

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:
G. A. Gibson 294 Glebeholme Blvd., Toronto 6, Ontario, Canada

“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

The Berean Christadelphian

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: U.S. & Canada \$2.50; Sterling area 12/-. Send direct to bro. G. Growcott, 15586 Normandy, Detroit 38, Mich., USA. Failing this, to bro. Gibson, or bro. A. Jeacock, 10 Garden Close, Wellington, Surrey, England.

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EXHORTATION

Our Foundation

"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"—Psalm 11:3.

(We are continually being urged to give more space in the Berean to what we believe to be the particular errors and dangers attacking the Brotherhood . . . the matters which, in the aggregate, we believe make "reunion" unwise and unsound. These appeals come from earnest brethren, some of whom have found themselves swept away from us by the tide of recent events. Others, who are clear and settled in their own minds, feel it is wiser — and more effective in the long run — to put aside any appearance of direct conflict with other groups' views, and rather devote ourselves to "strengthening the things that remain," confident that time will reveal the true state of affairs, to those who are seeking, and that conflict will have no fruit but bitterness and wider estrangement. This latter course appeals most strongly to us, and this is our general practice and purpose. But still the appeals of the others who are concerned and troubled cannot be ignored, and compel us—from time to time—to speak of the things that we believe are threatening the body.)

It is a well-known fact that we became associated with the Christadelphian body as a result of our conviction that "Christendom is astray from the system of doctrine and practice established by the labors of the apostles in the first century." After a diligent examination of the Scriptures of Truth, and a critical observation of those claiming to be Christians, both in doctrine and practice, we concluded that Paul was right when he said (2 Tim. 4:3-4)—

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

Among the many fables that the churches of Christendom have accepted as basic doctrines, we discovered they believed—

1. That "*God is three persons.*" This is known as the Doctrine of the Trinity, by which it is said "the Father is God, the Son is God: and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet there are not three Gods: but one God."

This, of course, is of human invention, for the Scriptures are emphatic in their teaching that there is but ONE GOD. When asked by a certain scribe, "Which is the chief commandment of all?" Jesus answered in the words of Moses, "*Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is ONE Lord*"—Mark 12:29. And this was confirmed by Paul, "To us there is but ONE GOD"—1 Cor. 8:6.

2. That "*Christ was God the Son.*" This doctrine is responsible for one that developed later, that Mary is the Mother of God. Both are contrary to reason, and at variance with facts, for nowhere in the Bible are either of them so stated. Jesus is always described as "the Son of God"—Luke 1:35, John 1:34.

3. That "*Christ's nature was immaculate.*" This would indicate that his nature was different from ours, and that he was not "Made of the seed of David according to the flesh," as Paul has said. Therefore, his flesh would have been clean, and not like ours as described by Paul as "sin that dwelleth in me" and "the law of sin which is in my members"—Rom. 7:20-23. This doctrine is a contradiction of Scripture. It denies that "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh"—2 John 7; or that "he was a partaker of flesh and blood"—Heb. 2:14-18. It is also a denial of the sacrificial work of Christ, for Paul has said,

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin (by a sacrifice for sin), condemned sin in the flesh"—Rom. 8:3.

If the element of corruption had not pervaded the flesh of Jesus; if there had been no sin principle ingrained in his flesh, as it is in ours, then sin could not have been condemned there, as Paul states.

Having come to recognize the error, and accepted the truth with a full assurance of faith, there was no difficulty in subscribing to another declaration of Paul's which he made regarding the Scriptures of Truth:

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work"—2 Tim. 3:16-17 (RSV).

The Bible, wholly God-inspired and infallible, is the substance of the introduction to our Statement of Faith, and has been the foundation upon which all Christadelphian teaching has been based for the past 100 years. This position, however, has been attacked by many; but especially in 1884 when the late Robert Ashcroft rejected the doctrine of the Bible's entire inspiration in an article published in the "Exegetist" which he founded. His theories were resisted, and effectively answered, by bro. Roberts. They were not, however, silenced, but continued their attacks, and in 1913 the "Fraternal Visitor" published a statement by T. Nisbet to the effect that "We cannot intelligently say that the Bible is the Word of God."

Unfortunately, these things do not all belong to the past. At the present time, a book titled "Dare We Believe?" is being published and sold by the editor of the "Christadelphian Magazine," in which doubt is being cast upon the factual record in the book of Genesis with respect to creation. The subject of Address No. 3 in this book is "Christianity and Evolution." On pgs. 6 & 7 the author attempts to adjust the Scriptures to fit in with what happens to be the current fancy of "science." He accepts the speculation of a P. J. Wiseman, who suggests that the 6 days of the first chapter of Genesis are not a record of 6 days of creative work, but—

". . . that in six days the details of God's creation were revealed to man in vision, the timing in Genesis conforming to the incidence of the visions. This explanation, which is so simple a reconciliation as to have escaped popular notice for a considerable time, leaves no contradiction between the millions of years quoted by geology and the 144 hours of Genesis. We cannot prove that this is the correct explanation, but it appears probable from the narrative in Genesis, and it removes any necessary contradiction between the Bible and the facts on which the evolutionists claim to build."

If we accept this "six-day vision" theory as being truth, then we must, of necessity, reject the Word of God given from Mount Sinai relating to the Sabbath law (Exo. 20:9-11)—

"Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant; nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."

We believe that statement to be true, as did bre. Thomas & Roberts (see quotation from bro. Thomas in Berean, June, 1953, pg. 191—reprinted in Chdn. by bro. Roberts). Bro. Thomas said—

"Would any Israelite or Gentile, UNSPOILED BY VAIN PHILOSOPHY, come to the conclusion of geologists by reading the Sabbath Law?"

If we say the "vision" idea is true, then we sit in judgment upon the Word of God, and elect to reject any part of the Word that does not conform to our opinions. Anyone familiar with the history of the early church will be aware that it was this trend by "intellectuals" and "philosophers" among the believers that developed the apostasy. There are other strange and disturbing views advanced in this article.

To all the brethren throughout the world who still believe the Bible to be wholly God-inspired, we ask, *what are you going to do about this?* Are you content to sit back and say it is nothing to worry about: or will you stand with those who are doing all in their power to uphold our Statement of Faith, and comply with the request of Paul to—

"Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong"—! Cor. 16:13 (RSV).

—Editor.

CHRIST'S SLAVE

"He that is called, being free, is Christ's servant." No man professing the Truth is rich for himself. He may act as if he were, but he will find his mistake at last. He is Christ's slave, for this is the word used by Paul. To put it in another apostolic way, he is Christ's steward.

What he has belongs to Christ, and although the use of them is at his absolute discretion, no man having the least right to dictate, he will be CALLED TO ACCOUNT for the use he has made of the Lord's property.

Does he use it for his own gratification, or for doing the Lord's commands? The verdict of the day of Christ will be according to the fact. Every man will reap as he sows. Some men sow to the flesh in pot-houses and among lewd fellows. Some sow to the flesh in gilded parlors, and conservatories, and croquet grounds in polite society. The judgment will place them both in the same rank at last.

"None of us liveth to himself, and no man (in Christ) dieth to himself. Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. 14:8).

It is wise to take this fact home now, and let it have full effect in our lives. A life based upon it is considered "extreme" and fanatical; but WHO considers it so? Not the Lord's people, and certainly not the Lord, for he has said that no man can be his disciple who does not discern him sufficiently to prefer him above every folly and every interest in this life. The Master was disowned and discarded as an impractical dreamer—a fiery enthusiast— an extreme preacher. Let us not aim to be otherwise estimated by the corresponding class in our day.—Bro. Roberts.

The Mystery of Godliness

By brother John Thomas

PART THREE

The *Shaddai* are styled *Elohim*, as expressive of the parental relation subsisting between them and AIL in nature and power. As the Highest and Most Powerful One in the universe, He styles himself the *AIL-Elohim*—the Power of powers: a truth memorialized by Jacob in the Altar he named *AIL-Elohai-Yisra-ail*—the Strength of the Powers of Israel.

Elohim is a plural noun, which in the singular is written *Eloah*. The use of this in Hab. 1:11 shows that the idea of *strength or power* is the radical meaning of the word—"As to this one, his strength is his *Eloah*" (see R.V.), or the one in whom he trusts.

The 3 men who appeared to Abraham were each of them as *Eloah*, but not each of them *Elohim*: the 3 together were *Elohim*. ELOAH occurs 56 times in the Scriptures, and 4 of these times only in the Psalms; but in Job 41 times. The use of AIL and *Eloah* by Job would indicate that one and the same being is meant. Every member of the heavenly host is an *Eloah*, but of all the *Elohim* ONE ONLY is the original and self-existent AIL—the absolute, omnipotent, and independent Power of the universe. Speaking of Himself in addressing the ends of the earth, He says:

"Look unto Me, for I am AIL, and **none else**" (Isa. 46.22).

And to Israel He saith,

"Ye are My witnesses, and My servant whom I have chosen, that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I, YAHWEH, am He; before Me AIL (or Power) **has not been formed**, nor after Me shall be" (Isa. 43.10).

—a testimony that identifies AIL with the *Logos* and *Theos* of John, which as ONE POWER, he saith—

". . . made all things, and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3).

Having thus shown the meaning of these several terms applied in the Scriptures to Deity, I proceed to offer a few ideas upon the Divine Nature as suggested in the revelation of the mystery.

