the Jews to a limited extent before the battle of Armageddon, for it is the prosperity of the Jewish Colony that whets the avarice of the Autocrat.

"It will be a sure and certain sign of the speedy appearing of the Son of Man in power and glory. No one need expect that appearing to be manifested until a Jewish Colony be lifted up "as an ensign upon a hill."

And in the September issue of the same year (1852), he says:

"There will be a pre-adventual limited colonization of the country by Jews, under the protectorate of Britain. The prosperity of this colony, together with the desire to cripple or subvert the British power in the east, will be the cause of the country's invasion by the Russian "Clay," styled Gog, etc., by Ezekiel. I CONSIDER THAT THIS COLONIZATION IS GOING ON WHILE RUSSIA IS ENGAGED IN THE CONQUEST OF THE WEST.

"However the colonization be brought about, it will be the sign of the time indicative of the speedy coming (of Christ). There are signs that the practiced eye can already see; but THAT will be a sign which—if men were not stone-blind—NO ONE COULD FAIL TO DISCERN ARIGHT."

That was written 101 years ago, when Palestine was at its lowest ebb of desolation. Today there are ONE AND A HALF MILLION active and enthusiastic Jews in the new State of Israel. A nation that has been politically dead for 2000 years has sprung to life.

Do we realize the tremendous significance of what is happening, or are we among those who must be classed—in the words of our brother Thomas 100 years ago—as "stone-blind"?

BUT FAR MORE IS INVOLVED YET

The *present* gathering is by no means an adequate fulfilment of the *prophesied* great and final assembly of Israel. It is simply the decreed sign that the time for that gathering is at hand. There is *far, far more* to the events attending the latter-day gathering than what we have seen happening so far.

And this is really the heart of our subject. This is way we are so interested in the Jew and his affairs. Let us glance at a few prophecies of this latter-day gathering of Israel, and our meaning will soon become very clear. For instance, in Jer. 23:5-8, we find:

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and A KING SHALL REIGN AND PROSPER, AND SHALL EXECUTE JUDGMENT AND JUSTICE IN THE EARTH. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely . . . They shall dwell in their own land."

CHRIST'S RETURN AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT

We know this has not happened yet. And we know it *cannot* happen without Christ, for Ezekiel—at the same time as Jeremiah was prophesying—said the throne of David would *remain overturned* "until *he* come whose right it is" (Eze. 21:27).

Apart from the great scope and the specific details of these prophecies, which rule out anything in the past as the fulfilment, we have this stone-wall that they *cannot be fulfilled* before or without the royal and triumphant coming of the great Messiah-Deliverer to rule the earth. Isaiah is filled with prophecies of this glorious time, of which chapter 11 is a good sample,

"And there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse (Jesse was the father of David—this is another prophecy of Christ on David's throne). With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and REPROVE WITH EQUITY FOR THE MEEK OF THE EARTH . . .

"The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord . . .

"In that day the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people . . . He shall assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isa. 11:1, 4, 9, 11, 12).

LITERAL ISRAEL, AND THE KINGDOM WORLDWIDE

Two things will be noted:

1. We cannot escape the fact that this speaks of literal Israel.
2. It is associated with a WORLDWIDE reign of righteousness.

Zechariah is another who has much to say about this time,

"I will save My people from the east country and the west country, and I will bring them and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem . . .

"Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord.

"Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, In those days it shall come to pass that 10 men shall take hold out of all nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we heard that God is with you" (Zech. 8:7,8,22,23).

And in the next chapter (Zech. 9:9-10):

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; Behold, thy King cometh unto thee . . . The battle bow shall be cut off and he shall speak peace to the nations.

"His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth."

Such testimonies could be multiplied many-fold, for this is the glorious message of all the prophets. Note the inseparable connection between the gathering of Israel and the world-wide kingdom of peace in the following prophecies: Isa. 2:1-4; Psa. 47:4-9; Isa. 60:9-14; Eze. 39-21-27, see 38:23; Psa. 102:13-16, 88; Mic. 4:1-8.

THE REASON: GOD'S GLORY AND PURPOSE

There is one point which should be mentioned, as it is another strong factor in pinning down the *literalness* of the gathering of the *literal* Jews, and also it will answer an obvious question arising out of their age-old disobedience to God:

"Thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, BUT FOR MY HOLY NAME which ye have profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them.

