

# 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*

Please send all communications and manuscripts to the Editor—

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

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## EDITORIAL

### Walking in the Truth

The small word "*walk*" has many shades of meaning, both in our common vernacular and in the Scriptures of Truth. Its fundamental meaning is, of course, to go or travel on foot, or to proceed by steps. That, however, is not the import of the word to attract our attention at this time. What we are thinking about is how to conduct oneself in a particular manner, or to pursue a particular course of life.

In the Bible sense, there are two ways in which we can walk—after the *flesh*, and after the *Spirit*. To "walk after the flesh" is to walk in the way of the world. This requires very little effort; everything we do is done to please ourselves. When writing to the believers in Ephesus on this subject, Paul said (2:2-3)—

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature children of wrath, even as others."

The entrance of the knowledge of the Gospel into our minds alters our course. Believing it and obeying it by baptism into Christ, we rise to walk in newness of life. That is done by putting away our former way of living, and coming *out* of the world, and being *separate* from its pleasures and all that it loves. This is the class of people to whom Paul wrote many interesting and instructive messages. In one of these, to Thessalonian brethren, he said:

"Ye know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory"—1 Thes. 2:11-12.

As one reads his letters, he soon realizes that, with Paul, *the Truth was a very serious business*. He exhorted; he comforted, and he charged the believers that they should walk worthy of God. This was his course throughout his entire ministry, and it would be the same if he were here

today. Our way of living passes through many changes, and business methods are altered from day to day; but *the Truth does not change*, and our relation to it must remain the same if we are to live in the age to come. Our newness of life must not be corrupted by the way of the old.

Therefore, there are certain phases of our newness of life that we have to affirm over and over again. This does not apply to the first principles of the Truth, for they are the foundations upon which we are expected to build. However, if the first principles of our faith are assailed by those who do not accept them, then it is not only necessary, but essential that we stand on guard and protect them. The things that must be constantly brought to our attention are those that constitute our worthy walk, and are designed to keep us on a firm foundation. Paul was very outspoken,

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who **mind earthly things**"—Phil. 3:17-19.

This statement of Paul's would indicate that it is our moral relation to the world of wickedness in which we live that has to be brought to our attention without interruption. This is where the great value of daily reading God's Word is realized, for—

"The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"—Jer. 10:23.

Therefore, it is not for us to trust ourselves to determine the nature of a walk that is worthy of God. We must depend upon, and rely with a full assurance of faith upon what is revealed in the Scriptures, as we look to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. We see this idea expressed by Paul as he writes to the brethren at Colosse—

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, **so walk ye in him**: rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving"—Col. 2:6-7.

John said, "*We ought to walk even as he walked.*" When we examine the records concerning Jesus, we find that his walk was vastly different to that of other men. To walk as he walked, we must go in the opposite direction from those who walk in the way of the world. If we progress, it will be the result of the *effort* that we put into the work of the Truth. At first, it may be hard to walk in newness of life, but if we are persistent, we will soon be rewarded by increased strength and courage. As our strength increases, we will discover that less effort is required. *Some mistake this for a time to rest.* Let us not be deceived; the time to rest is still in the future. Today is a time for action.

In addition to Jesus, there are three others of whose walk we speak briefly. Of Enoch, it is said, "*He walked with God,*" and Paul says, "Before he was taken, he had this testimony, that he pleased God." Of the second, it is written, "Noah was a just man and perfect (or upright) in his generations, and Noah *walked with God.*" Paul says, because of his walk, "He condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Our third is Abraham, the father of the faithful, styled in the Scriptures, "the friend of God"—

"When he was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared unto him and said, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect (or upright)."

Paul says we should "walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham." It is of interest to note that in each case the word "walk" signifies "to go on habitually."

It is therefore evident that our standing before God will be determined by the nature of our walk. It is also evident that *we cannot walk in opposite directions at the same time*. We must make a definite choice. Again we hear Paul pleading—

"We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and please God, so ye would abound more and more"—1 Thes. 4:1.

Walking, so as to please God, was the keynote of Paul's life and work. He warned the brethren *night and day with tears*. If companions of Paul required such warning, how much more do we need to be warned and exhorted? As in many other questions, Paul supplies the answer "so much *more* as the day approaches."

If, then, we would please God by our walk, we must, in the first place, be clothed with humility. This was one of the great features in the life of Jesus. In the prophetic writings, it is beautifully expressed in these words:

"What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God"—Micah 6:8.

The life of the believer must also be characterized by integrity, straightforwardness, and freedom from deceit. Here are the divine requirements—

"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds"—Col. 3:9.  
"Walk honestly toward them that are without" (1 Thes. 4:12).

Another feature of our conduct that requires careful attention is our moral relation to the world of wickedness by which we are surrounded. It is stated by Paul in these words—

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without"—Col. 4:5.

And by Peter, when he said—

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation"—1 Pet. 2:11-12.

Isaiah, throughout his prophecy, has painted some beautiful word pictures, but none more exquisite than that found in chapter 35. When the glory of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters now cover the sea, Isaiah says:

"The redeemed shall walk there,"

And when the law goes forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem:

"The people will be taught of God, and will walk in His paths."

If we would be among those who will walk with Jesus in the age to come, we must be mindful of the fact that walking in the way of the world is easy, but it will lead us unto death. Walking in the way of Truth requires effort, but it will lead us unto life. So let us "*walk in the Truth,*" for if we do we can say with David:

"The Lord is my light, and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" —Ps. 27:1. —Editor.

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# The Mystery of Godliness

By brother John Thomas

## PART SIX

### DEITY MANIFESTED IN SPIRIT

However perfect and complete the *moral* manifestation of the Deity was in Jesus of Nazareth, the divine manifestation was nevertheless imperfect as concerning the substance, or body, of Jesus. This was what we are familiar with as the flesh. It was not angel-flesh, or nature; but that common to the seed of Abraham, styled by Paul, *sarx hamartias—flesh of sin*; "in which," he says, "dwells no good thing" (Rom. 7:18; 8:3).

The anointing spirit-dove (which, as the Divine Form, descended from heaven upon Jesus at his sealing) was holy and complete in all things. The *character* of Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, without spot, or blemish, or any such thing; but his *flesh* was like our flesh, in all its points—weak, emotional, and unclean.

Had his flesh been like that of Angel-Elohim, which is consubstantial with the Eternal Spirit, it would have been unfit for the purpose of the Deity in His manifestation. Sin, whose wages is death, had to be condemned in the nature that had transgressed; a necessity that could only be accomplished by the Word becoming Adamic-Flesh, and not Elohistic. For this cause (Heb. 2:9)—

"Jesus . . . was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death . . . that he, by the grace of the Deity, might taste death for every man."

For this cause, and forasmuch also—

". . . as the children (of the Deity) are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy that having the power of death, that is, the **diabolos**" (Heb. 2:14).

—or **elements of corruption** in our nature, inciting it to transgression, and therefore called "Sin working death in us" (Rom. 7:13; Heb. 2:9, 14). Another reason why the Word assumed a lower nature than the Elohistic was, *that a basis of future perfection might be laid in obedience under trial*. Jesus has been appointed Captain of Salvation in bringing of many sons to glory (Heb. 2:10). Now these sons in the accident of birth are all "subject to vanity," with inveterate propensities and relative enticements, inciting and tempting them to sin.

A captain, therefore, whose nature was primarily consubstantial with the Deity, could not be "touched with the feeling of their infirmities." He would be essentially holy and impeccable, and of *necessity* good. But a *necessitated* holiness and perfection are not the basis of exaltation to the glories of the Apocalypse. These are to be attained only by conquest of self under trial from without, by which—

"They come out of great tribulation" (Rev. 7:14).

Its promises are *to those who overcome*, as their captain has overcome, when it can be said his victory is apocalyptically complete (Rev. 3:21; 11:15). Hence, then—

"It became the Deity to make the Captain of the salvation of His many sons perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10).

And to effect this, he must be of their primary nature, that when the Great Captain and his associates shall rejoice together in the consubstantiality of the Deity, they may *all* have attained to it upon the principle of *voluntary obedience, motivated by faith*, and maintained in opposition to incitements within, and enticements and pressure from without.

The flesh is, therefore, a necessary basis for this; and making it possible for him to be tempted in all points according to the flesh-likeness, without sin. Hence, though the Son of the Deity, and Heir of all things, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and being MADE PERFECT, he became the author of *aion*-salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 4:15; 5:8).

Perfection of character and substance, then, is the consummation predetermined by the Deity in His manifestation by spirit in Jesus and his brethren. In His wisdom, which is "first pure," He requires perfection of character *first*: as a recompense for this, He confers perfection of substance, or consubstantiality with Himself.