We learn from the Bible that the Deity it reveals has both body and parts. Paul teaches us this in declaring that the resurrected and anointed Jesus is—

"The **apaugasma** (reflection) of the glory and **charakter** (peculiar nature) of the **hypostasis** (substance) of the Theos."

In other words, he partakes of the Divine Nature; so that what he now is, is what the Deity hath always been.

The substance of the Theos is essentially *living* substance. It could not exist and yet be dead substance, for "*the Father hath life in Himself*" (John 5:26), and that life is His inherent peculiarity. It is underived from any antecedent existence; nor can it forsake the Divine Substance, for in that event the Deity would be mortal. But Paul styles Him "the Incorruptible Theos," and says that "He is the only one having *athanasia*, or deathlessness" (1 Tim. 6:16). Hence, the essential qualities of the substance, which underlies all that is predictable of Him, are *Incorruptibility and Life*.

Incorruptible and living substance, then, is the Body of the Deity; and, as the glorified Jesus, is "*the IMAGE of the Invisible Theos*," He must have "parts." It is not, therefore, a mere figure of speech to speak, as the Scriptures do, of the hand, ear, eye, and so forth, of the Invisible Eternal Power. He has form and parts, as well as body, and is the *Great Archetype, or divine original, after which all the "Elohim," or immortal intelligences, of His universe are modelled and made.*

He dwells in unapproachable light, and is "a consuming fire." Light and heat, then, in their essentiality, with incorruptibility and life, are centered in His substance, for He is the great focal center of these in all the universe of power.

Now these suggestions are sustained by "*the likeness of the glory of Jehovah*" which appeared to Ezekiel:

"Above the firmament that was over the heads of the four living ones, was the likeness of a THRONE, as the appearance of a sapphire stone. And upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a MAN above upon it.

"And I saw as the color of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his: loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about it; as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of YAHWEH" (Eze. 1:26).

This was the *Deity in symbol*, which is brought out again in ch. 8:2-3. In this place Ezekiel adds, that He Whom the likeness represented "put forth the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my head."

Being thus secured, he said, "The *Spirit* lifted me up." This was equivalent to saying that the likeness represented THE SPIRIT, which Jesus says is *Theos* or AIL.

All the similitudes in the prophets representative of the Deity are of this bright and burning character. In Daniel He is exhibited as the Ancient of Days sitting upon a throne like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire, with a fiery stream issuing forth from before Him (Dan. 7:9).

And so in the Revelation—"Out of the throne" that He sits upon "*proceed lightnings, and thunderings, and voices.*" And before the throne seven lamps of fire burning, which are representative of "*the Seven Spirits of the Deity*" (Rev. 4:5).

Light, heat, incorruptibility, and life, centered in one Eternal Substance, is the great self-existing and central Power of the universe. This substance is Spirit, for "the Deity is Spirit" (John 4:24). All power, life, and light center in Him, so that not a sparrow falls to the ground without His perception (Matt. 10:29).

"He upholdeth all things," and "in Him we live, and move, and do exist" (Acts 17:28). This is by "*the SEVEN SPIRITS which IS before His throne*" (Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6).

Though symbolically "seven," they are complete in one for, saith Paul, "There is ONE SPIRIT" (Eph. 4:4). Seven is the symbol of unity and perfection. Hence, being representative of the One Spirit, the verb is expressed in the singular, and not in the plural as the grammar of the sentence

requires—"The Seven Spirits which *is* (*not* 'which *are*') before the throne." There is but One Spirit there, and this *One* is the subject of the verb "is".

The Father of the spirit is the Divine Substance, for it proceedeth forth from thence. And because it issues from thence, He is styled "the Father of glory." Spirit irradiates the boundless universe from the throne of light, and pervades it in all its space.

Thus the spirit is consubstantial with the divine nature, or "free," radiating from unapproachable light, everywhere and illimitably, so that wherever spirit is, there is the Deity present; and consequently, as Paul said to the Athenians, "*Not far from every one of us*" (Acts 17:27).

This universality of the Divine Presence by His "free spirit" is beautifully and forcibly expressed in Psa. 139:7-12, as—

"Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend into the heavens, Thou art there. If I make my bed in Sheol, behold Thou art there."

* * *

"There is one Deity, the Father, **ex ou** (out of Whom) are all things" (1 Cor. 8:6).

Out of the Deity all things have proceeded. His free, radiant spirit is the substratum of every existing thing, from the star of the first magnitude to the minutest insect of the air. This all-pervading electricity is the simple, undecomposable radiation "*out of*" the Divine Substance which, under the fiat of His will, constitutes the atomic nucleus of all bodies, solid, fluid, or aeriform.

Thus, "*by His spirit He garnished the heavens*" (Job 26:13), illuminating boundless immensity with orbs of light, teeming with life and all the boundless wonders of His wisdom and power.

Such, then, was Deity before the appearance of Jesus—*Spirit, substantial and radiant*: substantial in His Own person; radiant thence into all the *Elohim* of His universe, in whom the radiant matter, by the fiat of the Divine Will, became fixed, organic, corporeal, and consubstantial with the Deity Himself.

Thus, He is *Eloah* in chief; and "without Me," He saith, "of *Elohim* there is none else," and "Without Me are no *Elohim*," and therefore it is we find the phrase in Isa. 46:18: "HE the *Elohim*"—*He* (the only Deity, by His Spirit) *a multitude of mighty ones*."

Having considered the Deity under the apocalyptic aspect of "*Him Who was*," of the "*Alpha*," of "the *First*," and of "the *Beginning*," I shall proceed to treat, in the next place, of the same Deity "*Who is*," in the development of the great mystery.

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

The Wedding Garment

By brother Robert Roberts

A man's course may appear one thing to himself, and be quite another in *fact*, when wholly seen. Paul, destroying the disciples in zeal for the Law, appeared, in his own eyes, a righteous man, approved unto God; in *God's* eyes he was "kicking against the pricks": that is, he was hurting himself and not those against whom he was fighting.

So the Scribes and Pharisees thought themselves defenders of the Kingdom of God in opposing Christ, whereas, they were in reality excluding themselves from any part in it when it should be established in its final form. To set forth this was the object of this parable, and also to intimate

certain consequences, highly unpalatable to them, which would result from their action. *It is in those consequences that we are personally interested.*

The parable is found in Matt. 22 & Luke 14. It is as follows:

"A certain king . . . made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them which were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come . . . Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

"So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good, and the wedding was furnished with guests.

"And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to his servants, Bind him and take him away."

In the king we recognise God, who spoke to the fathers and wrought with them for the execution of His purpose. That purpose is represented as a marriage feast for His Son. A marriage feast is the most joyous occasion in human experience, and fitly though feebly represents the character of God's great purpose.

His purpose from the beginning has been to spread a banquet of love and every good thing in the earth. His Son is the central object of this banquet. It is a marriage feast *for His Son*; but before it could be a glory and joy to Him, there must be *a partner and guests*. The provision of these is from the human race by invitation.

The invitation was first sent to Israel after the flesh, who were chosen as the national basis of the purpose. But the bulk of them did not accept the invitation, for lack of understanding. They accepted it in a certain way. They consented to be the Lord's people and rejoiced in the fact, but they used it for their own glory, and shut God out of the matter.

They approached God with their lips but their hearts were far from Him. And therefore, after long patience, there came a time when the invitation was extended to another class.

It is here where our personal relation to the parable comes into view. Before Israel's rejection of the message, we were outside of its scope altogether—

"Strangers from, the covenants of promise, and aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel" (Eph. 2:12).

Till Paul's day, God suffered the Gentiles to walk in their own ways, and winked at their ignorance (Acts 14:16; 17:30).

Our ancestry is altogether undistinguished from this point of view. *We are the descendants of barbarians, who were "without God and without hope in the world"* (Eph. 2:12). They had a "hope" and they had "gods;" but both were matters of imagination, and, therefore, are not Scripturally recognised.

By the hand of Paul and his co-laborers, the invitation, which had been lightly regarded by Israel in their generations, was extended to the barbarians, and, therefore, to us. Here we are, this morning, a company of their descendants. We have not heard Paul's living voice, but we are none the less invited. The invitation was to survive his decease, and continue in force till the Lord's appearing.

Consequently the fact of Paul's word having to come to us in the understanding of it, is evidence of the invitation referred to in the parable having come to us. The servants of the parable are

commanded to go out to the highways and hedges. We belong to the party of the highways and hedges, which is destined to furnish a considerable contingent of guests to the marriage feast.

Here comes an important practical question, to which the parable furnishes an answer. Shall we be accepted as the King's guests merely because we have answered the King's summons by the hand of the King's servants in the hedges and highways? *Shall we be chosen merely because we have been called?* The answer of the parable is in harmony with Peter's exhortation to "make our calling and election *sure*," which implies possible uncertainty. What is that answer?—

When the King came in to see the assembled guests, He found one without a wedding garment, and said unto him,

"Friend, how earnest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?"

This shows that *something was implied in the invitation that was not expressed in the first instance*. The invitation was, "Come to the feast." The implication was, "Come in a fit state." The King's question shows that every guest, though freely invited from the highways and the hedges, was required to come in a fit dress for the occasion. The man might have said, "I came because I was asked to come." But the King's question shows that *He regarded the acceptance of the invitation as acceptance also of the implied conditions*.

Now let us come to the point. What are these implied conditions? What is this wedding garment? We ascertain this from another figure of the same matter. The guests in their collective capacity are symbolized in the Apocalypse as a woman in white array—a Bride in "fine linen, clean and white." And concerning this white raiment it is added,

"The fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19.8).