"And the nations shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

"For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land" (Eze. 36:22-24; from the Jews' own version).

That is the reason that God will gather them—to further *His* purpose, demonstrate *His* power, and manifest *His* glory (Psa. 106:8; Rev. 4:11). Ezekiel explains in chap. 20 how the Jews must pass through a terrible latter-day purging and sifting before God can use them.

THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF THE AGES

God's overall purpose is to develop an eternal, holy people for His Name and glory, one by one, individually. His use of Israel as a *nation* is subordinate to this purpose. *Nationally* He uses them as witnesses and instruments to accomplish His ends. His coming 1000-year kingdom on earth over the mortal nations, in which the Jewish nation will have a leading part, is still carrying forward His eternal purpose of individually selecting and developing a holy people.

When the appointed time comes, God will bring peace and blessing and the true knowledge of Himself to the earth through the instrument of the regathered Jews. In Romans 11, Paul says

"If the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?

"If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?

"And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. 11:12, 15, 26).

Both their scattering and their regathering are parts of the plan. Paul reasons that if God in His infinite wisdom has brought salvation and hope to Gentiles out of the Jews' disobedience and rejection of their Messiah, how much greater and broader a scope of blessing He will bring out of the promised regathering and Kingdom Age!

THE LONG NIGHT OF GENTILE TIMES

In Luke 21:24, Jesus said, when asked what lay in the future for the Jewish people:

"And they (the Jews) 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" (Luke 21:24).

He is referring to the destruction of the city and temple foretold by Daniel as following the cutting off of the Messiah. It is clear from this that there was to be a long time of waiting—a time during which Jerusalem was to be trodden under the Gentile heel—a period referred to as the "times of the Gentiles."

As long as those times last, there can be no blessing of the nations through Jerusalem—no worldwide divine kingdom of righteousness and peace—and no salvation for God's people, either the watching living or the sleeping dead; for the testimony is that Christ will raise, judge and reward the dead when he comes to set up his kingdom on the earth. We are told, I Tim. 4:1:

"Jesus Christ shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom" (1 Tim. 4:1).

And he himself says, regarding the reward in store for his faithful saints,

"He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 2:26, 27).

That is the part we hope to have in the coming age—the inheritance of the kingdom and ruling the world in righteousness with Christ (Matt. 25:31-34; Luke 14:14). Therefore we rejoice to see the long down-treading of Jerusalem by the Gentile coming to an end, and the long-scattered people beginning to assemble, as the closing scene of the Gentile period begins to take shape—that is, the events leading up to the destruction of the invading hosts of Russia on the mountains of Israel,

followed by Christ's subduing of the whole earth, as foretold by Ezekiel, Daniel, Micah, Joel, Zechariah, etc.

Let us, while time remains, heed the great witness that God has given—through the Jews—of Himself, His purposes and His requirements. They are, as Isaiah says (12:2), a people terrible from their beginning hitherto. Never an ordinary people like others, but terrible—strange, marvellous—in their times of favor, and terrible in their times of punishment.

To them were entrusted, for all the world, the priceless treasure of the oracles of God. And from this people God raised up the Savior of all mankind. Jesus said (John 4:22):

"SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS."

Working through this people, God has placed eternal salvation within our reach. He invites us to believe the glorious Gospel of His coming Kingdom on earth (Rom. 1:16; Gal. 1:8-9; Matt. 24:14); to be baptized into that One True Faith (Matt. 28:19; Gal. 3:27-29; John 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:21); and henceforth to devote our entire lives to His service and glory (Rom. 12:1; Eph. 3:2, 17, 23; 1 Tim. 4:15; Matt. 6:19-34).

To the few from among men who do, there will be a great and endless recompense of reward.

—G.V.G.

The Serpent and the Rod

The following thoughts concern the incidents surrounding the one recorded failure of one of the greatest of the few great men that have ever lived. The background of the story begins in Exodus 3—the account of a strange event of tremendous significance in the development of the eternal purpose of God.

As the account begins, we find Moses tending sheep—an occupation in which he has spent 40 years of his life; surely one of the humblest and simplest occupations possible, but they were not wasted years for Moses, though they would appear so in the eyes of the ambitious of the world.

At the end of this 40 years of patient preparation, God appeared to Moses in the sign of the burning, but unconsumed, bush. The original means "thorn-bush."