This was the order of the Divine Manifestation in the son of David's daughter, who is the great model after which *the One Yahweh-Elohistic development* is to be apocalypted. Perfection of character was first manifested in Jesus, who was faultless before the Deity—a mirror in which was reflected the moral attributes peculiar to him, the Word, before manifestation in flesh. Nevertheless, though Jesus could truly say—

"I always do those things which please the Father;"

—yet he said, "There is none good but the Deity," *nor am I yet perfect*. He testified his own imperfection in declaring that he could of his own self do nothing (John 5:30); that he must die and that he would be perfected in the third day of his mission. Said he:

"Behold, I cast out demons, and I do cures to-day, and tomorrow, and **the third I shall be perfected**" (Luke 13:22).

In this third, "he was made perfect" *ex anastaseos*—"from, or out of, resurrection," when he "ascended to the Father;" and being thus exalted to consubstantiality with Him, Paul speaks of him as "Having been perfected for the Aion"—*eis aiona teteleiomenenon* (Heb. 7:28) or apocalyptically (Rev. 1:18)—

"I was dead, and behold I am living for the Aions of the Aions."

Jesus, then, like all his brethren, is to be considered in two states, each state having a nature peculiar to it. In the former state—

"He was crucified through weakness:"

—but in the after state wherein he now is—

"He liveth by the power of the Deity" (2 Cor. 13:4).

In the former state, the flesh was "*the filthy garments*" with which the SPIRIT-WORD was clothed (Zech. 3:3); "*the iniquity of us all*" that was laid upon him; "the soul made an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:6, 10). But, as He *now* is, the filthy garments have been taken away; "his iniquity has passed from him," and he is clothed with "change of raiment."

His flesh thus designated has been subjected to the transforming energy of the radiant power of the Eternal Spirit. By this energy his flesh has been transformed into spirit, styled by Paul, *pneuma hagiosynes*—"spirit of holiness." That is, a nature in which there is no filthiness of flesh or spirit. It is therefore HOLY SPIRIT NATURE: a nature generated out of the free spirit radiant from the Eternal

Substance. It is therefore like that substance, and hence consubstantial with it. Begotten of spirit, it *is spirit*; as that which is begotten of flesh is flesh (John 3:6). Therefore, Paul speaks of the exalted Jesus, saying, "He was made into a life-imparting spirit;" and elsewhere he styles him "the Lord the Spirit"—*Kyrios pneuma*.

Now Jesus as "the Lord the Spirit" is the manifestation represented in the Apocalypse by the title of "*the Who is, and who was, and Who is to come; and the Seven Spirits which is before the throne*" (Rev. 1:4). In relation to Jesus Anointed as he is now, these Seven Spirits are his Seven Eyes. This appears from Rev. 5:6,

"I beheld a Lamb as it had been slain, having Seven Horns and Seven Eyes, which are the Seven Spirits of the Deity sent forth into all the earth."

Seven is the number of perfection and completeness. The seven *spirits* are symbolical of the "One Spirit" in perfect manifestation; the seven *eyes*, of omniscience and perfection of vision; and the seven *horns*, of omnipotence and perfection of power. Hence, he who was slain is now a perfect manifestation of Deity, omniscient, all-seeing, and all-powerful—

"Jesus Anointed, the faithful witness, the Chief Born from among dead ones, and the Prince of the kings of the earth."

—from among those dead, who are to awake from their sleep in the dust of the earth; and Prince in their midst, when they shall reign with him for a thousand years (Rev. 1:5; 20:6).

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

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## UNSANCTIFIED DEALERS IN DOCTRINES

To see Christ unbosom his grief to his disciples, and soothe the sorrow caused by his words, is to learn that if we belong to the Christ-community, we are not callous theorists or unsanctified dealers in "doctrines" that touch not our feelings and move not our sentiments; but on the contrary, "the love of Christ constraineth us," because—

"We thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead, that they that live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:15).

This love is one of the fruits of the Spirit, which will only grow in well-tended soil. The "good and honest heart" is the good ground that will yield a harvest to this culture; but without the culture, the harvest will not come.

Natural goodness and honesty of heart will not of themselves bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, any more than rich garden ground will grow roses without planting. Good ground will grow nettles as easily as bad ground, and a little more luxuriantly if turned to that use.—Bro. Roberts.

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## "Be Kind to the Unthankful"

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

### THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

These letters of Paul are excellent models. We can never do better writing or speaking than to be *practically* followers of Paul as he was a follower of Christ. How excellent a beginning he makes of this second letter to the Corinthians! After stating whom the letter is from and to whom it is addressed, he salutes them thus:

"Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

There is great sweetness about that salutation. It is not an empty form of words; it is a *genuine wish on the part of Paul* that grace or favor might rest on those to whom he was writing, and that peace might remain with them; peace from two sources which are yet one: God the Father, the Creator, the Supreme Head of the universe, and the Lord Jesus, who is the appointed channel of His dealings with our fallen race; peace outflowing from them in the tranquilizing influence of Divine favor; a real peace which none can invade, as saith the Scripture,

"When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble; and when He hideth His face, who shall behold Him, whether it be done against a nation or against a man only?" (Job 34:29)

There was, of course, another element in Paul's good wishes; an unexpressed principle underlying his benediction, which we do well to recognize, expressed in the saying of James,

"FIRST PURE, then peaceable."

His wishes for their peace were based on the fact that they were a community of men and women, walking in obedience to the apostolic commandments—built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets—*men and women of pure hearts and pure lives*—purity of thought, purity of aspiration; a prevailing purity engendered by the knowledge of God, and faith in His glorious promises and love of the Lord Jesus as the center of those promises.

Now as believers of the Gospel we occupy a similar position to the Corinthians, and we may venture this morning, as on all mornings on which we assemble round the table, to take to ourselves the peace which Paul desired to rest upon them; and which he would no doubt desire us to have, if he were writing to us. But whilst looking at the sweetness, *let us also look at the purity*.

"Ye are clean (saith Jesus) through the words spoken to you."

But we may know the words and not be clean by them. *If those words fail to produce purity, they fail in their effect*, and that is what we have to consider on a Sunday morning. We come together on such an occasion as sons of God, and we have to be reminded of our position. We do not assemble in the same capacity as when we come together to present the Truth to the hearing of the public. We have no need of argument as to our position in nature, and God's purposed goodness, inasmuch as we all humbly recognize the standard to which we stand related. We believe in the Lord and have submitted to His yoke, and are here while looking at the favor of our position, to realize the duties it brings with it.

We are not called upon to afflict ourselves too much, though *there is less danger of our doing that than of our afflicting ourselves too little*. There is great danger that people may not afflict themselves enough; may not judge themselves sufficiently in the sight of God. Yet let us not run into the excess of depriving ourselves of the *true comfort of our position* as heirs of the grace of life. Some have been unduly weighed to the earth by a sense of their insufficiency, and have failed to be supported by those comforting thoughts that spring from faith in God. Peter says to such:

"Lift up the hands that hang down; strengthen the feeble knees; make straight paths for your feet."

Paul also says:

"Comfort the feeble minded; support the weak."

Let there be comfort where there is purity; repentance and supplication where there is failure. *If there is no purity—if there is disobedience, let there be no comfort*; let there be affliction, and mourning, and weeping, and refusal to lay hold of the joys of the truth until purity comes. As James says,

"Cleanse your hands ye sinners, purify your hearts ye double-minded. Be afflicted and mourn, and weep, and let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness."

But if we have the answer of a good conscience; if we know that we are walking in the way Christ has marked out for us, in the many commandments he has given, entering minutely into all the duties of life—then we may take to ourselves comfort.

There is one commandment I should like to mention—a commandment having relation to many others, and one which Christ repeats several times and in various ways.

"Be kind to the unthankful and the evil."

—and which he also puts into another form:

"Whosoever shall be great among you, let him be your minister even as I came not to be ministered to, but to minister."

And again,

"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted: but whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased."

In this he points to his own example, saying—

"If I, your **Lord**, take such an attitude, much more may ye."

That is a distinct and imperative commandment—*as much so as baptism*: and the reason why it is necessary to emphasize it is, that we are so liable to overlook and act in opposition to it—it goes so much against the grain of the natural man. The commandments not to steal, not to lie, not to commit fornication—are such as a man's own sense of honor would help him to abide by: but *to be kind to the unthankful and the evil is something opposed to all natural feeling*, and contrary to the world's moral philosophy.

There is nothing more usual than to hear persons justifying unkindness on the ground that the object of it is unworthy. Some one is in need: the need is not denied, but it is said that the man is undeserving, and this is accepted as a reason why assistance should be refused. Some one asks a favor who has proved ungracious in former transactions, and this is made the ground of refusal. Some one is ill, who in health was savorless, useless, and perhaps hurtful; and goodness is denied on this ground. A complaining widow is neglected because she refreshes not the soul.

*These things ought not so to be.* We are in such matters to act from allegiance to Christ, and not from our own tastes. We are to minister because he has commanded us so to do, and not because it is sweet to do it. It is our discipline, and though oftentimes bitter, sweetness will come even now from being kind to "the unthankful and the evil."