In the parable this principle is illustrated in its individual application. Each applicant for a place at the feast *must possess the individual righteousness* without which no man shall enter the Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9; Matt. 5:20).

Some escape this conclusion, deceiving their own selves by saying Christ will be their righteousness. *Why was he not righteousness for the rejected guest?* Why will he not be righteousness for false brethren who sow to the flesh, and to whom he will say,

"Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity"?

If a man have no *righteous fruits of the Spirit* to present before Christ in the account we must all give at his judgment-seat, when he judges the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, the fate of the rejected guest will be his—

"Cast out the unprofitable servant" (Matt. 25:30).

Those who have to say they have no righteousness of their own, will find that Jesus will be nothing to them.

The sentiment that Christ's righteousness alone is to be the basis of our acceptance, is one of the countless and pernicious corruptions of clerical theology. It doubtless originated in the *misapplication of a certain element of apostolic truth*, namely, that which informs us that all are under sin, and that our salvation is not of works; but through the righteousness of faith that is in Christ.

Men have long ceased to perceive that this principle applies *only to unjustified sinners* and not to those who have been placed in a justified or forgiven position, through the obedience of faith. Christ is righteousness for sinners in this sense, that God offers to forgive them for Christ's sake, and to grant

them a co-heirship with Christ, of what Christ, as a manifestation of God, has achieved for himself. *But when sinners become saints, they come into relation to a new principle.* They are responsible to him as servants to a master, and he will judge them ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS (Rev. 2:23; Matt. 16:27; 2 Cor. 5:10).

If they bring forth fruits to the Spirit (that is, do and be what the Spirit in the Word requires) they will receive everlasting life: and if they bring forth fruits to the flesh (that is, be and do what the mere natural mind prompts a man to do) they will inherit corruption.

So says the last testimony referred to. Hence it is that the apostles dwell so incessantly and so emphatically on the *necessity for brethren to walk as saints*, and to be on their guard against conformity to the world, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (Heb. 3:1-3).

If we present ourselves to Christ as one of the guests unprovided with that raiment of personal righteousness which he requires, we shall assuredly be rejected, and no man can learn what that personal righteousness is, so as to have it in continual available remembrance, except by the *continuous and reverential study* of the word of Christ contained in the writings of the apostles and prophets.

Apart from this, a man with even a complete theoretical knowledge of Christ may become *so infected with the spirit of the world around him*, which also exhales so freely from his own heart, that while professing the name of Christ he will walk in the flesh, having a name to live while *utterly dead to the high things of God*.

Most students of the Word, in the early stage of their studies, fall into the mistake of supposing that "the wedding garment" stands for baptism. If they pursue their studies to any practical effect, they, by-and-by, get rid of this mistake. They remember that *many baptized persons will be rejected at the judgment-seat*, and that the most distinguished of the guests—"Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets"—have never been baptized; in which case, if the "wedding garment" stood for baptism, we should have the anomaly of guests with wedding garments turned out, and guests without them allowed to remain.

Besides, to what a cheap affair it would reduce the garment in question! And how out of harmony with the whole spirit of the Divine economy, which lays such stress on persevering well-doing as a qualification for acceptance, and keeps in a comparatively minor place mere ceremonial compliances!

Baptism is only the first act of obedience on the part of a believing sinner, and is of a nature with the kind of righteousness which the Pharisees performed when they circumcised children, and kept the feasts—all very essential in their place, but *not accepted at the hands of otherwise unrighteous men*. The law of admission to the Kingdom says:

"Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God" (Matt. 5:20).

This is the righteousness typified by the wedding garment—"the righteousness of saints" in its fulness and ripeness, the unreserved and patiently-continued submission of enlightened men and women, in whose hearts *faith fully dwells with purifying effect*, working by love to the keeping of the commandments of God.

With this in view, the lesson of the parable is sobering and wholesome. It shows us that our mere acceptance of the Gospel will not suffice to save us. It shows us that there must be a *clothing of the inner man*, with all those principles, precepts and affections which the Spirit has so abundantly stored for us in the Word, and which we must procure from thence by *diligent daily reading*.

These constitute the wedding garment, without which we are "poor and miserable and wretched and blind and naked," even if we may be infatuated enough to suppose ourselves "rich and increased in goods and in need of nothing." The fact helps us both to understand and rightly estimate the Spirit's invitation,

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear" (Rev. 3:18).

This Divine merchant has erected a house for the sale of His wares. In the Bible He has spread them out to view, and cries at the street corners (Prov. 8:4-6)—

"Unto you, O men, I call, and My voice is to the sons of men. O ye simple, understand wisdom, and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart. Hear; for I will speak of excellent things, and the opening of My lips shall "be right things."

Those who respond to this call will experience the truth of the assurance that—

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom and the man that getteth understanding; for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her" (Prov. 3:13-15).

The experience of the goodness of Divine wisdom begins even now in the constant satisfaction which springs from the answer of a good conscience towards God and towards man, and in the joyful hope of ineffable good, when the weary journey of this life shall have come to an end, as come it will. But what shall we say of that final form of the experience which will be the lot of those who shall be declared by Christ to have overcome and kept his works unto the end?

Language simply fails to define and imagination to conceive it. We can simply say with David,

"Oh, how great is the goodness which Thou hast laid up for them who trust in Thee before the sons of men!" (Psa. 31:19).

The rebuke of His people will be taken away from all the earth. It will no longer be the portion of the sons of God to endure the quiet scorn of those whose portion is in this life, who dwell at ease, and are filled with substance, whose eyes stand out with fatness, and who have more than their hearts can wish.

The Sons of God are in heaviness for a season; but when their warfare is accomplished—when the fight is passed, they will receive the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, and in the vigor of an immortal nature, rejoice evermore in the joy which is the appointed portion of the accepted guests at the marriage of the King's Son. *Well may it be said,*

"Blessed are they who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

Two Cities

We have all doubtless often been struck by the remarkable coincidental relationship between the various parts of a day's daily readings, revealing the marvellous interweavings of the harmony and unity of God's Word.

Such is the case when we find ourselves, by the "Companion," reading Isa. 52 and Rev. 14 together. Therein we have a parallel picture of history's 2 great symbolic cities, with their ultimate destinies—*Jerusalem and Babylon*.

Isa. 52:1—"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments O Jerusalem, the Holy City; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean."

And Rev. 14:8—"Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

The *Holy City*, the city of life and hope and light—and the *Unholy City*, the city of death and confusion and evil. The city of future eternal joy—and the city of present, passing pleasure.

Both these chapters carry us forward to the time when the wisdom of the true choice will be manifested for the blindest to see—Zion exalted and Babylon destroyed. No exhortation or persuasion will be needed then to point out the advantages of the more excellent way. It will be convincingly clear to all, but the books will have been closed and the decree will have gone forth:

"He that is unjust, LET HIM BE UNJUST STILL" (Rev. 22:11).

Too late then to seek oil in panic-stricken confusion. There was plenty of time once, and constant pleadings, but now it is too late.

This picture of two cities, two rival commonwealths, is woven all through the Scriptures. This pictorial and allegorical form of teaching greatly helps the memory and impresses the imagination.

The seed of the Serpent and the seed of the Woman run parallel right from the beginning. From the time Cain hated and slew Abel because he was annoyed and condemned by Abel's more faithful and fuller life, the two cities have existed. Cain went, we are told, and *built himself a city* (Gen. 4:17)—an establishment, a center, an organization, a foundation of power. *Abel already HAD a city*. He was satisfied and secure. So Cain hated him in the misery of his own misdirected and unsatisfied desires.

* * *

The sons of God, in the long years that followed, tired of the Zionward journey. The vision of their distant city grew dim. The glittering cities of the children of men drew them aside and the result was the greatest catastrophe that has yet befallen the race. Out of the wreckage, only 8 were saved, and even among those 8, *all was not well*.

And when men began to multiply again, they said (Gen. 11:4):

"Go to, let us BUILD US A CITY."

Give us a city, give us a king, give us something we can see and handle, something social and exciting. This *spiritual City*, this *divine King*, this "joy of the Spirit" and "treasure in heaven" are rather thin fare for the natural appetite. "*Our soul loatheth this light bread*"—this divinely-provided manna from heaven.

But there was one among them who could see through the emptiness of the present. Abraham set forth seeking "a city that had foundations" (Heb. 11:10). He was obsessed with a desire for something *real and lasting*. He knew that (Psa. 127:1)—

"Except the Lord build, they labor in vain that build it."

So *he* sought for a city—

"Whose Builder and Maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

By God's guidance he found the *City of Peace* with the *King of Righteousness* reigning in it (Gen. 14:18), set high upon a mountain in the *Land of Promise*. And Abraham was satisfied, for he saw afar off the glory of this city, and he believed these things, and embraced them, and confessed that he was a stranger and a pilgrim separated from the cities of the children of men and waiting in faith for the City of God.

Not far from this mountain, in the attractive green valleys below, there was a city of the children of men. And God said to Lot:

"Get you out of THIS place . . . escape to the MOUNTAINS . . . lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of THIS CITY."

And so another chapter in the lessons of God was written, and Sodom, the city of corruption, added its name and example to Babel, the city of confusion.

* * *

Isaiah says, in this 52nd. chapter, verse 4,

"My people went down aforetime into Egypt."