Remembering Jothan's parable about the fruit trees and the bramble (Jdg. 9), Jehoash's taunt about the cedar and the thistle (2 Kgs. 14:9), Isaiah's and Ezekiel's use of the tall cedars as mighty nations, the great, wide-spreading Babylonian tree that reached to heaven (Dan. 4), and Jesus' parable of the Kingdom as a minute grain of mustard seed that finally filled the earth—in the light of these symbols, and others, how fitting is this fire-swept but never destroyed thorn-bush as a manifestation of God's purpose in and through Israel.

As shown on Roman coins, the emperors of Rome—one of the mightiest tree-kingdoms—wore a laurel wreath as a badge of their authority, but the King of the thorn-bush kingdom wore a crown of thorns.

In this manifestation to Moses, God revealed the eternal, memorial, covenant Name—I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE—the multitudinous purpose.

And this solemn occasion—the call of Moses, after 40 years probation, to lead and bring to birth the nation of God—one of the key points in the Plan of the Ages—is marked by 3 signs: the serpent and the rod, the leprous and cleansed hand, and the poured-out water becoming blood, symbols of deep significance.

* * *

Moving forward another 40 years, we reach the scene depicted in the 20th of Numbers. This chapter opens at the beginning of the 40th year of Israel's wanderings.

Very little is recorded of this terrible 40 years—just glimpses of the beginning and the ending—but it is well to ponder upon this weary period. Forty long, monotonous years in a hot, barren, dusty, comfortless wilderness—all the adults under the shadow of the sentence of death, waiting their turn to die.

Think of living under such conditions of hardship, with no hope of any release but death. The Scriptures speak of it as a waste, howling wilderness, a place of withering drought, and infested with fiery serpents and scorpions.

What did they do during those long years of endless waiting? In those 40 years they moved their camp 42 times, and they never knew—from one day to the next—when the next move would be.

Why were these people in this position? God had chosen and called them, brought them close to Himself and shown them marvellous things—but they had remained earthy and had failed to rise to the call. So a whole generation were cast aside to perish in these miserable surroundings.

And now the last year begins. The promised land of plenty, with its fruitful fields and green valleys and pleasant, settled houses, is within sight. They have arrived at Kadesh, south of the Dead Sea and on the west border of the land of Edom. (*Kadesh means holiness. In the antitype it is the point reached at the end of the wilderness journey, before entering the Promised Land.*)

The first event at Kadesh is the death and burial of Miriam. What a long, eventful time it had been—120 years—since we saw Miriam as a little girl courageously facing the majesty of the Princess of Egypt on behalf of her baby brother!

And now Miriam was gone. She too had had a great moment of failure and shame, when she questioned the supremacy of Moses and suffered the humiliation and affliction of leprosy, but this would now only be a regretted incident in their long period of working together.

* * *

V 2—"And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and Aaron."

The people on one side—Moses and Aaron on the other. The same old picture! Forty years had taught them nothing of faith in God or affection and trust for their leaders.

V. 3—"And the people chode with Moses, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord!"

From time to time during the 40 years, many had been smitten by God—as concerning the golden calf, the report of the spies, the lust for meat, the rebellion of Korah—and now in their faithless despair they wished they were among those whom God had destroyed.

We can, and must, sympathize with the bitterness of their lot, but how displeasing would their complaining be to God, and how grieving it would be to Moses who had given his life to teach and to care for and to entreat for them! Human nature is an evil, sinful, ungrateful thing.

Moses and Aaron went to the Tabernacle and fell on their faces before the Lord. They were two old men against an ignorant and enraged rabble, but their strength was in God.

"AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD APPEARED UNTO THEM."

What a wonderful thing! "*The glory of the Lord appeared unto them.*" If Moses had stopped to think, this could have settled and quieted his overwrought emotions, and brought a great peace and calm that no outward provocation could disturb.

As we consider these instances of open divine manifestation, we may feel that if only the glory of the Lord would appear to us, we could cheerfully and fearlessly face anything! But—does not the glory of God appear to us—*if we will let it?*

Does it not appear in all His wonderful works around us; in the ever-present marvels and beauties of His holy Word; in the terrible but inspiring accuracy of the working out of His purpose with the seething nations in these closing Gentiles days, and above all in the promise that if we truly seek Him, He will come and make His abode with us? *It is only our fleshly heedlessness that prevents our feeling the power of the presence of that glory.*

The brotherhood today is being shaken to its foundations, and long-accepted standards of truth and holiness are being cast aside, but good will come of it if we hold fast and are not swept backwards by the general tide. Let us pause and step aside and take time to let the glory of God appear unto us and envelop our lives, and all else will fade into insignificance, and we shall have calm and peace.

