

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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CHRIST IS COMING AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

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EDITORIAL

Love and Forgiveness

No position, or course, can be established by silence. A question, or movement, advocated and upheld by any person, or group of persons, must be examined by presenting considerations "pro and con," or arguments and reasons must be adduced in support of one's cause or position.

Participants in religious discussions, generally speaking, face two dangers. If a party discovers that he is in an erroneous position he may, rather than submit to correction, endeavor to cover up his predicament by a display of "good words and fair speeches." On the other hand, he may have become weak in faith, and labor to maintain his position by using a multitude of words and phrases with the true meaning of many of which he is unfamiliar. The latter course seems to be in evidence in our days when some have much to say about "love" and "forgiveness."

What is love? Webster defines it as "a strong personal attachment, or ardent affection—a desire for, and earnest effort to promote, the welfare of another, especially as seen in God's solicitude for man and in man's due gratitude and reverence to God." That is all very well, but we prefer to leave it while we examine the New Testament writings in an endeavor to get a better understanding of the word.

As we scrutinize the use of the word in the apostolic records, and then reflect upon the definition of Webster, we must conclude that there are various forms of love. The most common type is that exhibited in the world—a sentimental and fleeting love resulting from the operation of natural inward impulses which disappear in death. Another form of love, which we might designate as *factional*, is found among groups who, through their religious beliefs, become separated from the orthodox bodies. This isolation creates a fellow-feeling which is often mistaken for the love of the very thing that has drawn them together, and becomes a cause, or source, of harm when tribulation comes upon them.

Scriptural love is entirely different for it has foundations upon which our eternal salvation depends. John goes right to the root of the subject when he says (2 John 6)—

"**This is love**, that we walk after his commandments."

This statement is neither obscure nor ambiguous. It is enlightening and makes so clear mentally that a child can understand it. Any person, fully realizing what John has said, will profoundly appreciate the revelation of the Truth to such an extent that he will become "a workman who has no need to be ashamed." The concept was not John's—he had learned it from his beloved Master the night before his excruciating death, when he said (John 14:15)—

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (Diag.).

This type of love is the same as Jesus had previously spoken of when he said "the love of many shall wax cold," and again in his final message to the ecclesia at Ephesus, when he informed them that "they had left their first love." It is also identical with the teaching of Paul who spoke of a "faith that worketh by love," or as he expressed it in another place (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, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

This is not just a play upon words; they are *thoughts that breathe, and words that burn*. However, we feel that the apogee of Paul's teaching on the subject of love is attained in the 13th chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians. The real meaning of this chapter becomes clear when we substitute the word "love" for "charity," and read it *with John's definition in view*. Then we realize that the love that belongs to the Household of Faith is "for the Truth's sake that dwelleth in us." Our authority to make this change is based on the fact that the word rendered "charity" is the same word rendered "love" in 2 John 6, and is so used in the various revisions of the past 70 years.

After reflecting and meditating upon what Jesus, Paul and John have made so clear on the subject of love, we must come to the conclusion that it is obviously *impossible for anyone whose love, and friendship, are bounded by the Truth, to be in love with the world's pleasures at the same time*. If he thinks that it can be done, it must be because "the god of this world has blinded his mind." There can be no other explanation.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him"—1 Cor. 2:9.

Little need be said about *forgiveness*, because we have no authority, or power, to forgive anything except personal injury against ourselves, whether verbal or physical. Any form of sin against God, can only be forgiven by Him. Therefore, if a brother teach doctrines contrary to the Truth, and refuses to disavow, or abjure, what he has taught, or what he has stated to be his belief, we may overlook it (to our own sorrow), but we have no power to forgive him.

Let us beware, then, of "enticing words" which would turn us from the "simplicity that is in Christ" and cause us to "fall from our own steadfastness." —Editor

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

"While travelling, I am careful not to identify myself with the grumblers. The true philosophy is to endure patiently what you cannot cure, for in doing so the evil will be less. I lost about 8 days in a journey of 1342 miles. I have not had my clothes off since I left Newark 8 days ago, having passed the nights in cars and on steamboat floors." —Bro. Thomas, Sept., 1854.

The Mystery of Godliness

By brother John Thomas

PART EIGHT

SYMBOLIZATION OF DEITY IN SPIRIT

Now, this, "Apocalypse of the Sons of the Deity" is represented in the Revelation by different remarkable symbols. The first is that described in Rev. 1:13-16, and styled "Son Of Man." This does not represent an individual man. It represents *Many in One*. What John saw among the lightstands was a similitude or likeness— *homoion uio anthropon*, "like to a Son of man." The voice which John heard proclaimed the reality of this likeness to be "THE LAST"—the Spirit in the last manifestation; the ONE YAHWEH *in many Elohim*.

In the time of manifestation it is "*the Living One*," which previous to apocalypse "*was dead*" but being apocalypted, "*is living for the Aions of the Aions*;" and as "THE FIRST" before this apocalypse, and limited to Jesus Anointed, "had the keys of the invisible and of death" (Rev. 1:18).