See how marvellously the hand of God worked in this! And as we read, let us be impressed with the inexorable workings of God's justice—slow, invisible, often disguised, but *terribly sure and strikingly fitting*. Rebekah misled Jacob, very well-meaning but misguided; Jacob deceived Isaac, still well-meaning but still deception; Laban deceived Jacob, not quite so well-meaning; Jacob's sons deceived Jacob and sold Joseph into slavery into Egypt, ill-meaning and vicious; and finally the Egyptians betrayed and enslaved the Israelites and killed their children as they had thought to do to Joseph. *What a gradually broadening chain of evil and sorrow!*

And what did the Israelites have to do in Egypt? Exo. 1:11—

"They built for Pharaoh **treasure cities**, Pithom and Raamses."

What irony! The sons of God sunk to ignorant slavery and forced to build cities for earthly treasures of the children of men!

* * *

The next typical unholy city was Jericho. This was an important place, a strong fortress, the gateway to the conquest of the land of promise. It was the first city confronting the Israelites as they set out to occupy their inheritance; its defeat was miraculous and symbolic, and its destruction was complete.

It is several times called "the city of palm trees." Now palms throughout the Scriptures represent triumph and joy—victory after faithful struggle. Palms so appear in the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:40), at Christ's royal entry into Jerusalem (John 12: 13), and in the hands of the victorious host before the throne (Rev. 7:9). In Psalms (92:12) and the Song of Solomon (7:7), the righteous are likened to the straight, erect beauty of the palm tree.

How then is Jericho, the *unholy* city, a "city of palm trees"? Because Jericho is a *counterfeit* copy of the true. The palm trees indicate that Jericho is not just the cities of men generally, but the false *ecclesiastical* city. There is one reference to palm trees that gives us a hint of this meaning. Speaking of the heathen idols, Jeremiah says (10:5)—

"They are upright as the palm tree, BUT SPEAK NOT" (10:5).

They have a dead form of godliness, but lack the living power. Trees without fruit, twice dead (Jude 12). In this light, the Roman system is pre-eminently a "city of palm trees," for their dead idols are legion.

As the destruction of the hosts of Sihon and Og typify the defeat of Gog, so the subduing of Canaan with its *seven* (or completeness of) nations typifies the subduing of the earth. And Jericho came first. At the 7th trumpet-sounding on the 7th day, Jericho fell. So will great Babylon, the unholy city.

Jericho had to be utterly destroyed. The other cities of the land they took over and used—*but not Jericho*. As the fourth beast (Dan. 7:11), a curse of perpetual destruction was put upon it. It was never to be rebuilt (Josh. 6:26).

But what happened? Someone in the host of Israel did not realize the terrible reality and power of the One Who was in their midst and led them, and great trouble came upon the whole camp as a result until they had put away the covetous one from among them. God had promised them abundance in His good time, but *here was something they could not have*.

But Achan was out of harmony with the purpose. He could not wait for God. "*Is it a time to receive money and to receive garments?*" said Elisha to Gehazi (2 Kgs. 5:26). First things first, and all things in God's order. "*Verily they HAVE their reward.*" Achan said (Josh. 7:21),

"I SAW . . . I COVETED . . . I TOOK . . . and I HID."

He THOUGHT he hid. What a pitiful delusion! He dug a hole and hid it away from God! Is it possible that *we* sometimes are as foolish as that?

And what was it? "*A goodly Babylonian garment.*" What a snare those goodly Babylonish garments have been to the children of God all through the ages! It was a "goodly" one—doubtless one of Babylon's best, and the *very latest model*. But was it worth the price he paid for it?

John saw the unholy city in a goodly Babylonish garment:

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls" (Rev. 17:4).

Her gold and precious stones and pearls are counterfeit, as are her palm trees. Her ostentatious parading of these apparently genuine symbols of righteousness and truth deceives the world and in a subtler way may deceive the very elect. Believers are in little danger of deception by the bare Church of Rome itself, or her many ecclesiastical daughters; but her institutions, customs and thinkings permeate the world. The fourth empire still exists in universal diffusion. It is still a Roman world. And each year, on Dec. 25, this Roman world pays more or less conscious homage to the scarlet woman on the seven hills.

"By her sorceries were all nations deceived" (Rev. 18:23).

But Isaiah in this 52nd chapter, verse 1, tells us of better garments than the flashy tinsel of Rome:

"Put on THY beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city."

Here is a refreshing and satisfying change of scene. Here is the beauty of holiness which so delighted the heart of the Psalmist:

"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Psa. 29:2).

What is this holiness, without which *none shall see the Lord* (Heb. 12:14)? It is nothing strange or mysterious. The word simply means "separateness." Worship the Lord in the beauty of separateness—separateness from anything that is displeasing to God or out of harmony with His ways. We can see immediately that the result must necessarily be *perfect beauty*.

It is not necessary to point out the desirability of beauty, but it is necessary to learn what, in God's sight, constitutes beauty, and what mars it. Solomon says (Eccl. 3:11-14)—

"He hath made everything beautiful in its time: also He hath set eternity in their heart . . . Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before Him."

He hath made everything beautiful in its time. All *God's* work, and everything associated with *Him*, is beautiful. Apart from God, *nothing* is. Of natural attractiveness, unassociated with God, Solomon says again—

"Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain" (Prov. 31:30—RSV).

And further (Prov. 11:22)—

"Beauty without spiritual understanding is like a jewel in a swine's snout."

Wisdom will always perceive and be repelled by the snout behind the jewel. So beauty is purely a matter of spiritual education and discernment. It is inward, and not outward—

"Whose adorning let it NOT be that OUTWARD adorning (like the scarlet woman), but the HIDDEN man of the heart, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" (1 Pet. 3:3-4).

There *is* one item of outward glory and beauty that God *has* expressed delight in; one that He Himself has expressly created for glory. While of great beauty and dignity in itself, its chief beauty in God's eyes lies in its evidence of wisdom and discernment and humble acceptance of, and obedience to, God's will. Its importance rests in its symbolism of harmonious, God-appointed relationship. In God's love and wisdom He has made this a token of blessing and honor, and the marring of it a matter of sorrow and shame. *God's mind is expressed in* 1 Cor. 11:6, 15.

The world's fashions in beauty vary with every age and every nation. What is beauty to one nation appears quite hideous to another. But God never changes. Are we wearing *His* holy garments—appointed "for glory and for beauty"—or the *world's*? When we are called to the judgment seat, we shall have to go as we are. The importance of some of the desires God has expressed may strike us a little more forcibly *then* than now.

* * *

"Put on **thy** beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the **holy** city. From henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean."

As custodians of the holy city, believers have the solemn responsibility of maintaining its standards and laws. Bro. Roberts says on this point:

"If the knowledge of the Truth fail to beget the new man in the heart of the sinner, the baptism following his knowledge is not a birth. It is a mere performance of no benefit to him, but rather to his condemnation . . .

"It ought, therefore, to be seriously considered by all who contemplate that step, and **by all who are called upon to assist them**, whether there is EVIDENCE of death to sin before arrangements are made for burial. The burial of a living man is cruelty. It were better for the sinner to leave God's covenant alone than to make a mockery of it."

—Further Seasons, pg. 13.

It is no kindness to either the city or the individual to bring in the uncircumcised in heart. The issues are too serious. The Holy City—*God's city*—has been in degradation and misery for 25 centuries. *Why?* Because the custodians of its holiness neglected to keep it holy. What an unforgettable lesson!

* * *

Vs. 3: "Ye have sold yourselves for nought . . ."

We are often reminded that the Jews are God's witnesses. What a sad witness they are to this eternal truth! What have they gained by putting aside the loving guidance and restraints of God's arrangements, and seeking their own pleasure and benefit?

"Unto them were committed the oracles of God . . . To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, the service of God, and the promises."

What great blessings this people had! What great responsibilities these blessings entailed! What terrible punishments because they had been allowed to approach so close to God, and *yet* had failed to discern His mind or be transformed by His love!

". . . and ye shall be redeemed without money."

God's purpose will not fail. Regardless of man's failure, injustice or unkindness, we have the divine and eternal assurance that certain things are sure and guaranteed. And Israel's long night is not purposeless. The nation will rise out of it purged and white.

What does He mean, "redeemed *without money*"? Surely this refers to the "stone cut out of the mountain *without hands*."

"Not by power, nor by might, but by MY spirit, saith the Lord."

When all natural strength and resources are spent and cast aside, *then* will redemption come. The proud and militant Jews of Palestine have a sad and bitter lesson to learn before that day. And so it is with spiritual Israel (2 Cor. 12:9)—

"MY strength (saith God) is made perfect in weakness."

The proud, able, self-reliant—all such are no value to God.

* * *

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of peace and salvation" (v. 7).

Here is real and divine and eternal beauty. The Spirit through Solomon speaks of these beautiful feet in the Song of Songs (7:1)—

"How beautiful are thy feet **with shoes**, O prince's daughter!"

The divinely-appointed shoes whereby they walk in the ways of God, and run to do His bidding.

John sees these feet as flaming pillars of the fires of *war*, purging the dross and ugliness of the earth, preparing it for eternal beauty (Rev. 10:1). Paul sees them shod with the preparation of the gospel of *peace* (Eph. 6:15).

* * *

V. 8: "They shall SEE EYE TO EYE when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

Why is it necessary to say that? The sad history of Israel, both natural and spiritual, show how real and necessary this blessing will be. Consider the Jews—at the greatest moment of their history for the past 2000 years, faced naturally speaking with their supreme crisis—yet torn by bitter factions among themselves. And we remember the words of Joseph, as he sent forth his brethren with a message of life and hope for the perishing, "*See that ye fall not out by the way*" (Gen. 45:24).