* * *

V. 7—"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the Rod."

"THE Rod." Clearly some particular rod is meant. What rod?

V. 9—"And Moses took the Rod from before the Lord."

Arising out of Koran's rebellion, some time before this, God had confirmed the authority of Moses and Aaron by the token of the blossomed rod. And God had said (17:10)—

"Bring Aaron's Rod before the Testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels."

Paul tells us (Heb. 9:4) that this Rod was kept inside the very Ark of the Covenant itself. This was the most sacred place possible, teaching us the importance of the significance of this Rod.

So the Rod Moses was to take was Aaron's Rod that budded. Now let us trace this Rod back a little further, and we shall find that it has an interesting history. We shall find that "*Aaron's*" Rod is the same as "*Moses*" Rod.

Turning back to Exod. 4 (the occasion of the burning bush), we find Moses protesting (v. 1)—

"Behold, they will not believe me."

God says, "What is that in thine hand?" Moses replies, "A rod." Then comes the sign of the rod turned into a serpent, and back again. Concluding the vision, God says (v. 17)—

"Take THIS Rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs."

So this is the Rod by which the serpent sign is to be manifested. The particular appointment of this Rod is further emphasized when we note in v. 20 it is called, "*The Rod of God.*"

It also helps us to form the picture when we remember (see v. 16) that Aaron is appointed as the mouthpiece for Moses—they are one unit. V. 30 informs us:

"And Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and DID THE SIGNS in the sight of the people."

—Aaron did the signs, with *Moses' Rod*—the "Rod of God." Turning to Exod. 7, we find the same thing happening. In v. 10 (at Moses' command) Aaron cast down "his" Rod before Pharaoh, and it becomes a serpent. In v. 15 God tells *Moses* to take the Rod which had become a serpent. In v. 17 *Moses* is to speak of it as "the Rod in *mine* hand" smiting the waters. But in v. 19 we find Moses telling Aaron to "Take *thy Rod*" and smite the waters.

This was the first plague. If we trace the plagues through, we find that some (Ex. 7:19; 8:6, 17) *Aaron* brings with the Rod, some (9:23; 10:13) *Moses* brings with the (same) Rod.

The point to be noted is that throughout Moses and Aaron act as an interchangeable unit, and it is the *same* Rod—the "Rod of God." It is again spoken of as the Rod of God when it is used to play an important part in the defeat of Amalek (Exod. 17:9). As long as Moses holds up this Rod, Israel prevails. Truly this is a very important Rod.

Now, in the Scriptures, "rod" is a common figure of *rulership*—of one who rules—particularly, of the Messiah: the King of Kings:

Psa. 110:2—"The Lord shall send the Rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies."

Jer. 10:16—"Israel is the Rod of Mine inheritance."

Isa. 11:1-4—"There shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse . . . with righteousness shall he judge."

So we see in this Rod of Moses and Aaron—this "Rod of God"—the manifested power and authority of God.

At its first mention God's power is manifested in turning it into a serpent and back again to a rod. *Is this just meaningless wonder-working?* On the contrary, here is a deep symbol, embodying the whole purpose of God with man.

God made Adam in *His Own image*, and gave him dominion over all the earth—note the 2 aspects, manifestation and rulership. Solomon records (Eccl. 7:29) that God made man upright, but that man forsook this upright state—that is, *the Rod became a Serpent*. Sin took over, and natural man became the seed of the serpent—no longer the Rod of God.

But God's loving purpose is to bring man back from the serpent condition to the rod condition—to make him again upright, the true and complete image of God, exercising holy and faithful dominion over an earth filled with God's glory.

All this shown in Christ—the typical man—born under the serpent-cursed constitution to which man had fallen, but cleansing and transforming himself from it by obedience, and achieving royal honor and dominion as the chosen Rod of God.

The other 2 signs of the burning-bush manifestation emphasize the same truths. The hand that became leprous and then was restored to health shows another aspect of the picture. The Rod and Serpent show a change of position and activity—the leprous hand shows a change of physical condition. Leprosy, the dreaded living death that slowly but relentlessly consumed its helpless victims, is a scriptural symbol of the deadly uncleanness of sin.