There are some people who do not go anywhere unless they can obtain enjoyment; they have always open mouths in a mental sense. They will go where they can drink. They will go where they can be entertained. They will visit people who are in health and prosperity. They will do kindness to the thankful and the good, invite friends able to invite them again.

There are not many who visit where they can get no gratification beyond that which comes from obeying the commandments of Christ, visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction. *There are not many who bestow their kindness upon the repulsive.* There not many who call to their feasts the poor, and the halt, and the maimed, and the blind, who can give no recompense; and yet *NONE OTHERS are Christ's true servants.* Jesus says—

"Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Let us remember this. It is not sufficient to hear the Truth and like it. There are many who sit and listen with pleasure to the beautiful sentiments of the Gospel, to whom Ezekiel's words apply:

"Lo, 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 and do them not."

You will not forget that Jesus likens this class ("who hear these sayings of mine and do them not") to men building their houses on the sand, which when the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow, fall with great ruin (Matt. 7:26). If, therefore, we are to be associated with Jesus, and the glorious band that constitute the Kingdom of God, we must distinguish ourselves by the present and actual performance of His commandments.

Some people are always more or less regretting the dearth of the time in which their lot is cast. They feel like David when he says,

"As the hart panteth for the water brooks, so my soul panteth for Thee. My flesh longs in a dry and thirsty land wherein there are no waters."

This is a natural and legitimate sentiment, but the situation is not purely a misfortune. There is another side to the question. These evil times bring with them our opportunity. If there were no unthankful people, if we were not placed in relation to evil people, and if all things around were spiritually prosperous and refreshing, what opportunity should we have of carrying out the commandments of Christ, which expressly pre-suppose the existence of surrounding evil conditions.

If all were sweet and plentiful, we should be bemoaning ourselves that we had no opportunity of being tried whether we should keep His commandments or not. I have seen this very sentiment in another form: I have heard brethren and sisters who had a strong wish to do something in the service of Christ. I have heard them speak as if at a loss what to do.

If such would just bethink themselves, they would find that this present evil gives the opportunity they profess to desire; and would be enabled to make a very good use of the situation. Out of every evil would come good. They would be very much enabled to endure; for it would fall to them to consider that *all the accepted of God have had to live alone*, as it were.

Take Lot in Sodom; Moses in the unbelieving congregation which fell in the wilderness; the Lord Jesus who, although surrounded by disciples, was, in one sense, called upon in solitude to endure the contradiction of sinners against himself; he was not appreciated even by his friends; they could not rise to his great height. They looked merely on the outward aspect of his mission. The crowds that rushed to see the wonderful works he performed, were attracted by the prospect of temporal benefit. So he poured cold water on their enthusiasm when he said:

"If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

*He had to go on his solitary way, for the joy set before, enduring the cross.* Take that view, and you will be greatly strengthened. Remember that all this submission to evil is but probationary. It is not in human nature to accept it as a finality. Without some assurance of the comfort of God, it

would be too much to bear. God does not wish us to bear otherwise than as Jesus bore it, who, for the joy set before him, despised the shame. Therefore we are warranted in looking at the beautiful idea contained in the words:

"Grace be unto you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ."

After which, come those equally beautiful words,

"Blessed be God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any trouble by the comfort where with we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."

Paul's sufferings were pre-eminently the sufferings of Christ, and the sufferings of the Corinthians were indirectly the sufferings of Christ. Just as Paul was poor and unpopular as the result of the course he pursued, so were they as the result of identifying themselves with him. Therefore they shared the sufferings of Christ, and we have to do likewise. We have to accept unpopularity and the imputation of madness, and many other disagreeables incident to such a position as ours, if we are faithful to the Truth.

But if the sufferings of Christ abounded in the Corinthians, so also did the consolation, What is the consolation of Christ? It is that referred to by Christ himself when he said,

"Blessed are ye that mourn; ye shall be comforted."

It is a future comfort as the subject of a present contemplation. Christ's joy, Christ's consolation is ours, *if Christ's sufferings are ours*; for when the time comes to develop the result of all the sufferings and the trials, he asks his servants to "enter into the joy of their Lord."

"He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied."

He shall see a glorious state of things established as the result of his travail, when there shall spring from the earth an immortal generation ascribing their victory over death to him. He will see a very different state of things from that in which he lived when he was the scorn of the Pharisees. All the joy and riches, the life and the honor of the earth will be his; and when that comes to pass the sufferings that God appointed for him will be looked back to as the means of bringing it all about.

And we shall have a share in the glory if we fellowship the sufferings of Christ now. The cross now; the crown then. We must make up our minds to the things that are required; we must make up our minds to the self-denial. *We must make up our minds to forego many things that are in themselves legitimate, but hindrances in the race.* We must lay aside EVERY weight; giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure.

Young women called to the race will refrain from ornamental trifling, and consecrate the hours thus wasted in the production of mere trinkets to "redeeming the time," knowing that the days are evil. They will rather turn Dorcases, spending their leisure time in making clothing for the poor, or some other work of goodness.

Men of high calling will leave the engrossments of merely literary or scientific or any other kind of life apart from the Gospel, which, though interesting in some respects, have a tendency to take up all the time and absorb all the mind, and which when life is gone, are *worth nothing at all*. There will be plenty of time for intellectual sweets, when we have attained to life eternal. To gain this, we have now to neglect many other things.

We have to choose the disagreeable. We are not fools in doing so. A man will always choose the disagreeable if he sees something good at the end; a man will go down into a mine and endure darkness, and fatigue, and danger, if he thinks it will enrich him for the rest of his life. And a person who sees in his mind's eye, *JESUS CHRIST, the Future Rider and Possessor of the World*, will be very glad to share in the sufferings of Christ in this present time; knowing that this is exacted as one of the conditions of participating in the glory to be revealed.

There are many ways of sharing in the sufferings of Christ. Let each one choose the way next to him; let it not be slothfully done, for Christ will approve no slothful servant. Let it not be our aim to make and keep ourselves comfortable; but to do his work and help his need. He can be assisted in an abundance of ways. The honor of his name, the interests of his Truth, the well-being of his people, present us many opportunities of writing an account that we shall not be ashamed to confront in the day of reckoning.

While, then, we comfort ourselves, let us be quite sure we are entitled to the comfort by obedience, first, by purity in all things, and second, by seeking out and performing the Master's will in all things, and occupying ourselves in the execution of it.

And let us make up our minds that this will not always be necessarily agreeable. Sometimes it will be exceedingly otherwise; occasionally there will be a little uprush of the true nectar of heaven from the bottom of the spring around which we are working, but at most times it will be hard, trying, and toilsome work.

Then we are not to lose confidence because we sometimes lack joy. The Truth is calculated to impart joy, but the absence of joy is no necessary indication of the absence of favor in His sight; for if we take David and Jesus, we find them both overborne with suffering. Take the Psalms of David; see how much they have to do with sleepless pillows, and Christ himself was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Therefore we must not conclude that, because we do not see the sun all the time, God is not smiling upon us. We may do well and suffer. The principle remains good:

"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?"

That was said to Cain, and is said to every servant of Christ.

"But if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."

Gladness in that case is of no use; the gladness of the transgressor will turn to weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth in the day of Christ's glory.

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### **"WALK WITH ME IN WHITE"**

They shall walk with him "in white robes." Those who walk with the Spirit must be "worthy." The "few" in Sardis are declared to be such: "They are worthy," saith the Spirit, Their robes must be of moral and material whiteness. Their CHARACTER being pure and unstained, their NATURE must be made to correspond.

In the present state, the saints are invested with holy garments, termed "their garments" (Rev. 3:4). Having "put on Christ" by faith in the Kingdom and Name, and by immersion, he is for them a robe of righteousness; and by walking in him according to the Truth received and obeyed, and so yielding the fruit of the Spirit, they "keep themselves unspotted from the world," which is as a garment of "fine linen, clean and white," which symbolizes the "righteous actions (dikaionata) of the saints"—Rev. 19:8. These premises constitute the basis of their exaltation to spirit nature.—Bro. Thomas.

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## **"I Must Die in This Land"**

Our readings today have brought us to the conclusion of the writings of Moses. Israel is standing at the borders of the Promised Land. The book of Deuteronomy is a record of the final admonition of Moses to Israel. At the outset of his remarks he advises Israel that he will not be allowed to enter the land, because they had caused him to transgress before God.

"The Lord was angry with me for your sakes, and swore that I should not go over Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance" (Deut. 4:21). "I must die in this land" (v. 22).

Moses was now 120 years old. His had been a service for his nation and the Creator. He had "chosen to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Moses' tenure of service was over. He was laying down the rod of authority. He was setting aside the pen of the scribe of God's Word. The mantle was passing to a younger man.

Through all the years his eyes had been set upon the promise made unto the fathers of his race. But there was a lesson to be learnt, a very important point to be impressed. Moses' desire was to enter the land in the normal course of his life. It was a personal desire which he possessed, and which we in similar circumstances would probably feel.