This apocalyptic plurality in victorious progress was obscurely communicated to Isaiah in the following testimonies:

"Who raised up righteousness from the east, (the kings from a Sun's risings—the saints,) called him (that which is indicated by the symbol before us) to His foot, gave the nations before him, and made rule over kings?" (See Rev. 2:26-27).

"He gave them as dust to his **sword**, and as driven stubble to his **bow** (Ephraim and Judah—Zech. 9:13; 10:3-4). He (the symbolical Son of Man) pursued them, and passed in peace; by the way he had not gone with his feet, who hath wrought and done this—naming the generations from the beginning (at the Bush)?"

To which enquiries the Eternal Spirit answers,

"ANI YAHWEH—I who will be—**rishon**—the FIRST ONE, and **ethacharonim**—THE LAST ONES; I—He. The isles saw, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came. They helped every one his neighbor, and said to his brother, Be of good courage" (Isa. 41:5-6).

In this passage "the Last" is in the plural, but in Isa. 44:6, it is used in the singular, according to the formula—

"Thus saith YAHWEH, King of Israel, and his (Israel's) Redeemer, YAHWEH Tz'vahoth (or, 'He who will be of hosts,' that is, COMMANDER' of them—Isa. 44:6. I THE FIRST ONE and I THE LAST ONE; and without Me no Elohim. And who as I shall proclaim, and declare it, and set it in order for Me since I appointed the **people of Olahm**? And the things that are coming, and shall come, let them show unto them."

The "*Last Ones*" of Isa. 41 are comprised in the "*Last One*" of ch. 44 which, though expressed in the singular, clearly indicates a plurality by its association with the sentence, "*and without Me no Elohim*"—without the Spirit which quickeneth there will be no glorified saints, for, "the flesh profits nothing;" they are "*the people of Olahm*," destined to reign with the Christ a thousand years (Rev. 20:6).

And here the reader is requested to bear in mind, that the titles and expressions by which the ETERNAL POWER designates Himself in the Scriptures of the prophets are all reproduced in the

New Testament and the Apocalypse, and *therein applied to Jesus and his Brethren when "perfected in spirit" or "glorified together."*

Thus, the prophetic YAHWEH ELOHIM styles Himself "*the First and the Last*"; so doth the symbolical Son of man. Yahweh says He is the only *Rock*; Paul speaking of the Rock terms it Christ. Yahweh styles Himself *King of Israel*; Christ Jesus calls himself the same. Yahweh declares that He is a *Savior*, and that there is none beside Him; the Word made flesh was called Jesus, because he should "save his people," or be their savior,

"I, I, YAHWEH, and there is no savior beside Me" (Isa. 43:11).

John saw the Son of man similitude in the midst of the Seven Lightstands, or aggregate of ecclesias, and heard "the voice of the many waters" from their midst, as indicative of the source from whence the persons constituting the reality symbolized by the similitude are derived. The promises symbolized in Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21, are all made to the constituent members of this similitude of the mystical Son of man—the "*One Body*" the church, when victory is complete.

Another vision of the Sons of the Deity in Apocalypse is described in Rev. 4. When John was "*in spirit*" he saw the similitude of their manifestation when they shall be "*in spirit*" in the day of the Christ. He saw them enthroned as "the twenty-four elders, clothed in white raiment, and crowned" (4:4). He saw them enthroned in a stormy period, when "lightnings, and thunderings, and voices" were issuing forth from their enthroned omnipotence (4:5).

He saw the going forth of their power into all the earth in the burning of the Seven Spirits (4:5; 5:6) which seven, symbolical of the One Spirit, in judicial exercise upon the dominions of the world, he saw in the similitude of the FOUR LIVING ONES, omnipotent and omniscient—the One Spirit manifested in the redeemed, careering in victorious conflict, and proclaiming the superlative holiness of YAHWEH Elohim almighty, the "*Who was, and Who is, and Who is coming*" (4:7-8). He saw these in progress through the earth, contending for dominion over it, with the full assurance that they would succeed. "WE SHALL REIGN," say they, "ON THE EARTH" (5:10). John also beheld the Sons of the Deity in Apocalypse in the mighty angel of Rev. 10:1, who,

"Comes down out of heaven invested with a cloud; and a rainbow upon his head, and his face as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire."

His lion-roar proclaims the consummation of—

". . . the mystery of the Deity as He hath declared the glad tidings to His servants the prophets" (v. 7).

—which accomplishment ultimates in the constituents of this mighty angel taking possession of the kingdom under the whole heaven, and the consequent establishment of the reign of Yahweh and His Elohim for the Aions of the Aions.

This is the result of the seventh and last trumpet having exhausted the judgment pertaining to it. The consummation of this trumpet, which is also the consummation of the Seventh Seal, is the work of the mighty angel, symbolizing the heaven-descended Jesus and his Brethren, the saints. The Seventh Vial is the work allotted for them; and in their mission they march to victory with:

"FACE AS THE SUN, and feet as pillars of fire."