The *third* and culminating sign was the water of the river (*living water*) poured out on the *dry land* and becoming *blood*.

In John ch. 2 there is something strikingly similar—a "sign" in which poured-out water becomes wine (type of blood)—a sign which appears on the surface to be mere wonder-working, but which undoubtedly has a deep meaning.

It was on the *third* day (John 2:1). And it was the "beginning of miracles (RV. signs) that Jesus did." Surely the water that became blood is the Word made flesh for the redemption of fallen man—the blood poured out on a dry and thirsty land.

* * *

When Moses (Num. 20:8) is told to enter the sacred Most Holy Place—the very presence of God—and bring out this Rod, the whole 40-year history of its use would be before his mind, from the time of the burning bush forward.

Now, *all its former uses had been judicial*. This fact has a significant bearing on Moses' action at this time. With it he and Aaron had brought the plagues on Egypt; with it he had smitten Amalek; with it he had smitten the Rock before at God's command; and finally, it had been laid up in the Tabernacle as a testimony "*against the rebels*" who challenged Moses and Aaron's authority.

Now—when rebels are challenging his authority again, God says: "*Take the Rod*." It is perfectly natural, then, that he should smite the Rock, at the same time crying: "Hear now, *ye rebels!*"

It was natural—*but it was wrong*. Moses had lost control of himself, and contact with God. He was not thinking calmly. He was excited and angry, and not paying attention to God's words. Every word God speaks to man is vital. God had plainly said: "*Speak to the Rock*."

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH, IF THE LORD WILL)

"JESTING AND FOOLISH TALKING"

If a man know God, that man is purified and sanctified. "Gravity and sincerity" become habit of speech with him. The Truth has brought us out of a world, not only of cant and ignorance, but of levity and corruption.

Light talk and foul is the order of the day. From this the Truth calls upon us to purify ourselves. Even "jesting and foolish talking" are among the things which Paul says are "not to be named among the brethren as becometh saints."—Bro. Roberts.

Why We Separated

Beloved brethren and sisters:

In the year 1923, 43 ecclesias in the U. S. and Canada separated themselves from what was then known as the Temperance Hall Fellowship, and now known as Central Fellowship. Why did they do so? **Had they a real cause, or were they grouped together because of "misunderstanding"?** It was not a "misunderstanding," but a JUST AND RIGHTEOUS CAUSE.

During the early part of the present century, bro. A. D. Strickler, of Buffalo, N. Y., issued his first challenge to the brotherhood on the subject of the Atonement. This was in typewritten form, and its circulation was limited. He had come to the conclusion that bre. Thomas and Roberts did not understand the true doctrine of the Atonement, and that their interpretation of some important passages in the apostolic writings was not in harmony with the intent of the Divine writer.

Bro. Wm. Smallwood, of Toronto, rose in defence of the Truth, and in the year 1913 published "Bible Teaching Concerning Sin and Sacrifice." In acknowledging receipt of a copy of this pamphlet in "The Christadelphian" for June 1913, pg. 259, bro. C. C. Walker said: "We have received

from bro. Wm. Smallwood, of Toronto, a pamphlet of 92 pages on Bible Teaching Concerning Sin and Sacrifice, and we find ourselves in entire agreement with the matter set forth."

Six years later bro. Strickler enlarged his writings and startled the brotherhood by announcing that he had discovered they were ALL IN DARKNESS and, therefore, titled his book, "Out of Darkness into Light." He claimed that his book contained **the real light of God's Truth**, sent out for the purpose of dispelling Christadelphian darkness. He said further that "It is taking hold of the brethren in England, and there is rejoicing because of deliverance from darkness." Here are some of the things he called "light," and they are the things that brought about division in 1923—

1. That the first sin of Adam fixed itself in the flesh brain only as a habit fixed itself. The sin which Paul says dwelt in him . . . sow a habit and you reap a destiny.
2. That Christ's human nature did not make him unclean. We have no right to say that his (Christ's) individual flesh was full of sin, or sinful flesh. It could not be said of him (Christ) that he had sin dwelling in him.
3. Christ never made any offering for himself. God's method of salvation by the shedding of blood to make atonement did not apply to Christ.
4. That our sins laid on Christ made him unclean and accursed by God, and that it was from this curse, and from this uncleanness, that Christ needed cleansing. It was from these sins (ours) that Christ became accursed. Just before Christ was nailed to the tree he was a clean and holy altar . . . when he was nailed to the tree he became unclean because of the sins which he bare. The antitypical altar (Christ) was cleansed from the same kind of sins (transgression of law).
5. In the teaching of substitution he said, Christ suffered the punishment due us on account of our sins. The death of Christ was inflicted to satisfy the ends of justice. When Christ died he bare the consequences and punishments due us for our transgressions.