The contemplation of the purpose of God would convince Moses that the literal inheritance of the land of Canaan was not that unto which the promises referred in their proper sense. Had he not advised the children of Israel that immediately he was laid to rest they would turn from the ways of God? Certainly then, with such a prospect, Moses must have had a higher ideal of the Everlasting Covenant than a conditional inheritance.

Yet, through it all lay that strong desire to go into the land. Thus we read of Moses—

"I pray thee, O Lord God, let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain and Lebanon."

But the Lord replied,

"Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto Me of this matter."

There was a deeper thought entailed in Moses not going into the land at this time. He was the representative of the Law given at Mount Sinai. He, as Aaron, stood for those things which were to be done away in Christ.

Paul, referring to this, made note of Abraham's two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. He said that their relationship presented an allegory,

"These are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar . . . but Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

*For Moses to have entered the land would have laid the foundation for belief that the Law could provide title to salvation.*

Paul states that if there had been a law which could have given life, verily life should have been by the Law of Moses. It was holy, just and good. The weakness lay in human nature not being able to keep it. The Law was designed to impress this feature upon mankind; to bring man to a humble

recognition of his position before God as needing mercy and forgiveness and a savior of God's providing.

The very reason Moses was prevented from entry into Canaan was his failure in humility, the weakness of the flesh. Ironically, humility was the characteristic wherein Moses excelled all others:

"Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3).

This is instructive to us, for it shows that man at his very best will never attain unto worthiness through his own efforts. It teaches us never to be high-minded, regardless what we set our hands unto, nor whereunto we may attain in the eyes of other men. *We stand or fall by the Divine standard and just judgment.* In the finality it will be an extension of Divine mercy in every case for those who receive the prize.

"There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not" (Eccl. 7:20).

Again our minds are carried to another aspect of the Divine work. Though Moses had been typically baptized in the Red Sea and in the cloud at Mount Sinai, it was necessary for him to die before entering the land. He stood as a type of Christ, in his first advent, as the Lamb of God. The sacrificial phase of Divine deliverance was portrayed beforehand by this typical prophet, even as the conquering aspect of Christ's second coming was shown by the invasion under Joshua.

As the death of the Lamb was required in the Father's wisdom and plan of redemption, so the death of Moses was required before Israel's entry into the land could be effected. His very existence stood in the way of the realization of that which he had striven for all his days. Knowing this, he would be humbled and confess that it was God who was working out the purpose on a fuller and higher plane than man generally comprehends.

These things should not discourage us. Rather should they place us in the correct frame of mind to acceptably partake of the memorials of the Father's mercy, as emblemized on the table before us. Far from detracting from Moses' service, these things are designed to show us a way to life. The Divine commendation was stated through Paul—

"Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant."

It was in the same sense that David could be classed "as a man after God's own heart." It will be so in the revelation of the sons and daughters of God who shall shine as the stars for ever and ever in the age to come. And it will be a humble confession—

"Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood" (Rev. 5:9).

The emphasis of Moses' words to Israel as they stood prepared to enter the land of promise was on "separation." The urgency of this feature appears from chapter to chapter as we have progressed through this final address of the Lawgiver. It has its spiritual exhortation for us in the closing days of the wilderness journey.

The promised land is in sight. The journey has just about ended. *We stand, as it were, in the plains of Moab.* If it was necessary for the final instruction by Moses to the children of Israel, how important it is for us to study the same instructions on a higher plane, who have been called to be sons and daughters of God.

As Israel had drawn toward the end of all their weary wanderings, they let the principle of separation to God's service depart from their hearts, as they associated with the Moabites in idol-worship. It is not as an interesting novel nor merely as an historical record of their failure that God has

given us this account. It is to impress us with the weakness of the flesh and that we must place our trust, our reliance and our affections on Him alone. We cannot divide our affections. Either we love God or we do not. *There is no middle ground.* As we stand in the plains of Moab on the borders of the land of promise, let us heed Moses' words; they are the words of life.

The principle of giving heed unto them is a moment-to-moment occupation. We dare not let them depart from us for an instant—

"And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Dt. 11).

The thought of God's love should be on our minds the last thing at night, the first thing in the morning, and wherever we walk or whatever pursue. Moses tells us, and Paul reiterates the point, that God's word is very near unto us; it is available for each of us at any moment we desire to avail ourselves of it:

"The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (Deut. 30:14).

"See I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil . . . That thou mayest love the Lord thy God and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them" (Deut. 30: 15-20).

"*To give them.*" How would these words affect Moses? Certainly he would see in them the prospect for the future, that his labors in God's service were not in vain. If the promise was to be given to his fathers, surely there must be a reward in store for him.

Moses manifested his humility in accepting the sentence of God. There were 120 years of bitterness and tears, pleading with God for His erring children, witnessing the slow but unerring judgment and justice of the Divine hand—long years of hope mingled with despair as Divine anger flared time and time again to have destroyed Israel, only to reveal the unbounded love of this unselfish man as he placed Israel's welfare ahead of personal gain

"Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book" (Exod. 32:32-33).

*The Law, which was 430 years after the promise made to Abraham, could not disannul it or make it of none effect.* Thus we find Moses divinely moved to speak of the blessings of God's people, blessings which will have complete and fullest realization when—

"The God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help shall thrust out the enemy from before thee" (Deut. 33:26-27).

To those who wait in patience, faith and trust, God will be a Refuge and Strength to carry through the intervening years.

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (v. 27).

The immediate prospect for Moses was sad. He might naturally feel that his labors were useless and in vain. The very thing which he had striven for—*the development of a people for God*—had been unattained. They are however, not all Israel who are of Israel. The people who were "God's people" were hidden in the multitude of the congregation. In any age they will appear as an insignificant number. When they are revealed to the world they will be manifest as an innumerable host. In each generation the Creator has revealed evidence of His future kingdom; nor was the life of

Moses any exception to this rule. The purpose in the darkness of the immediate moment, is that each heart will see the passing vanity of earthly things and set faith on the eternal—those truths which endure to eternity.

Thus Moses was instructed to turn his back on the temporal and look beyond. His day was done—

"And the Lord spake unto Moses that selfsame day, saying, Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people" (Deut. 32:48-50).

The combination of names in this passage conveys the same thought of the vision of the future. *Abarim* means "those beyond," while *Nebo* means "called." The result is that Moses was called to see those things which were beyond the weary struggle which was now ending for him.

It would naturally be a sorrowful parting as he laid his hands upon Joshua and gave him the charge to be strong and of a good courage. It would be a great lesson for Joshua as he shouldered the mantle of the great prophet. Perhaps he too could see that, though the land was before them, it would be a conflict and heartache and in the end still a probationary age:

"For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (Heb. 4:8-9).

We have had to take on the responsibilities of many things at various times during our lives. They have not been sought after. Of ourselves we would shun them and feel our incapacity for them. We feel like Moses when he replied to God,

"Send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send."

The true approach is to realize that *God is the One Who is doing the work*. We are but the medium of the operation. It is God's glory, not our own. In both Moses' case and Joshua's, God sent His angel before them to lead their armies. Moses and Joshua were but the outward evidence of the inner workings of an all-wise Hand—

"Underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27).

So Moses took his leave of the people after the prophetic vision of chapter 33, a chapter which has its counterpart in the Revelation 10—the glorious Rainbowed Angel, going forth with the power and majesty of the Creator, to bring the world to God's glory. Up the mountain went Moses, as he was guided by the angels, perhaps with sorrow, yet with resignation, "*Thy will be done*." He would not however feel that his name had been blotted out of the Book of Life. The panoramic prospect from the top of Mt. Pisgah was a portend of the future for him, and not for him only, but for all those who trust in God.

Our minds are carried forward to a later incident of a similar nature. We look forward and see Moses, Elijah and Christ upon the mount of transfiguration, enwrapped in the glory of God. This was a representation of the glory and power which would envelope all those in the kingdom age who were drawn from the periods of time depicted by these three individuals. This was, as is recorded, some "not partaking of death until they saw the kingdom of God come with glory and power." Moses, Elijah and Christ portray the complete range of time from Adam to the kingdom. The glory was only to be revealed through the death of Christ. Both Moses and the prophets (depicted by Elijah) speak of Christ's decease and the glory which should follow. We also stand with Moses and view the kingdom afar off, through the eye of faith, the while partaking of the suffering of association with Jesus' Name.

"And Moses was 120 years old when he died" (Deut. 34:7).

One hundred and twenty is a multiplication of the period of probation three times. It speaks of a time of waiting and watching. There were 120 included in the number of brethren and sisters who were waiting for the Comforter when Peter addressed them first in Acts 1:15. This number is a factor of the 600,000 who entered the probationary wilderness journey. On a higher plane it is a component of 144,000, that symbolic number who are sealed in their foreheads through all the ages by the preaching of the word of God. We strive during our hours of daylight to attain unto the years of pilgrimage which will constitute us a part or factor of the 144,000, to be numbered among those who,

". . . have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:14).

As Moses reached the top of the mount, he would not be a tired old man, weary of the struggle and the climb:

"His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated" (Deut. 34:7).