* * *

V. 11: "Depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing. Go ye out of the midst of her."

That same warning again. That same picture of the two cities—come out of one and enter the other. Paul quotes these words of the Spirit through Isaiah when he says (2 Cor. 6:14-17)—

"Come **out** from among them and be **separate** and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you and be a Father unto you."

On this condition alone will God accept us as children.—G.V.G.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah

PART EIGHT

Chapter 5, Verses 9 to 15

The Mosaic covenant promised them a land of plenty, all the blessings of full barns, and winepresses. Their exposed condition in Jeremiah's time was such that all the surrounding nations invaded them and took the produce of their labor.

"We gat our bread with the peril of our lives, because of the sword of the wilderness" (Lam. 5:9).

Daily bread was a necessity. It was promised by God to Israel for faithfulness. It came in the wilderness and they gathered of it day by day. There was then no "sword of the wilderness" which they had to fear. They had to fear themselves, those inner impulses which rebelled against the chastening hand of an All-wise Father. They did not learn to seek *first* the will of God, and that when necessary all these things would be added.

God sought to impress them again in later years in a similar manner during the time of the kings, when He withheld the rain, and brought famine. He made the sharp contrast between the failure of Baal to provide, and the power of God to control the elements essential for seedtime and harvest.

But He indicated that the cause was much deeper than the hunger for daily bread. It lay within their hearts. And therefore a famine of a far more serious nature was to strike home to them:

"I will send a famine in the land, not of bread, nor of thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.

"And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east. They shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord—and shall not find it" (Amos 8:11-12).

* * *

"Princes are hanged up by their hand" (v. 12).

The name Israel means "a prince of God." The name was conferred upon Jacob on the occasion when he wrestled with the angel and prevailed (Gen. 32:28)—

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

Israel, as a nation, were the *princes of God*. They were the chosen race, to be witnesses of the glory and majesty of the Creator. What shame and reproach befell them as their leaders were now hanged up before the eyes of all nations and peoples!

Certainly now they had no power to wrestle with God; nor did they deserve the honored position of a prince in His eyes. Their power to contend with their Father waned with their faith in Him. They did not then have the power to contend with their surrounding nations. They were now displayed as witnesses of the truth and justice of God's Word (Deut. 29:24-26)—

"All nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land: what meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God . . . for they went and served other gods."

Ironically the Law which they had despised, which they had abhorred, they could not avoid in death—

"He that is hanged is accursed of God" (Deut. 21:23).

Supplications for the nation ascended to God through the years from the hearts of those who looked to the end of the purpose. They recognized that God, Who had foreknown His people, *would finally establish the everlasting covenant*. But in the meantime the lessons of shame, reproach and degradation were also to be impressed upon succeeding generations.

What Israel experienced in the time of Jeremiah, they were again to pass through in another six centuries. This time it was to come as a culmination of all their wickedness, the filling up and overflowing of their cup of sin, in the hanging up of the Prince of Princes. It was their leaders who incited the people to cry,

"Crucify him. Crucify him!"

Again the darkness settled down over the nation and the lessons of Jeremiah were impressed anew. Those who claimed to be princes in Israel were slaughtered by the Roman legions. Their children were led forth as slaves to all the marts of the empire.

Through the centuries the true princes have been unidentified as princes by the world. Their kingdom is not of this age. They are the weak and lowly of the earth's inhabitants. From the beginning it has been illustrated that they should be bruised by the power of sin. They have been crucified through all ages, hung up as a spectacle and gazingstock for the world to see and jeer at. The Psalmist declared,

"For Thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter" (Psa. 44:22).

The portion of those who have wrestled with God against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places, has been—

"They had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain by the sword—of whom the world was not worthy" (Heb. 11:36-38).

Through the long night of waiting, watching, and wrestling, tribulation has been the portion of the saints. These are the real princes in the sight of God, awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God, in power and authority. These are the "Kings of the East," or "*Kings out of a Sun's risings*" to use the translation of bro. Thomas in Eureka, Vol. 3. These princes shall be revealed for all men to see in the near future.

* * *

"They took the young men to grind, and the children fell under the wood. The elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their music" (vs. 13-14).

These verses reveal aspects of the captivity which do not appear from the historical record. This is a feature of other parts of the Scripture record. It manifests the unity and integration of the whole message. We observe additional details of the Israelitish bondage and deliverance from Egypt in the verses of the beautiful Psalms. We gather the full picture, if we carefully read our daily portions of the Divine Word.

The *aspect of servitude* is impressed by these final verses of Lamentations. Certainly it was the antithesis of the promise of a joyful inheritance, without the fear of oppression.

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof . . . How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" (Psa. 137:1-4).

It was a day of sorrow and mourning. The joy of victory and exaltation was for their enemies. The true godly sorrow was manifested in the case of Nehemiah. Said the king of Persia:

"Why is thy countenance sad? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart."

To which Nehemiah replied,

"Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?" (Neh. 2:2-3).

Notice how his mind was primarily on the *sepulchres*—the place of sorrow and reflection. Notice also the place which Caleb chose as the lot of his inheritance, he who was faithful to God (Josh. 14:6-15). He chose Hebron, the home of Abraham, and the Cave of Macpelah, the *sepulchres of his fathers*.

* * *

"The joy of our heart is ceased: our dance is turned into mourning" (v. 15).

The true young men of God will not be found whiling away their time with music and dance in this time of Israel's sorrow and the Gentiles' ascendancy. This is the nature of the Noahic generation, which shall come again upon the world, "Eat, drink and be merry." Solomon, through inspiration, said,

"There is a time to laugh" (Eccl. 3:4).

But he had previously stated,

"There is a time to weep."

Set in this order we see the Divine purpose—"the cross before the crown." So also we read, "*Weeping endureth for the night (it is now night), but joy cometh in the morning.*"

We identify ourselves with the weeping, sackcloth generation when we accept Christ. Why should we assume that because it is a time of prosperity we can laugh with the world? Such laughter is as the crackling of thorns under a pot in the ears of the Heavenly Father. We are in the vineyard. It is a time of sowing the seed. It is not yet the time of ingathering of harvests.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psa. 126:5-6).

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

The Image and the Stone

PART THREE

"And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath"

—1 Samuel 17:23.

—and all the men bravely drawn up for battle draw back and cower before him. (We may find ourselves speaking of their fear a little disparagingly, but perhaps we should ask ourselves how we would have acted in the circumstances.)

But the boy David could not understand the action of the men of Israel—

"Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" (v. 26).

—that is, why doesn't someone go out and destroy him and remove the reproach from Israel? And the men he spoke to told him that Saul had offered his daughter and great riches and freedom for his father's house, to any who would face Goliath (v. 25)—yet with all these inducements no man had come forward.

The conqueror of Goliath should be given the king's daughter. Psalm 45 declares—

"The king's daughter is all glorious within . . ."

—note particularly the "*within*" . . .

". . . her clothing is of wrought gold" (v. 13).

"*Wrought gold*" is faith shapen under the hammer of affliction. Now, who is the "*king's daughter*"? This whole psalm, we find, is a beautiful song concerning Christ and his Bride. It contains the tribute to Christ that Paul quotes in Heb. 1:9—

"Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

The conqueror of Goliath should also receive "*great riches*." Paul's use of this word in his various delineations of the glories of the Truth adds great depth to its meaning. He speaks of—

"The riches of God's goodness" (Rom. 2:4);
"The riches of His wisdom and knowledge" (Rom. 11:33);
"The riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7);
"The riches of His inheritance" (Eph. 1:18)—

—and, above all—

"The unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8).
* * *

". . . and make his father's house free in Israel."

That was the great purpose of Christ's battle with the enemy of his brethren—to make his father's house free in Israel.

"Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin . . . If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:34-36).

* * *

"And Eliab's anger was kindled against David" (v. 28).

Why? The most natural cause in the world—*fear and jealousy*. He, the eldest, a man of war, was afraid of Goliath. David, the youngest, a boy, was not. David's fearless words reflected on him, the elder brother, and being a natural man he reacted with anger and blustering—calling David names and attempting to humiliate and belittle him. Eliab said—

"With whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness?"

The "few sheep in the wilderness" have always been a matter of scorn and reproach to the faithful. So few can resist the argument of numbers that the fewness of the "little flock" has always been a stumbling-block.

We expect this from the world, but it is sad and discouraging to see this same outlook in the brotherhood—"We are the majority, and so that proves we must be right. You are just a 'fragment,' so you must be wrong."

But the sheep have always been few—and *they have always been in the wilderness*—outcast and despised. And it has always been Christ's humble work to care for his Father's few sheep in the wilderness—the poor and downcast of the world, not the rich and well-favored.

But the time is coming for the humble shepherd to manifest himself as the mighty deliverer. To the "few sheep" he says—

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

* * *

The words of this shepherd boy come to the ears of the distraught king, and he is so desperate that he sends for him. And the poor shepherd boy says to the mighty king—

"Do not be afraid! I will destroy this Philistine."

Saul reasons according to the thinking of the flesh—obsessed with Goliath's armor and might—

"Thou art not able to do it" (v. 33).

Why not, if God is with him? What difference do Goliath's size and natural advantages make? There again is that same fatal human obsession with sheer weight and bulk and the outward appearance of strength. David replies—

"I kept my father's sheep, and there came out a lion and a bear . . . And I slew both . . . and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them . . . the Lord will deliver me" (vs. 34-37).