The above doctrines are false. They caused bro. Herbert Fidler to write his pamphlet "Ought We to Tolerate False Doctrine?" in which he published correspondence with Birmingham Temperance Hall Ecclesia in which they **FLATLY REFUSED TO GIVE ANY SUPPORT TO THOSE WHO OPPOSED THE TEACHING OF BRO. STRICKLER.**

In their last letter, dated June 12, 1926, the Birmingham ecclesia referred to an article in the April 1926 "Christadelphian," pg. 182, which, they said, "clearly defines our position." In the same issue, pg. 181, they quote, in full, a letter from bro. Strickler, "That I have not changed my position on that question (the Atonement) since writing the book 'Out of Darkness into Light.' Furthermore, that there is nothing in the pamphlet that conflicts with the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith when interpreted as Dr. Thomas and bro. Roberts taught. It is the only Statement that the Buffalo ecclesia has ever met upon."

The "clearly defined position," on pg. 182, is expressed in this quotation — "The opinion was expressed by the Birmingham brethren that decisions taken on doubtful issues, only caused artificial divisions in the brotherhood, because **NO REAL DIFFERENCES IN DOCTRINE EXISTED** between those taking opposite courses, but only a difference of judgment as to facts in dispute."

If, then, no real difference in doctrine existed, and there is nothing in the pamphlet ("Out of Darkness into light") that conflicts with the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith, how are we to understand these statements made by bro. A. D. Strickler.

1. "It pains me to in any way differ from them . . . I do not care to justify myself, but I can prove that bro. Roberts differed from Dr. Thomas on some very important truths. I have been forced to my present views by what I honestly believe to be the meaning of the apostolic writings. The interpretation of those writings in some important passages is not in harmony with the intent of the divine writer. The vitality of man's responsibility to God for his sins is undermined and destroyed by those interpretations . . . Principally where I differ with the Doctor is in the meaning of certain Scriptures." (Sin and Sacrifice, pg. 8).

2. "We have no right to say that Christ's individual flesh was "sinful flesh" (O. of D., page 84)."It is a marvellous thing that such a theory should ever have been invented as the bearing of physical so-called sin" (O. of D., pg. 85).

3. "For years there has been a difficulty in harmonizing the Scriptures with the theory of the atonement held by us as Christadelphians. The Scriptural use of the word 'propitiation' as well as the word 'atonement' has been misunderstood, and explained in such a way as to pervert the original idea, that caused the Spirit of God to select these words, to convey the intended meaning. Now, what I have done has been to REJECT certain 'stock' explanations of the Scriptures . . . and adopt such explanations as will harmonize all the Scriptures which refer to the same thing." (Berean June 1923, pg. 184).

4. "My books contain the real light of God's Truth, sent out for the purpose of dispelling Christadelphian darkness." (Berean 1923, pg. 209).

Today, brethren are trying to tell us that we "misunderstood" bro. Strickler. Others say that while there seems to be error in his writings, it is offset by his statements of truth. If anyone thinks that error is offset by truth in the writings of any brother let him refresh his memory by reading again the third chapter of Genesis. Here he will find the statement of the serpent containing error mixed with truth — the most dangerous form of error to be found in all the world, and the most destructive.

This whole matter resolves itself into one question. Does it matter what we believe? For the past 100 years we have been telling the world that IT DOES MATTER WHAT WE BELIEVE. If we are to be consistent, we will have to confess that we were wrong, because that is the position of all Berean ecclesias that have forsaken the strong position they have held for the past 30 years, and have joined up with those who have for 30 years justified and fellowshiped the Strickler error and condemned the Berean stand, saying there was no cause for division.