How full of meaning are these words for those in every age who follow the same course as the great prophet, struggling from the depths below up to the clear vision and prospect of the kingdom age, to look out over the panorama of the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! How fitting that our application to the message of God will have been such that *our vision has not grown dim*, and that we have confidence and courage that those things which God has promised He will surely fulfil, when our probation is over! Our natural strength may diminish; our eyes may grow dim. Natural strength comes according to the purpose of God with each of His servants. He knows what is best. But our spiritual strength comes from our application to spiritual food found only in God's word, and the vision increases rather than dims with passing time, if we look into the perfect law of God.

Thus Moses looked out over the length and breadth of God's heritage. *He saw the holy hill of God and the congregation standing ready to march forward*. They still had to take the land. It had to be conquered. Darkly to Moses' left and at his feet appeared the valley of the Dead Sea. The prospect was not yet all clear as crystal. He was not in the land. Intervening was the valley of death—not the sleep of the righteous but that depicted by the Psalmist in those beautiful words—

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Psa. 23:4).

As Moses surveyed all the land before him, he would be impressed with the boundless wisdom and mercy of God. Down in the wilderness, it had been a day to day struggle with life, a seeming endless endeavor against the current of human nature. From the mountain he saw the whole picture. The combination of places he saw illustrates his striving toward the mark, also its Divine purpose. In this we see also the depth of meaning in the names which were given to Jacob's and Joseph's sons.

*Dan and Naphtali* spoke to Moses of a "wrestling" for the prize and prevailing and of the "judging" of his cause by God. *Ephraim and Manasseh* illustrated that though Moses had toiled many years through affliction and sorrow, his labors had been "fruitful." The fruit which this had borne was shown in his vision of the land of Judah. *Judah* means, "Praise of God." The added phrase, "unto the utmost sea" (Deut. 34:2), is a prospect of Christ's glorious reign:

"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Blessed be the Lord God; let the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen, and Amen."

This is when the prayers of Moses, David and all the faithful shall be ended or fulfilled.

It was only a vision of the future for Moses. A mark appeared on the picture. *A city with palm trees stood in the foreground*—Jericho, the city of an outward show of righteousness, was a

deception. Its appearance of righteousness was soon to be manifest for what it was. It was to be destroyed with the fire of God. The real palm trees were not visible except by the eye of faith. Their characteristic in the present dispensation is insignificance. Thus we find Moses' eyes travelled beyond Jericho to little Zoar. Said Lot, as he fled before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah,

"Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live" (Gen. 19:20).

*Our* souls shall live if we humble ourselves before God in all our ways. Then shall we constitute part of the throng with palms in their hands, described in Rev. 7:9, assembled around God's throne.

"He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-Peor" (Deut. 34:6).

*Beth-peor*—"the house of the gap" or "the way." Moses' writings had been as a schoolmaster pointing forward to "the way of life." They established God's righteousness and man's need of a way of life, through something greater than his own accomplishments. It was the prophet like unto Moses who declared,

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

Moses, having this vision, would see the wisdom of God, and understand the reason for his burial *outside the land*. The vision was yet for an appointed time, that, in the words of Paul—

"They without us should not be made perfect" (Heb. 11:40).

—E. F. H.

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### LOVE IN ITS PERFECT FORM

We never see a finer thing on earth than love. We do not see it often in its perfect form, because the conditions necessary for its full play are rarely met. There is plentiful and abundant scope for the love that takes the form of benevolence: kindness to the afflicted, attention to the humble and poorly-gifted, and almsgiving to the poor.

These are godly manifestations, and satisfying to the doer; but the glowing attachment that is gendered by the mutual exhibition of excellence—the luxury of requited noble love—is a flower of heaven that grows not by the wayside. It is to be met with in secret corners, now and then blooming like the violet unseen, and coming never to maturity then unless the good seed of the Kingdom is the germ of the flower.

In the Captain of our Salvation, the conditions of love exist in their fulness. Presented to us as the object of supreme attachment—attachment to whom is the indispensable condition of discipleship—we have in him, as Paul expresses it—

"All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3).

He is the wisdom of God manifested in an individual of our race. He is the "power of God" to whom is committed all power in heaven and in earth. He is the goodness of God—

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Cor. 5:19).

Wisdom, power, excellence, goodness, and authority combine to make him altogether lovely, and this loveliness is made to shine with greater power into our hearts by the fact that he died for us. We can love him without danger of recoil. No inferior manifestation on his part will ever cool our ardor or tire our preference. He is the focus of the covenanted goodness; the Head of the Body.

—Bro Roberts.

## Life and Death

How frequently, and even thoughtlessly, we hear people use the words "*life*" and "*death*," yet solemn thoughts are engendered in the minds of those enlightened in Christ's teachings, when life or death are mentioned.

The Greek words "*bios*," "*psuche*" and "*zoe*" are found to be the original from which many English translations of "life" come.

"*Bios*" (Luke 8:14, etc.) is the origin of our English word "*biography*"—a writing of a person's life; also of "*biology*"—the study of living things.

"*Psuche*" is translated "life" where mere animal life is meant, whereas "*zoe*" nearly always refers to the life which is obtained by faith and obedience.

As "*death*" is simply a word implying the cessation of life, we can not fail to realize its significance when we ponder the meaning of the word "life" and consider carefully that the origin of all life is obscured by "science falsely so called," which has adopted the conclusions of vain worldly philosophers and accepted as proven the theories which are being continually exploded by the spade of the archaeologist.

True science claims to deal only with "facts" whose origin has been discovered by others; hence those "scientists" who accept false theories can do incalculable harm by classing these theories as scientific facts.

As we look about in springtime when nature is putting forth verdure and mantling fields and forests with varying shades of green, the very air we breathe seems to be (and really is) pulsating with life and energy.

When in the morning we rise from refreshing rest and slumber, *why do we so seldom think of the significance of the Scripture references to "day" and "night," as typical of "life" and "death"?*

"For ye are all sons of light and sons of the day; we are not of the night or darkness" (1 Thess. 5:5 RSV).

Surely this teaches that night and darkness represent ignorance and death. Light—being the antithesis of darkness as day is of night—is fitly representative of enlightenment and life; so that we can comfort our hearts on arising if we realize God is picturing before our eyes, in symbol, the resurrection from death to renewed life, if we really trust His promise to those who love and obey Him.

The humanly-important matters concerning laboring to obtain sufficient food, raiment and housing under the most sanitary and comfortable conditions is paramount with most people, and is often spoken of as matters of "life and death."

The struggle for continued existence in this mortal body is considered imperative, and the reasoning of Jesus that "*The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment*" (Matt. 6:25) is considered impossible of practical application because the people of the world are not "seeking first" the things Jesus puts as first, but are strenuously seeking the bodily requirements until striking indications of the failure of the body to function does sometimes cause them to think of the future and realize enjoyment will cease if life is taken.

That God is Light and Life, as well as the Source of all life, was known by Patriarchs and Prophets even before Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." This is well attested by even the manner of oaths used by Kings and Prophets (oaths being then permitted). David says—

"In very deed, as the Lord God of Israel liveth" (1 Sam. 25:34).

Also Saul, in 1 Sam. 14:39—

"As the Lord liveth, which saveth Israel."

Elijah, in 1 Kings 18:15—

"As the Lord of Hosts liveth, before Whom I stand."

So, since God is the Fountain and Source of life, Jesus tells us—

"As the Father hath life (**Zoe**) in Himself, so He hath granted the Son also to have life (**Zoe**) in Himself."

Jesus can and will bestow life to those who seek for it in childlike humility and who trust in God and in him.

"My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life (**Zoe**), and they shall never perish, nor shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Here we note the Greek word from which "eternal" is translated is *aiionios*, which is "age-lasting," corresponding to the Hebrew word *olahm*, used in Isa. 60:15, where Jerusalem is to become an "eternal excellency."

Surely we are more concerned about "life eternal" than this dying nature which must be quickened and transformed in order to endure. Then we look unto Jesus, even as the serpent-bitten Israelites looked unto the brazen serpent "lifted up" for all to see and be healed of the sting of death, which is sin (1 Cor. 15:55-56).

Human life is defined as "the period between birth and death." This applies to animal existence, but not to spiritual; for—as Jesus has promised—those obtaining that world and the resurrection die no more (Luke 20:35-36). And again in Rev. 22:15—

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the Tree of LIFE (**Zoe**)."

As God gives life eternal to His adopted Sons who do His will, so Christ will make his faithful ones "Equal unto the angels" (Luke 20:36)—those immortal glorious beings who "*sang together and shouted for joy*" when God created the earth (Job 38:4-7).

The Greek word "*thanatos*" is familiar to Christadelphians and to many other students of Scripture. From this word almost invariably in the New Testament the word "*death*" has been translated. Paul, in Romans 5, has much to say of the introduction of death into the world. This logical analysis extends from Rom. 5:12, pointing how sin—and death *by sin*—entered the world by the transgression of one man, Adam, until the triumph over sin and death by one man, Christ. The consequent bestowal of eternal life on those in Christ is summed up in 6:23—

"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life (**Zoe**) through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The Apostle expounds at length in ch. 7 how this sin, after entering the world, *became a fixed principle in Adam's nature and from him was transmitted to all his posterity as an inveterate "law in the members"* (v. 23).