A lion and a bear. What does that make us think of? What will Christ first encounter when he first comes to deliver his sheep?

Up to the present we have been reminded mostly of Christ's *first* advent to conquer the great enemy SIN, which held all men in fear and bondage of death. As we proceed, however, we shall find our minds directed more to the circumstances of his *second* coming (though not to the exclusion of the first).

When does Christ slay a lion and a bear? Just before he issues his challenge to the great image of the Kingdom of Men. In fact, like David, it forms the very background and stepping-stone of that challenge.

For first he subdues the Kings of the South and the North— Britain and Russia—*the Lion and the Bear*—the latterday Egypt and Assyria, as they squabble over his land—the pasture of his sheep. Then the challenge goes to the kingdoms of the world—

"Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come" (Rev. 14:7).

* * *

"As a roaring lion and a ranging bear, so is a wicked ruler over poor people" (Prov. 28:15).

The scripturally-trained eye sees that this is the character of all the sin-powers of the earth, of which the Kings of the North and the South are the latterday heads and representatives.

Picture Palestine—God's Own pasture—the ravaged battleground between rival world-powers that Korea has been, and we can readily visualize the lion and the bear among the sheep.

* * *

David's faith was entirely in God—not in any way in himself. Therefore he had no doubts about the outcome, for *God cannot fail*. This is the frame of mind we must develop, if we are to be among the chosen few.

God cannot fail, and He has specifically promised "both to will and to do of His good pleasure" in those that truly love Him.

"We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

His workmanship, and GOD CANNOT FAIL. Do we grasp the tremendous and revolutionary significance of this passage? *Whether or not we do is the key to life or death.*

"Filled with all the fulness of God . . . according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:19-20).

This is what we must sell all to obtain. This is what we must seek agonizingly and unceasingly, as for hid treasures, until we find it—for *this is life, all else is death*.

"ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKETH IN US."

* * *

"And Saul armed David with his armor, and put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail" (v. 38).

Saul attempts to arm David as Goliath is armed. That is simply fighting flesh with flesh. A "helmet of brass" (flesh) is the direct opposite of the golden helmet of salvation on which David relied.

The children of the Spirit are no match for the children of the flesh if they attempt to meet them on their own ground with their own weapons. Here the children of the flesh have all the advantage of numbers, experience, prestige and learning. Here is where the churches of the world—afraid of appearing unlearned, afraid of being left behind, afraid of being called "obscurantists"—have given away their scriptural foundation and undermined their only bulwark by meeting the evolutionists halfway in their speculations.

The children of the Spirit must find higher ground for the conflict. *They must not be drawn down into the Philistine plain*, but must stay up in the Israel hills. Their defence must lie in holiness and faith, and the consequent indwelling, invincible power and presence of the living God—

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord . . . he that hath clean hands and a pure heart" (Psa. 24:3-4).

If we can reach this point, we are unconquerable. If the children of God haven't these things, they are no match for the wisdom of the world. It is only as instruments of God's use that they succeed against all the advantages that are on the world's side.

So David wisely put off all Saul's brazen armor. He did not even retain the helmet as protection for his head—the most vital part, but went forth in his simple shepherd's garb, with no natural protection at all. He realized it was all or nothing. *Part* of the armor would have been worse than none—it would have impeded his movements and chances for success without giving him any guarantee of adequate protection.

This is a problem and decision we must all face. There is no use putting on *half* the world's armor. If we want to rely on the world's way of protection, let us go all the way. But if we want to rely on God, let us go all the way in *that* direction. Sad indeed is the man who grasps at both and gains neither!

* * *

"And he took his staff in his hand" (v. 40).

—his shepherd's staff. We cannot help wondering why David carried his staff into this encounter. What could he possibly have thought of doing with it against this great, heavily-armed giant? *Naturally* speaking, this is one of the most difficult things to understand, but as to the *spiritual* significance we are guided by the 23rd Psalm. Truly David was here walking into the "valley of the shadow of death," and he declares—

"I will fear no evil: Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

The staff is clearly the sustaining and comforting presence of God. And surely he needed comfort! We remember that David wrote this Psalm, and that it expresses his thoughts and feelings (while, of course, being a foreshadowing of the mind of Christ).

Therefore the taking of the staff—apparently from a natural point of view so unreasonable—seems to give us a marvellous insight into his frame of mind as he went down to meet the mighty Philistine champion in this valley of the shadow of death, as the army of men and the people of God watched in tense silence.

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

Do they hinder or help the work of the Gospel in us? This is the simple test by which we may easily decide what is wise to be done. There are many things that, judged by this rule, will be let alone by spiritual men—large business aims, worldly friendships, scientific specialties, political and social hobbies and fashionable pleasure-taking.—Bro. Roberts.

"They Feared to Ask Him"

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it"—Luke 9:23-24.

There are some Scriptures which require time for us to adjust ourselves to them. They embody the essence of a multitude of minor precepts and require a multitude of minor adjustments. We must return to them again and again to check our course and our progress by them.

Such are these words of Christ. It requires time even to find out all that they mean—in fact, it seems that this process of fathoming their full implications is endless—and it takes further time to adjust ourselves to these implications as they unfold. No one could ever feel within himself that he had completely exhausted their meaning and satisfied their requirements.

* * *

"The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected and slain" (Luke 9:22).

"Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of Man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not . . . and they feared to ask him" (vs. 44-45).

Why were they afraid to ask further light? Because these things that Jesus was saying were disturbing and did not fit in with their conception of what lay before them. They did not want to face the implications of his words. Their minds were full of his coming glory, and their respective ranks of honor around his throne—see the next verse, where they contended among themselves who should be greatest.

It would have been better for them to have faced their fears, and asked him what he meant. They would have been better prepared for the ordeal to come, and braced against the hopeless despair that engulfed them at his crucifixion.

"Fools and slow of heart to believe all the prophets have written!"

How natural to close our eyes to unpleasant truths, but how comforting on the other hand to be fortified in a time of trouble by a clear perception beforehand that all is in harmony with a glorious divine plan!

* * *

As they continue on their journey they come to the village where the Samaritans refuse to receive them, and the disciples say,

"Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?"

Our minds go back a little way: "*And they said, Lord, teach us to pray. And he said, Pray ye on this wise: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.*" How quickly this beautiful lesson of love was forgotten!

"*Even as Elias did.*" How glibly we justify our natural desires by some eagerly-grasped Scripture that suits our end!—"Abraham was rich" . . . "Daniel had great authority" . . . "Solomon lived in splendor" . . . "Moses led an army." The whole life and teaching of Jesus was of the spirit of lowly gentleness and kindness, but it is this fiery instance in the life of Elijah that immediately comes to their mind—*because it fitted in with their feelings.*

They little realized the exalted nobility of the purpose that centered in Christ. There was no room there for petty personal resentment. He saw men broadly as sheep without a shepherd, seeking rest and finding none. *Even in their blind abuse of him, he pitied them,* for they but vented on him the bitterness of their own frustration and futility.

This instance illustrates how difficult it is to seek scriptural guidance with an open mind, and how easy it is to find just what we are looking for. What assurance then have we ever that we are not self-deceived? Narrow is the way, he said, and few there be that find it. *Few there be that even FIND it!* But still the unchanging promise is—

"Ye shall find Me—when ye **seek** for Me with **all** your heart."

Millions are seeking with varying degrees of earnestness and effort, *but few put their whole heart and soul into it, to the exclusion of all else.*

This is the only guarantee of success. This is the only possible hope of success. One sole and all-exclusive purpose.

"If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."
"A doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways" (Jam. 1:8).

Divided interests and affections lead only to endless mental turmoil. Lukewarmness is an abomination to both God and man. God gives us a positive guarantee of failure before we start if we do not throw ourselves into His service with wholehearted zeal. Those who attempt to serve two masters lose any real enjoyment and satisfaction that they might have derived from either service.

* * *

In the last few verses of the chapter, Jesus speaks to three men. Here again, the words of Jesus are of the type to which we must keep returning, seeking to adjust our outlook and our lives. They are not what we would naturally expect Jesus to say in the circumstances. They must be slowly digested. They are lessons in a type of thought and viewpoint directly opposite to the natural.

Natural man's thoughts are based on maudlin sentimentality that has no solid framework of reason and which a slight irritation soon exposes as superficial. Natural man is all for goodwill and fellowship—until his little personal interests are jeopardized or his touchy sensibilities are affronted. To the natural man the words of Jesus were often very hard.

"This is an hard saying—who can receive it?"

He was always seeking to drive them deeper—force them to think down through the common shallow veneer—shake them out of the rut of paralyzing habit and unthinking conformity with an unthinking brute existence. Consider what he says to these three men, especially the second. The man asked:

"Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father."

Jesus replied to him,

"Let the dead bury their dead."

What a thing to say at such a time! A hard saying, indeed. Of course, human commentators explain it away. They say that the man meant, "Let me stay with my aged father until he dies." Instead of letting it "sink down into their ears," and seeking to extract divine wisdom from it, they attempt to water it down and thus escape its searching, transforming power.

"Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God."

Would he stop to bury his father if a flood or tornado were sweeping down on him? Would he stop to care for the *dead* if his *living friends* were in dire and immediate need of his help? It is all a question of relative values.

He took his call too lightly. Men had been living and dying for thousands of years and were to do so for thousands more. Many had been buried and many had not, it was all the same in the end. *But here was the turning point in God's plan of the Ages, that would triumphantly sweep death from the earth.*

In the fulness of time God had sent forth His Son, and this very moment he was saying personally to him, "*I need you NOW, follow me!*" The words still rang in the air. And the man said, "I can't make it right away, I have something else to do first." And so his great moment passed.