As for myself, I am just as confident today as I have been any time during the past 30 years, and I do not intend to compromise my relations to the Truth. It is too precious an heritage to be bartered for any consideration pertaining to this present evil existence. I learned the Truth from the writings of brethren Thomas and Roberts, and by them I intend to stand.

With love in the truth, your brother,

George A. Gibson, October, 1953.

Ecclesial News

BIRMINGHAM, Eng.—174 Edmund St. —Memorial 11 a.m.; Lecture 6:30 p.m.; Bib. Cl. Thurs. 7:30 p.m.; Sun. Sch. 11 a.m.

BOSTON, Mass.—355 Newbury St. — S. S. 10:30 a.m., Memorial 11:45; Lecture 1st & 3rd Suns. 2:30 p.m.

BUFFALO, N. Y.—O.F. Temple, Kenmore & Myron Aves.—Memorial 10:15 a.m.; S.S. 11:45; Bib. Cl. Wed. 8 p.m.; Public Lecture 3rd Sun. each mo., Oct. thru May.

CLOVER BAR, Alberta, Canada

CROYDON, Eng.—Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd.—Memorial 11 a.m.

DENVER, Colo.— 432 S. Emerson St. — Memorial 11 a.m.; S. S. 10 a.m.

DETROIT, Mich.—15586 Normandy—Memorial 10 a.m.; S.S. 11. 30.

FLAXCOMBE, Sask., Canada

HAMILTON, Ont., Can.—Crescent Hall, 63 King St. W.—S. S. 9:45 a.m.; Memorial 11; Lecture 7 p.m.; Thurs. Bible Class 8 p.m.

HOUSTON, Tex.—8008 Junius St.—S.S. 10 a.m.; Memorial 11; Public Lecture 7:30 p.m.; Wed. Eureka Cl. 8 p.m.

KIDDERMINSTER, England

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

LETHBRIDGE, Alta., Can.—633 7th St., S.—Memorial 11 a.m.; S.S. 12.30 p.m.; Lecture 7.30 p.m.; Bible Class Wed. 8 p.m.

LONDON, Ont., Can.—Orange Hall» 388 Clarence St.—Suns: S. S. 10:15 a.m.; Memorial 11:30; Lecture 7 p.m.; Thur. Cl. 8 p.m. at WCTU Hall on Clarence St. ½ block N. of Dundas.

MASON, Texas

MELBOURNE, Australia

MIAMI, Fla.—Memorial 7 p.m. Sun. at 2940 S.W. 23rd Ter.; Wed. Cl. 7:30 p.m. at 3428 S.W. 65th Ave.

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.; Lect. 6:30 p.m.; (3rd Sun. of month —Supplem. B. of B. after lecture).

NEW TREDEGAR, Eng. — Workman's Lesser Hall—Memorial 6 p.m.

PAPAKURA, New Zealand

PLYMOUTH, Eng.—O. F. Hall, 148 Union St.—Breaking Bread 11 a.m.; Lecture 6:30 p.m.; Bib. Class Thurs. 7:30 p.m.

ST. ALBANS. Herts., Eng.—O. F. Hall, Victoria St.—Memorial 11 a.m.; Lecture 6:30 p.m.

SAN ANTONIO, Tex.—R4, Floresville.

* * *

TORONTO, Ont.—294 Glebeholme blvd. Memorial 11 a.m.; Bible Study 7 p.m.; Bible Class Wed. 8:15 pm

During the month, of August we were encouraged by visits from: bro. & sis. Roy Sutherland and sis. Louise Martin (London) and bro. Fred Higham (Detroit).

Bro. Higham and Sutherland strengthened us with the word of exhortation.

During the trying times in which we live, it is essential that we "give attendance to reading, to exhortation and sound doctrine." It is our solemn duty to stand by the Bible, for it is wholly God-

inspired and infallible, and is the basis of our belief, and the ground of our confidence, —bro. G. A. Gibson.

* * *

WHANGAREI, New Zealand

WICHITA FALLS, Texas — Box 343—Sun. Sch. 10 a.m.; Memorial 11.

**WINCHMORE HILL Eccl.—Canning Hall, Canning Cres., Wood Green, London N 22—
Memorial 5:15 p.m.; Lecture 7 p.m.**

WORCESTER, Mass.—Grandview Hall, 21 Grandview Ave.—S. S. 10 a.m.; Breaking Bread 11.

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS

BOSTON..... October 11

(Please tell us of any others)

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