Each succeeding generation of mankind thus becomes sinful and dies, and the only deliverance is in the way he points out, after discussing the conflict between the righteously-inclined mind illuminated by Christ's teaching, and the sinful-flesh-nature controlled by its innate lustful law. This deliverance can be accomplished only by the mind becoming victorious over the flesh through Christ, as his conclusion shows (vs. 24-25).

The natural inquiry then should be "What is the first step to be taken in order to obtain this life for which I seek?" To those who have already taken this step the answer is simple and easy—Believe and obey the Word preached by Jesus and his Apostles, spoken of as the Gospel, or "Good News" concerning the Kingdom which Jesus is to establish over all the earth.

To proclaim this Gospel Jesus commissioned his Apostles just as he was about to depart to his Father (Mark 16:15-16). And this Gospel is said (Rom. 1:16) to be "*The power of God unto salvation.*" Hence it is folly to attempt to be saved without a knowledge of, and obedience to, it.

The long wilderness journey toward that promised inheritance causes many of Jesus' followers, like the Israelites who followed Moses, to be discouraged and to succumb to the temptations and allurements which are so enticing to the flesh.

God, the Fount and Source of life, declared through Moses—

"I, even I, am He . . . I kill, and I make alive (death and resurrection). I wound and I heal, neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand. For I lift up My hand to heaven and say, I live forever" (Deut. 32:39-40).

Jesus now says to us (John 6:48-57)—

"I am that Bread of Life . . . This is the Bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. . .

"He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, he shall live by me."

This positive language really teaches that those who are truly in Christ and living by the commands he has given will—just as surely as they continue to eat and drink the bread and wine symbolizing His body and blood—just so surely will they receive the life he has promised, *if they—*

". . . continue in the Faith, or Truth, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the Hope of the Gospel" (Col. 1:23).

This is the grounding spoken of in Eph. 3:17-19—

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend—with all saints—what is the breadth, length, depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be FILLED WITH ALL THE FULNESS OF GOD."

*What a marvellous conception!* Need it be emphasized—in the light of this exalted teaching—that those not deeply rooted and strongly grounded in not only the knowledge of the Truth, but also the LOVE thereof will not "Endure unto the end, that they may be saved."

Looking back upon Israel, to whom Moses gave the choice of blessing or curse (Deut. 11:26-28), can we not see how mercifully God has caused these things to be "written beforehand for our instruction"—and thus take the lesson of faith and obedience inculcated and given over and over again throughout the life, work and teachings of our Lord and Master, who has set before us a blessing and a curse—*LIFE and DEATH*.

We must distinguish, however, between the blessing of the Law of Moses, which related to temporal life, and the blessings which the keeping of Christ's law will confer, as evidenced by a comparison of Deut. 28 and Matt. 5:2-12. The Mosaic Law blessed:

". . . the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy ground, the fruit of thy cattle and the increase of thy kine and the flocks of thy sheep; blessed shall be thy basket and thy store" (Deut. 28:4-5).

Jesus says—

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven: blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

"Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3-10).

—to mention just a few of the *spiritual* blessings he promises.

Paul teaches that the Law of Moses was not instituted to give life, in Gal. 3:10-13, where the Law (elsewhere styled a "*ministration of condemnation*" and a "*ministration of death*") is exhibited as a means of condemning those who violated it—"that they might be justified by faith." How enlightening then the words of Jesus—

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the LIFE: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

James indicates the necessity of developing a *righteous character* before expecting Christ to bestow the reward of life eternal:

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of LIFE, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him" (James 1:12).

—which points to Jesus' own promise in Rev. 2:7—

"To him that **overcometh** will I give to eat of the tree of LIFE, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

In closing we turn our minds to the last words of the last message of warning and of comfort from our beloved Master.

"Blessed are they that **do His commandments**, that they may have right to the tree of LIFE.  
"And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of LIFE freely." —H.A.S.

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## "Almost Persuaded"

"For we are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end"—Hebrews 3:14.

When we come to the table of the Lord, do we thoroughly realize the great privilege that has been granted to us? When we examine ourselves, can we be always satisfied that we value the privilege of daily companionship with "*the Glorious Gospel of our blessed Lord*"? We should never forget it is by the goodness of our Father in heaven that we are enabled to assemble ourselves together once more, to remember Jesus our Redeemer, and to let our thoughts dwell on all that he has done for us.

What has persuaded us to come here this first day of the week? Was it the urgent desire to render unto our Father in heaven homage and worship that is due unto His Holy Name? By coming here each week *have we grown in grace*, and in godly virtues, in sincerity and sobriety, and in our walk and conversation? God is working out in each of us a testing process. From that process, do we feel cleansed and purified, do we truly feel that from week to week we can say with sincerity—"Master, it was good for us to be here"?

Or are we content to come week after week and be quite forgetful of the great task that lies before all of us—to "work out our own salvation"? And that word "work" means in itself *effort and labor*. Happy are we if we realize fully what it means.

When we give these things our serious consideration, what do we find the results to be? By taking the right attitude we will leave with a blessing; for we will be in that frame of mind that gives a new determination, we feel that our faith has grown, that our strength and courage has been fed and watered; and we can feel that we are ready to go out against the world with all its deceptions and temptations and snares. By "casting our bread upon the waters" it has returned to us many-fold. In John 6:51 are these words—

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever."

The disciples could not understand what he said unto them, and from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. (John 6:66). They had been "*Almost Persuaded*," but the Scriptures tell us:

"Let every man be FULLY PERSUADED in his own mind."

In Acts 26 there is recorded the incident of Paul before King Agrippa. Reading that chapter, no one who understands the Truth can fail to be stirred in their Faith!

Reading v. 1 we can picture in our minds Paul standing fearlessly before the assembled chief captains and principal men of the city. Then King Agrippa said unto Paul—

"Thou art permitted to speak for thyself."

Then Paul stretched forth his hand and answered for himself. (Acts 26:1). We are safe to assume that the writer of the Acts has given us but a very brief outline of all that Paul had said. Paul's defence may have been of considerable duration, for during his discourse he is interrupted by Festus, who said in a loud voice—

"Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad."

But Paul answered,

"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely; for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner . . .

"King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know thou believest."

Then Agrippa said unto Paul—

"ALMOST thou PERSUADEST me to be a Christian."

There is but very little known of Agrippa, but from Paul's testimony he was undoubtedly familiar with the writings of the prophets. Because of that knowledge, and also, because of Paul's sincere and powerful speech, Agrippa was "*Almost Persuaded*" to become a Christian. But like many others, that was as far as he got—"Almost Persuaded." Perhaps the thought of all he would have to give up overwhelmed him; many are like him.

Agrippa would have to give up his position, his wealth, his prestige and power, and become as a child in humility, to become a servant of Christ. So he chose to not serve Christ. He let the golden opportunity go by of changing his pitiful, perishing earthly crown as "King" Agrippa, for a real enduring crown of victory which could have been his. Both he and his crown are now in the dust—lost forever. Yet, he was "*Almost Persuaded*."

There are some things worthy of note in the prominent personages in that drama. We know that Agrippa was the son of Herod Agrippa, who 16 years before had murdered James the brother of John. He was the grandson of Herod Antipas who had killed John the Baptist, and great-grandson of Herod the Great who murdered the children in Bethlehem, after the birth of Christ. Bernice the queen was Herod's sister, acting as his wife.

Festus could see no difference between Paul and his accusers except that Paul believed Jesus had risen from the dead; while his accusers maintained that Jesus was dead.

It would seem that Festus had considerable respect for the dominating personality of Paul, for no ordinary prisoner could have called forth such a display of pomp and splendor. Also noticeable is Paul's extreme courtesy throughout the whole proceedings, although he must have been well aware of the dissolute character of Agrippa.

It can be readily recognized that Paul considered the matter of the resurrection of Jesus as the one great issue. To the carnal mind of the heathen Festus such a thing as a resurrection from the dead could only be thought of by a madman. But Paul, with the greatest courtesy, reminds Festus that Agrippa was aware of the story of the resurrection of Jesus. And when we read vs. 31-32, we can realize that they were agreed that Paul was innocent—

"And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar."

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In Matthew's Gospel (19:16) we find another instance of one who was "*Almost Persuaded*":

"And behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

"Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but One, that is God."

Then Jesus named the commandments that the young man must keep if he would enter into life. And he answered and said—

"All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet? And Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me.

"But when the young man heard that saying he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions."

Yet, he had been "*Almost Persuaded*"! In Mark 12:25 we read—

"And one of the Scribes came and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?"

And Jesus named the commandments to him, and the Scribe said to him—

"Well, Master, thou hast said the truth; for there is one God, and there is none other than He."