He did not realize—and how *hard* it is to realize—the utter insignificance of natural things. He was not ready when the call came. He hesitated. He had other things on his mind. Suddenly confronted with a decision, he failed. How important to be ready beforehand—to have laid the right foundation during the time of opportunity!

The lesson and the type is clear. "*See that that day come not upon you unawares.*" Be ready. Keep your lamps trimmed and full of oil. Get mentally adjusted to the relative values of natural and spiritual things, so that when He once more shakes not the earth only, but heaven also, and many things that seemed well-grounded begin to rock and sway, and a decision is suddenly thrust upon us, we shall have the discernment to distinguish what to hold fast to—and what to let go.

It is not part of God's plan for believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom to be living in peaceful and prosperous communities. When they got "rich, and increased in goods, and said they had need of nothing," He put an end to their ecclesiastical prosperity and peace by scattering them abroad to preach the Word. The Kingdom can only be entered through much tribulation, not through prosperity and peace.—Bro. Thomas, 1854.

"There Must Be Heresies"

In the first reading for this morning (2 Kgs. 24-25) we are at the end of a major epoch in the great plan of God—a time when things that had seemed unchangeable began to crumble and fall.

Such times call for deep foundations. Lives grounded merely upon the upper layers of immediate fact cannot stand the shock of these periods of earth-shaking transition. Within the Household of God, the present time is of a similar nature. The old landmarks are disappearing. Rifts are developing where solid rock was expected, and every individual is forced again and again to examine his own foundations to see whether they are still firm and unchanged, or whether they turn out to have been built upon what had only the appearance of stability.

Paul said to the Corinthians,

"There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Cor. 11:19).

Mere membership is meaningless. Each must stand upon a firm foundation of intelligent belief and perception cemented by constant study. *Vital decisions are being forced upon us.* Only a daily and affectionate familiarity with the Word will make us ready for them. Those that are not ready will be weeded out and left behind.

There must be heresies so that the approved may be made manifest. After the storm has passed, some houses will be left standing—some will have been swept forever away. It is hard, but it is necessary. The stones of the temple must be sound and solid. In battle training, real bullets are used. A false move means death, even in the training period. It is hard, but it is necessary. Facts are always hard, but wisdom will face them.

The end of Israel's kingdom is a sad consideration. Not particularly because of the immediate circumstances and individuals concerned, but *because of what lay behind*—because of the great underlying tragedy that was involved. Our minds go back to the beginning. To the glorious blazing mountain, enveloped in cloud and smoke, and rocked with thunder—to Moses, the man of God—to the commandments and the Covenant. Then to Solomon at the dedication of the Temple. Wonderful beginnings, full of possibility and promise! But now this is the end. *The temple plundered . . . the city burned . . . the leaders slain . . . the people scattered.*

Why? Because the pull and example of the world had overcome the influence of God's law and institutions. They never thoroughly grasped the superiority of God's way, or the necessity for their own wellbeing of following it. To them it was always a burden—a meaningless restriction upon their natural desires. They never perceived its spirit and purpose, so the day of judgment came upon them unawares.

The clouds of judgment were gathering for a long period, but they were unheeded. The great fallacy that prevented them from discerning the ominous trend of events was their dependence upon Egypt as the basic stability of the times.

Stretching far back in the dim past, Egypt had always seemed vast, solid and unmovable. The world revolved around Egypt, and Egypt was their friend. These upstarts from the East, Assyria and Babylon, would soon pass away. Egypt would arouse, gather her strength, and crush them.

But history had reached a turning point. *Something deeper than dependence upon Egypt was going to be necessary to carry them through this time.* Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, all the prophets repeatedly urge the children of Israel to lay a deeper foundation than upon the fleshly arm of Egypt. But allegiance to Egypt appealed to them more than allegiance to God because their ways were more in keeping with the ways of Egypt.

Egypt offered them insurance, and God offered them insurance, but Egypt's requirements were less exacting and more pleasing to the flesh and more assuring to the natural eye.

The economic system that God had set up under the Law of Moses was entirely different from the selfish way that natural man carries on his business. If they were to depend on God, they would have to do what God wanted, and live the way He commanded. *They would have to give up a lot of things that were very desirable to the natural man.*

The Law of Moses prevented the accumulation of great wealth and the development of a class of exploited workers. It was aimed at general national wellbeing and equality, rather than personal ambition and advancement.

They had long since forsaken all these principles. They had built up a system of caste and oppression. They had patterned themselves in all things according to the heathen who surrounded them. The rich oppressed the poor, and the Lord's inheritance, which was given impartially to all, was seized by the stronger who trod down the weak.

Born with superior ability or favored by superior opportunity, by some perverse twist of logic they came to feel that they were entitled also to superior prosperity, and that the less fortunate were fair game provided they kept an appearance of legality.

This is how the heathen have always done. It is the way of the world. God gave them a law designed to develop unselfishness, generosity, consideration for others and disregard of personal advancement. They were not to glean their fields or orchards, they were to be openhanded, they were to lend freely without interest. *They were taught that all was from God and intended for the general good and not personal aggrandisement.*

They were above all not to make profit out of the position of others less fortunately placed. Such were the self-destructive abominations of the heathen. He had showed them a better way—burdens mutually borne and joys mutually enjoyed.

The natural way has the great advantage of being the natural way. It takes no effort, no patient investigation, no tiresome self-analysis and burdensome self-discipline, no stepping out of line and opposing the majority. Relax the efforts and it immediately asserts itself. And it is always so reasonable—to *the natural mind.*

God's purpose was that the Jews should be a witness to the world of a community operating according to the divine way, to demonstrate that way's superiority to those who had eyes to see.

But the great lament throughout all their history was that they had no mind or attention for the way of God. They would not rise above the natural level of vicious selfishness and greed. Again and again they were forcibly raised above that level—the way of God was forcibly thrust upon their consciousness, but they fought it bitterly, and settled back as soon as the pressure was released.

And so the judgment descended and the privileged classes were destroyed or removed to Babylon, and Palestine was given to the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen, and the Kingdom of the Lord came to an end. And yet, even those that were left in the land still clung to the empty shell of Egypt—and went down to ruin with her soon after.

* * *

The reading from Ezekiel (chap. 9) is from the same time in Israel's history. Ezekiel was one of the great historic figures who stood out during this period pointing out the way of wisdom and life. Like all the rest, his words received little attention. Not that he was ignored. He was politely listened to, and looked upon as a great prophet from God—but, as God said to him:

"Thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, BUT THEY DO THEM NOT" (Eze. 33:32).

They listened to him, *and agreed with him*, and remarked how sad it was that things had come to such a pass; but they completely missed the personal application, being blinded by their own covetousness.

Today's reading is a bitter denunciation of the prophets who said "Peace" when there was no peace. Those who soothed the people, instead of stirring them up to the ever-present dangers of complacency. Smooth, flattering words that all is well always grate upon the ears of wisdom, for *there is never justification for relaxed vigilance or self-satisfaction.*

"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" . . .

"When you have done all things commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants" . . . "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Such is always the trend of scriptural admonition. The reward is within everyone's reach. *There is no excuse for defeatism.* With God all things are possible, and He delights in strengthening the weak—but still God is not mocked and He can see what time and effort we can give other things if we want them badly enough.

In sacrifice, God demanded the *best that a man had.* A man might be poor, and his best might be but a handful of meal, but it must be his best. And a man seeking' to draw near to God in sincerity and love would be content with doing no less. *Anything less than our utmost cheapens the whole transaction* and robs it of much of its unique satisfaction and pleasure. Man is only truly happy when he is using his best efforts in the best available direction.

But it must be free from pride. That is where wisdom comes in to direct. *Pride is the delusion of limited minds that do not realize how poor their best really is.* We cannot overcome pride by just concealing it. If we do, it will break out in the repulsive form of false humility. Pride is an inseparable companion of ignorance and limited vision, and it is only cured by enlightenment and a divinely-adjusted perspective—

"What is man that Thou art mindful of him?"

One Hundred Years Ago

By bro. Thomas, from "Herald of the Kingdom," April, 1854

To believe on Jesus is to believe what he preached—not simply that there was, and is, such a person. He that has no more faith in Jesus than that he exists, or died and rose again, **does not believe on Jesus.** He may believe the same thing of Lazarus, but he does not therefore "believe on Lazarus."

To believe on a man, in the scriptural sense, you must **believe what that man presents to you for faith.** This is the great thing, for if you receive the man's doctrine, you receive him; if you reject that, you reject him also. Jesus said:

"He rejecting me, and NOT RECEIVING MY WORDS—the word which I have spoken—the same shall condemn him in the last day" (John 12:48).

This is conclusive. Now, who of the Spirit-Rappists receive the words of Jesus—the word that he has spoken? In other words, who among them believe the Gospel of the Kingdom which he preached? (Matt. 4:23). Now, mark this—Jesus, nor any other Scripture authority, ever promised the Holy Spirit, or its powers, to any persons who did not believe on him in believing the Gospel of the Kingdom that he preached.

Hence, whatever "spirit" it may be that spiritists rejoice in, it is **not** the Holy Spirit of God. He gives not His Holy Spirit to the unholy, faithless, and disobedient, to play tricks with in moving tables, etc. I have no controversy with Spiritists about their "**facts**"; what I reject completely is their **explanation** of them.