And when Jesus saw he answered discreetly, he said to him—

"Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God."

All of these men were not far from the Kingdom. They were "*Almost Persuaded*"—but they lacked the strength of will and the courage to give up the worldly things that Christ required of them, and requires of all that would follow him. They passed across the stage of life and into the silent oblivion of the graves. How many others have been "*Almost Persuaded*" to accept Christ, but the seductive pleasures of the world seemed far more attractive than to take up the Cross and follow Jesus Christ; for that means trials, that means giving up those little personal pleasures that many think they cannot do without. But what do we read?—

"Therefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

King Agrippa, the rich young man, and countless others, have laid much value on their titles, their positions of honor, and all those things that seem so desirous and precious to the worldly.

But what are these things in the sight of God? They are just *weights* that must be laid aside for that which is of far more value. How many there are who in their desire to indulge in passing pleasures are unwittingly placing a stumbling-block in their own way; These things may seem small at first but they grow as they are fed by the desire for greater enjoyment of the worldly things. But, "Can a clean thing come from an unclean?" Can the things of the world be of value to anyone *if they have their mind fully set on that precious jewel which a loving Father has invited us to run for*—"a Crown of Righteousness" (2 Tim. 4:8)?

Is there not great wisdom in casting aside the weights that would hinder us, as they have hindered countless others of all generations in the world's long and sad history, who have had to face the same decision and have turned the other way, although they were "*Almost Persuaded*"?

Why do we hold on to even a *few* of the worldly treasures? God has declared we cannot successfully do that—"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." If we let anything interfere or come in the way of our serving God, are we not serving Mammon? In the Revelation we find these words—

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:15-16).

There is a question that all in the Truth must answer: are we "*Fully Persuaded*"? We would like to be in the Kingdom, but is our heart, and soul, and mind *fully occupied* in winning the race? Let us give heed to the Scripture which saith—

"Give yourself wholly to these things."

In Heb. 11:13 we are told—

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were PERSUADED of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country."

And in Romans (4:18) Paul says of Abraham—

"Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations." And being FULLY PERSUADED that what God had promised He was able also to perform."

Let us turn the thoughts of these things to ourselves. If we are "*Fully Persuaded*" of the Truth of the Gospel, then are we not "*Fully Persuaded*" of what it can do for us? It will guide our feet past snares and pitfalls which the world lays before us in such tempting displays. In time of sorrow (and who can escape sorrow?) it will bring comfort. If we live just for the present, then we will suffer with the world.

Is there not *wisdom* in striving to find that peace of mind, that calmness, that sublime serenity which comes with the fulness of Faith? To not think it a *sacrifice*, the giving up of once-desirable things; but rather to think of it as a *privilege*, and as an opportunity to be called to work for Christ, that we might have something acceptable when he comes.

Would not our gift to him be to be able to stand before him at the bar of judgment as faithful stewards and servants? What else could we offer him? Nothing. We will have no gifts, no jewels, no treasures of any kind. Just ourselves.

If we are found acceptable, happy will we be in that day. Every day we see that *the world is not happy*—how could it be? All things that man has received from a beneficent Father, they take the glory of unto themselves. The people weary themselves with their vanities.

But those who live by the Truth become reconciled to God, and live in a more peaceful state. They have their heartaches and deprivations. They have to carry a cross which many times can be a cruel trial, trying to live as saints in an evil world.

But with all the trials we are "*Fully Persuaded*" we can be happier; we can have more interest in life than those who know not God, and make no effort to know the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The world has all the fear and fretfulness propagated by its lusts and vanities, and its cravings for positions of honor and power.

Do we fully realize our *great opportunity and privilege* of being in the favorable position of knowing God, and by being known of God? If we do realize it, then we know how difficult it is to express, and that it is impossible to exaggerate the glory that will be ours in being—

"Fellow-citizens with the saints, and members of the Household of God."

Brethren and sisters, beware of those who have become a dead branch on the vine, whose desire is more of the world's goods. You will find them standing in the way of sinners; and in the seat of the scornful. Their hearts have become hardened and they stoop to many follies in which they blithely profess to see "no harm."

But such as they, we fear, are only laying up wrath against the day of wrath of the righteous judgment of God, Who will render to every man according to his deeds. Listen to the words of Paul:

"For the which cause I also suffer these things. Nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know Whom I have believed, and am PERSUADED that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

Paul had not committed gold or silver, for these he had none. But by his life he had formed and laid up a character that will shine for all time. Yea, in the day when the true eternal values shall be made manifest he shall receive the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give him; and not to him only, but to them also that love his appearing; for he had fought the good fight.

*"Let us go and do likewise."*

—C.H.T.

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## **The Pharisees and Sadducees**

For a clear consideration of the origin of these two sects, it is necessary first to review briefly the history of Palestine just prior to the time during which they came into prominence.

Let us then travel back in our minds to that period of history in which Alexander the Great figured, just over 300 years before Christ. We remember that he brought all the then known world, including the land of Israel, under Grecian sway.

Following his death in 323 B.C., the vast empire which he had created was divided into several parts. With two of these, *Syria* on the North of Palestine, and *Egypt* to the South, we are now concerned, inasmuch as they played some part in the history of the Jews and the formation of the sects which we have under consideration. When, by 300 B.C., the quarrels and disputations caused by the partitioning of the Empire had subsided, Palestine found itself under the rule of the Egyptian section, of which it formed the Northern border, and remained so for about 100 years.

Toward the end of this period, severe contention arose between the Jews and their Egyptian sovereign, and they solicited the aid of the King of the Syrian part of the former Empire—their neighbors to the North. As a consequence of the war between Syria and Egypt which ensued, Israel (198 B.C.) came under Syrian control.

The change of masters soon proved for the worse. Under the Egyptians, the Jews had experienced comparatively little constraint, but it was soon apparent that the Syrian domination was not to be so benevolent.

After about 25 years of oppression and restriction, the King of Syria determined to unify his dominions by forcing Greek culture and religion upon all his subjects. To this end, his persecution of the Jews was of barbaric severity. The Temple was plundered, and the unfortunate inhabitants, besides being forbidden to practise their religion, were forced on the pain of death to eat meat which to them was unclean, and to worship Greek gods.

Under the spur of this oppression, the more fervently religious among the Jews pledged themselves to stand by the Law, and defend their religious institutions. These later became known as *Pharisees*, or "separated ones." At its inauguration, this sect comprised the most righteous and God-fearing of the people, who were willing to suffer death in defence of their Faith, but during the two

centuries which intervened until the ministry of Christ, the noble object for which they had banded together was obscured in a fog of self-righteousness and looking after trifles.

That, however, was later. Soon after their formation, about 168 B.C., and also as a result of the cruel Syrian persecution, the *Maccabean rebellion* commenced, and spread rapidly throughout the country, and war between Palestine and Syria—which culminated finally in Jewish independence—continued with varying fortunes for about 50 years, during which time, due to internal strife and pressure from the East, the Syrian power steadily waned.

Now, during the early years of this rebellion, the Pharisees fought side by side with the Maccabees for freedom, but it soon became apparent that the aims of the two parties were divergent. The Pharisees had come into being to preserve their religion, and within a few years of the beginning of the uprising, religious independence was secured, and the persecution ceased.

The Pharisees, having accomplished their object, saw no further need for resistance. In fact, to them, *foreign domination with the people united under a religious head, was preferable to independence with such kings as they had experienced earlier in their history at the head of the people.* To them it seemed that national freedom would be followed by a waning religious fervor.

The Maccabees and their followers on the other hand, were fighting for their national independence, and the defection of the Pharisees at this juncture was a severe blow to their strength, for the Pharisees had the majority of the people with them.

Opposed to the Pharisees at this time, we find the *Sadducees*. At the inception of this sect, their motives seemed to be more of a political nature than religious. They were composed of such as might be termed the aristocracy, those who had risen to prominence with the Maccabees during the rebellion. The points of religion wherein they differed from the Pharisees would seem to have risen from their political aspirations, and fostered the spirit of *worldly advancement*, rather than spiritual improvement.

Let us consider the policies and doctrines of the two parties at this time. The Pharisees were formed, we have seen, *to save their religion*, which was in danger of annihilation, and their tenets reflect this aim. It was their belief that, with the *written Law*, Moses had also received an *oral Law*, explaining the written one, and applying it to every occupation and walk of life, and that this oral law had been passed on through the Elders and Priests. This, with additional traditions which had subsequently accumulated, the Pharisees claimed was necessary to interpret the written Law, and keep it always before the minds of the people.

To them the present life was a preparation for a future one, and consequently they were not as concerned with temporal success as were the Sadducees. They believed, also, that while freedom of action was left to man, yet God was controlling human affairs, and this, too, would cause them to attach less importance to the struggles and ambitions of men. They believed in the resurrection of both the just and the unjust to judgment.