I have done several wonderful things myself, and seen more remarkable ones performed by others. As far as my experiments have gone, the phenomena have all resulted from the energy of my own will operating on the brains and nervous systems acted upon. Without speaking or looking at the man, I have compelled actions that he could not successfully resist; and which appeared wonderful to all who saw them.

Now, had I been a religious knave, I might have played off Simon Magus before the company. Had I concealed from the subject my operations on his system, and had he been fanatically inclined, he might have attributed the influence he felt to the Spirit of God dealing with his soul, **especially if I had willed religious impressions upon his sensorium.**

This explains, to my mind, the origin of "religious experiences;" such—all such, I mean—as do not result from **searching the Scriptures for the truth.** People in families and societies mesmerize one another unconsciously. Their brains and nervous systems are acted upon by the ideas willed, evolving and expressed, among them.

The preaching, praying, talking, and silent wishing of some concerning others, create a halo of influences which invests the community in its family and associational relations, like a fog. If the preachings, etc., be the vain imaginations of brain-sinful, the spiritual atmosphere is infectious, and generative of fanatical experiences, wildfire excitements, awakenings, "miraculous dealings of God with souls," witchcraft, ecstasies, dreams, prophesying, visions, "spirits," and a 1000 other things detailed in the annals of fanatical religionism.

And it may be noted, that **where the Scriptures are least accurately understood, these nervous-system manifestations most prevail.** No man who is not enlightened in the Gospel of the Kingdom is safe from the influence of this sectarian mesmerism.

Ecclesial News

BIRMINGHAM, England—174 Edmund Street—Memorial 11 a.m.; Lecture 6:30 p.m.; Bible Class Thursday 7:30 p.m.; Sunday School 11 a.m.

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BOSTON, Mass.—581 Boylston St.—Bible Study 10:30 a.m.; Memorial 11:45 a.m.

On March 21 bro. Stanhope of Worcester gave an excellent lecture on the "Glorious Future for the World." There were six strangers present.

Our Wednesday night classes are very well attended.

We were pleased to welcome bro. & sis. Lumley, of Miami, around the table of the Lord.

—bro. Edgar A. Sargent

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BUFFALO, N. Y.—O. F. Temple, Kenmore & Myron Aves.—Memorial 10:15 a.m., Sun. Sch. 11:45; Bible Class Wed. 8 p.m.; Public Lecture 3rd Sunday of month 11:45 a.m., Oct. thru May.

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

DENVER, Colo.—432 South Emerson St.—Memorial 11 a.m.; Sun. Sch. 10 a.m.

DETROIT, Mich.—15586 Normandy—Memorial 10 a.m.; Sunday School 11:30.

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GLENDALE, Pennsylvania.

After receiving proof that several reported things concerning the Central group (matters of belief and worldly practice which we had questioned) were correct, we have decided to return to the Berean fellowship.

We had a meeting of the ecclesia at which we explained that we had decided that the move to Central was wrong, and that we now felt duty bound to return to Berean fellowship.

It was a very serious step. We felt it was necessary, but the task of breaking away was somewhat of an emotional strain. I am sure that there are many good brethren and sisters who will eventually stand with us from the group who left the Berean position to join Central.

With much love to those of like Faith, your brother in the great Hope. —David Sommerville.
(We "thank God, and take courage" at the above news—Editor)
* * *

GRANTS PASS, Oregon, Route 2, Box 471.

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HAMILTON, Ont., Canada—YMCA Building, 79 James Street South, Hamilton.

We have been encouraged by visits from several brethren and sisters: bro. & sis. Daniel Gwalchmai, bro. Robson, sis. Bere (London); bro. & sis. Gilbert (Buffalo).

Bre. Gwalchmai and Gilbert gave us the word of exhortation. We greatly appreciate their help.

We are now five in number, sis. Mary Martin having joined us (she has always remained in the Berean fellowship). With us she now waits for the Master. With love to all the brethren.
—bro. J. Fotheringham.

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HAWLEY, Pennsylvania.

HOUSTON, Texas—8008 Junius St.—Sunday School 10 a.m.; Breaking of Bread 11; Public Lecture every first Sun. 7:30 p.m.; Wed. Eureka Class 8 p.m.

KIDDERMINSTER, England.

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LAMPASAS, Tex.—Christadelphian Hall, Avenue I East—Bible Study 10 a.m.; Memorial 11 a.m.

We of Lampasas were blessed by a visit from our beloved sis. Caldwell and her daughter, sis. Glenda Caldwell, of the Houston ecclesia. We regard them as a shining light in the Truth—they drove 225 miles to be with us on Sunday. Oh, that all the brethren and sisters were headed for the Kingdom with all their soul, mind, strength, and heart!

How few realize the importance of Christ being formed in us! I suppose it is usual in writing the news to just state local happenings, but to me the important thing is—HOW MUCH DO WE LOVE THE TRUTH? As John says, we have no greater joy than to hear that our brethren are walking in the Truth.

We are happy that bro. & sis. Ross Wolfe moved back to Lampasas to be with us in our ecclesial work. Sis. Hatcher (of our ecclesia) is visiting in California. Bro. & sis. Beauchamp (of Pomona) plan to be in Lampasas Mar. 14.

Don't forget our annual Fraternal Gathering at Hye, July 27 to Aug. 1. Everyone is cordially invited. Your brother in Christ.

—S. S. Wolfe.

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LETHBRIDGE, Alta., Can.—635 7th St.—Memorial 11 a.m.; Sunday School 12:30 p.m.; Lecture 7:30 p.m.; Bible Class Wednesday 8 p.m.

LONDON, Ont.—Orange Hall, 388 Clarence St.—Sun. Sch. 10:15 a.m.; Memorial 11:30; Lecture 7 p.m.; Bible Class Wed. 8 p.m. at WCTU Hall on Clarence St., ½-block north of Dundas St.

MASON, Texas.

MELBOURNE, Australia.

MIAMI, Florida—3428 S. W. 65th Ave.—Sunday School 10 a.m.; Memorial 10:30.

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

NEWPORT, Eng.—Clarence Hall, Rodney Rd. (opp. Tech. Col.)—Memorial 11 a.m.; Lecture 6:30 p.m.; Suppl. Breaking Bread 3rd Sun. of month after lect.

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

PAPAKURA, New Zealand.

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

During the months of February and March we were strengthened and encouraged by the following visitors:—sis. Louise Martin (London); bro. G. V. Growcott, sis. Anne Growcott and sis. Fred Higham (Detroit). Bro. Growcott's words of exhortation refreshed and cheered us in the sublime matters that engage our attention in these troublous times. Our thoughts turned to Jesus, when he said, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while." It is refreshingly invigorating to be in the company of those who are making strenuous efforts to maintain scriptural standards of doctrine, practice and fellowship. —bro. G. A. Gibson.

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WHANGAREI, New Zealand.

WORCESTER, Mass.—Grandview Hall, 21 Grandview—S. S. 10 a.m.; Mem. 11.

A Letter to Our Children

Hello, dear children! Once again we gather together to take our trip to distant lands. Our trip this month is to England, and we are going to take a boat across the water from Holland where we visited last month.

Our first building in our travel around England will be the Houses of Parliament, in London. These buildings are very important in the history of England. From these buildings laws and commands are issued by man. These men make the laws at present, and God may not agree with them, but He will change them when He wishes to.

The British Commonwealth obeys these laws and commands and follows them until the Queen or other officials change them. What a difference from the way things will be done in the future, when Christ comes in HIS Kingdom! Then God and Christ will make the laws and we (if found worthy) will willingly obey them.

The laws of the future will not go forth from the Houses of Parliament in London which we are visiting today, but will go forth from that wonderful city that was established many centuries before London—the city of Jerusalem (Look up what is prophesied in Isaiah 2 about the Law going forth to all the world from Jerusalem.)

One of the most impressive sights we see in walking through this huge building is one of the halls called Westminster Hall. The roof of this hall is very wide and the guide that is taking us through tells us that it is one of the largest spans in the world without supports in the middle. In this hall gladness and sorrow walk hand in hand with the British people. In 1951 King George VI opened the new chamber of the House of Commons and it was a great day for him, but just one year later he was lying in the same hall, with many of his subjects passing on each side of him. Such are mortal rulers, but the King who will reign from Zion will never experience death or weakness, but shall reign forever!

Next in our quick visit to the buildings we see the tremendous tower called the Clock Tower. At the top of this tower is a clock with an hour hand of nine feet and its minute hand is fourteen feet. There is a bell inside this tower which is called "Big Ben"— it weighs 13½ tons. We read that the clock was first placed near Westminster Hall by royal decree so that its continual striking would remind the judges in the Hall to administer true justice. But true justice will only come when man's rule is done and Christ begins to reign.

The continual solemn striking of this clock teaches us that time is swiftly passing—our present time of opportunity to prepare ourselves to meet our Master when he returns. So while we leave the buildings we hear the bells ringing and we join altogether saying—

"All through this hour, Lord, be my Guide.
And by Thy power my foot shall not slide."

—Uncle Joe

(Write to: Joseph Jackson, 77 Glenwood Crescent, Toronto 13, Canada).

1954 ANNUAL TEXAS FRATERNAL GATHERING
(If the Lord will)

At Hye, Texas, beginning at 11 a.m., Tues., July 27 and ending after the Sun morning meeting, Aug. 1. For full information write: Bro. E. W. Banta, 7012 Sherman St., Houston 11, Texas.

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