It is a matter of sad history, though, that an extreme magnification of the importance of ritual and tradition, caused many of the Pharisees to lose the spirit of the precepts of their religion, and their view of themselves as the preservers of the Divine law, through a period of great stress, fostered the spirit of complacency and self-righteousness now so often coupled with their name.

However, from this picture of their noble origin and their general line of belief, we can understand how that, when convinced of the genuineness of Christ's Messiahship, the *earnest* and sincere among the Pharisees (like Nicodemus) found little difficulty in accepting his teachings.

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Let us turn back now to a consideration of the *Sadducees*, remembering that we are still in the time of the Maccabean rebellion. The Sadducees, we have seen, were *ambitious for the independence of their country*. To them, religion was secondary. We find them rejecting most of the Pharisees' doctrines. Divine intervention in human affairs was flatly denied, and they contended that all that men do or have rests entirely on their own efforts. They accepted nothing as binding that was not included in the written Law, and did not believe in a future life. In short, their code was to make the best of this life, and to suffer no more restriction than necessary.

During the years that followed the Maccabean uprising when Judah at last threw off the yoke of a now weakened and diminished Syria—only to find herself within 50 years subject to Rome—these sects played a large part in the politics and government of the country, Pharisaism being often used as a standard under which purely *political* aims were fostered.

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Let us now consider them from the point of view of their relations with Christ. Of the Sadducees, there is little said in the New Testament. They seem to have exercised little influence on the religious thought of the time. Under the firm grip of Rome the power and importance of the Sadducees had waned. The brief mention which they are accorded in the New Testament is also attributable to their political and non-religious constitution. The only specific doctrine of the Sadducees that we find recorded is their non-belief in a resurrection, on which question we read that Christ confounded them and put them to silence.

Of the two sects, it was mainly of and to the Pharisees that Christ spoke. They were the acknowledged religious leaders. When Christ spoke of the Pharisees, though, it is not to be supposed that he included all who held Pharisaic doctrines and who might therefore really be included in the term. Many of their doctrines, in themselves, were not greatly at variance with the message that Christ brought, but it was the *self-righteous and hypocritical leaders* whom Christ addressed. The charges which Christ made against them show plainly to what depths they had degraded the name of Pharisee.

All the faults with which Christ charged them may be traced to a distortion of the fundamental tenet of their Sect—the sacredness of the Law. The traditions of the Elders which they claimed were necessary to amplify and protect the Law, had, at the time of Christ, grown into a *monstrous system of outward formalities* which regulated every act and activity of the public and private life of its adherents.

And in the meticulous performance of these multitudinous regulations and restrictions, the *spirit and purpose* of the Law was completely forgotten. In their complete engrossment in these forms and rituals we discover an answer to a situation which otherwise would be most puzzling. That is, *the almost unbelievable blindness of the Jewish Nation in regard to Christ's advent*.

Ever since their inception as a nation, they had been ardently anticipating their promised Messiah. This hope had held up the national spirit in times of extreme distress. Yet now, when Christ appeared, conforming to all the prophecies and fulfilling all the promises, working miracles which none of them could comprehend or explain, and clearly proclaiming himself the Messiah, they strained their ingenuity trying to catch him in his words and conspired together to destroy him.

What is the explanation for such benighted blindness? It is true they wondered about this extraordinary man who did these things but, said they, he cannot be from God because he does some of his miracles on the Sabbath. He neglected those cherished traditions which had become so sacred to them and he even condemned the length to which they were carried. *He sometimes even neglected to wash before eating! He could not be the Messiah!*

Thus these blind leaders of the blind reasoned, when a clear, undistorted consideration of the ministry and activities of Christ would have shown them their long-awaited Savior. But to them,

externals were all-important. Christ called them hypocrites— self-deceived, unconscious hypocrites— "*Thou blind Pharisee!*"

Broad phylacteries, wide-hemmed garments, long and public prayers, alms before men, all these outward signs proved to them their own righteousness. Through their habit of judging from appearances, Christ's coming from Galilee was to them another proof that he was not the Savior. The Truth was perfectly plain to those who *intelligently searched for it*, but purposely obscured from those who approached it critically and unsympathetically.

That Christ spoke as man had never spoken before, confounding them in their hypocrisies every time they attempted to confuse him, and did works that could be explained in no other way than the hand of God, was not sufficient to overcome the prejudice aroused by his flouting and condemning the vain traditions which they so jealously cherished.

This was the natural explanation of the God-given blindness, for God works His purpose on earth by natural means. And the blindness of these Pharisees, to whom the gold was more precious than the Temple and the gift than the Altar, was accomplished by their own error in *nullifying the Law by the commandments of men*.

The Sadducees were essentially political and their waning light was finally extinguished by the fall of Jerusalem, and the subsequent dispersion. After this time they ceased to exist.

The Pharisees, on the other hand, were the accepted spiritual guides of the people, although at times the spirituality of their guidance is doubtful. Regardless of their errors, however, they were the accredited religious leaders and to them fell the task, after the dispersion, of uniting the Jews as a religious community.

Deprived of the Temple and its service, as a religious center, a new system had to be devised to preserve the identity of the scattered people. The Law was even further widened, and the Messianic Hope became an even more prominent feature of their devotions. As a substitute for the Temple service, the *Rabbinic system* was inaugurated, in which Schools for the study of the Law were created. In this way, its precepts were handed down with full expositions of their traditional application, and each generation was supplied with men whose knowledge made them authorities and centers of religious learning.

Throughout the wanderings of the people, these Rabbis have preserved the spirit of national isolation, and in this again we see the hand of God, maintaining the identity of His people for the final phase of their long and eventful history.

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Perhaps a few words on the *Scribes* would not be inappropriate, as we find them often mentioned in connection with the Pharisees. The general meaning of the term is, of course, a *writer*. In the Old Testament the word is used to denote one fulfilling secretarial duties, but by New Testament times, and as therein used, Scribe had come to mean *one who had made a long and exhaustive study of the Law*, and was consequently an authority upon it.

This especial class seems to have originated during the Babylonian captivity. They were, of course, in the main part, Pharisees. The expression, "*Scribes and Pharisees*," which Christ uses in his denunciation, the Rev. Vers. renders as "*Scribes of the Pharisees*," which is a better description of the guilty class—those leaders of the Pharisees who had made an intensive study of the Law and professed authority on its teachings.

We have seen that these were unworthy custodians of a name whose early history was filled with honor and self-sacrifice. Let us then, in thinking of the Pharisees, remember them, not only as self-righteous, fanatically formalistic, and hypocritical, but also during the earlier and nobler times

when, for the sake of the Law and the commandments of God, they endured suffering and death, and withstood to their last breath the heathen corruptions that were forced upon them.

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**1954 ANNUAL TEXAS FRATERNAL GATHERING**  
(If the Lord will)

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

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**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.**

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

**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.**

**GLENDALE, Pennsylvania.**

**GRANTS PASS, Oregon, Route 2, Box 471.**

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

We have been greatly helped and encouraged by visits from the brethren and sisters in Toronto, London, and Detroit. In March we had the pleasure of a visit from bro. & sis. Gibson, bro. & sis. Crone, bro. J. Jackson (Toronto); and sis. Bere (London). Bro. Gibson gave us the word of exhortation which we all greatly enjoyed, and felt strengthened by the Word.

In May we had visits from: bro. & sis. F. Higham, bro. G. Growcott, sis. Anne Growcott (Detroit); bro. & sis. G. Gibson and bro. J. Jackson (Toronto). Bro. Higham gave us the word of exhortation which was very comforting and uplifting.

We are also greatly encouraged in the Faith by the addition of three sisters to our fellowship: sisters Grayson (formerly of London), Dolly Box and Jenny Fotheringham, the latter having returned to our fellowship. We pray that God will bless us and give us strength to go onward, and we pray to the Father to manifest His Word among the Brotherhood and dispel the sorrow cast upon it by recent events. With love to all,  
—bro. J. Fotheringham.

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**HAWLEY, Pennsylvania.**

We have been strengthened and encouraged by the visits of brethren and sisters of like precious Faith during the months of May and June: bro. Geo. A. Kling, bro. & sis. W. Kling (Buffalo); bro. N. Mammone (Jersey City); bro. & sis. O. Beauchamp (Pomona); bro. & sis. D. Sommerville, sisters E. & G. Matthews (Glendale, Pa.).

Bro. W. Kling and Beauchamp exhorted us, and bro. Beauchamp lectured in the afternoon on the subject, "The End of Gentile World Rule at Hand, and the Establishment of Christ's Kingdom on Earth Very Near." Bro. Mammone presided at this lecture.

These exhortations and the lecture were at Lake Ariel, but meetings are held at our homes alternately.

Bro. & sis. Frisbie of Baltimore are members of this ecclesia, and attend as they have opportunity. We are striving to devote ourselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and prayers (Acts 2:42 RSV). With fraternal love and greetings to all our brethren and sisters.

—bro. H. A. Sommerville.

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**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.**

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

**LETHBRIDGE, Alta., Can.—633 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.**

**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.**

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

**WHANGAREI, New Zealand.**

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

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