Again they appear upon the apocalyptic page in Rev. 14:1. Here they are the sealed nation of Rev. 7:4-12, resurrected, with the Lamb, Jesus, in their midst. Their symbolical number, a definite for an unknown (7:9), is 144,000. In this vision they are stationary, as indicated by "*stood*" in reference to the Lamb with whom they are. They are standing, awaiting the result of the proclamation which

announces to the nations that "THE HOUR OF JUDGMENT IS COME" (Rev. 14:3-7). They wait the issue of this before they go forth, as "the Seven Spirits in all the earth," to overthrow Babylon, and to torment the worshippers of the Beast and his Image (Rev. 14:8-11).

In Rev. 15:2, the Sons of the Deity are again apocalysped. Here they are in the attitude of victory and blessedness. They are in joyous repose,

". . . standing upon a translucent sea, having harps of the Deity."

This sea of nations had been "mingled with fire;" but "they had gotten the victory" over the Beast and his Image, and over his Mark and Number, which as dross had all been destroyed from the sea by the fire of their indignation; and they are seen here in—

". . . rest from their labors, and their works following them."

This is the consummation of the 7th Vial, in which it can be said:

"Thy judgments are made manifest" (Rev. 15:4).

In getting the victory over the Beast they are apocalysped in the vision portrayed in Rev. 19:11-21. Here the Sons of the Deity appear in military array, in clouds of cavalry, styled "the hosts in the heaven," following "THE WORD OF THE DEITY" in his campaigns against the nations; which he smites and conquers in treading "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of the all-powerful Deity." They tread them "as ashes under the soles of their feet," and bind and shut up the Dragon in powerlessness for a thousand years.

Having obtained this great victory over the kingdoms and dominions of the world, they are manifested as the occupants of thrones peculiarly their own; which continue undisturbed for a thousand years. Their victory inaugurates the universal dominion foreshadowed in Rev. 5:12-14. Peace being thus conquered by their omnipotence—

". . . the spirit is quieted, and the earth is at rest."

The Gentile earth and heaven have fled away from before them. With the Captain of their salvation they are enthroned as "the kings of the earth;" and as a DIVINE MUNICIPALITY, possess the glory and honor of the nations (21:26). In this relation they are apocalysped as the NEW JERUSALEM,

"The city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God."

—looked for, but not yet seen, by the patriarchs and prophets of the olden time (Heb. 11:10; Rev. 21:9-27). For a thousand years this Beloved City is the light of the nations, which are then "all blessed in Abraham and his Seed," according to the Gospel of the Kingdom. It is the YAHWEH-*Elohistic* municipality, symbolized by 144 cubits, each cubit representing 1000 of the numerical symbol of this "Holy Nation," the Israel of the Deity (Rev. 7:4; 14:1; 1 Pet. 2:9; Gal. 6:16).

But, at the ending of these thousand years, during which they have been an Arboretum of healing influences to the nations, the base ingratitude, malice, and envy of human nature find scope to organize rebellion against the Saints and their government. Their camp is beleaguered by countless myriads which gather together against them for war.

But the Sons of the Deity are as powerful at the end as at the beginning of the 1000 years. Peace and blessedness will not have enervated their incorruptible nature; and they will be prepared to give the rebels a crushing and final overthrow. As the Woman's Seed, their mission is to bruise the

Serpent's Head (Gen. 3:15). The war begun, their burning indignation overflows them as a consuming fire, in which they are "tormented day and night" to the end of the 1000 years (Rev. 20:10). Thus—

"Fire comes down from God out of heaven, and devours them."

This establishes "the End," when the kingdom is delivered up to the Father; Who will then have put all enemies under the Son's feet. At this crisis death is banished from the earth; the wicked utterly destroyed out of it; and the Deity—apocalypsed, or manifested, in His Sons (considerably augmented in number by the accessions of the 1000 years) becomes the sole occupant and inheritor of the earth (1 Cor. 15:24; Prov. 10:30; Rev. 21:3-4).

"RECEIVE NOT THE GRACE OF GOD IN VAIN"

A fruit tree exists in itself, but not for itself. A fulfilment of the objects of its existence requires that it bring forth something for the use and gratification of its owner. This is completely applicable to those whom Paul exhorts to receive not the grace of God in vain. Salvation has come nigh to them, not merely that they may be personally delivered from evil; but that they may be "to the praise and glory of His grace." The fruit that is acceptable to the great Owner of the vineyard is styled "the fruit of the Spirit."—Bro. Roberts

BOSTON FRATERNAL GATHERING

(If the Lord will)

To be held Sunday, October 10. Write to bro. Edgar Sargent, 27 Jersey Ave., Braintree 84, Mass., for information or accommodations.

To the Elect of God

In a Time of Trouble

The elect of God exist, although no man can individually identify them. They are after a common family likeness, though differently situated in the present evil world. They have one faith, and one aim, and one mind, though following different occupations, and are living in different parts of the earth. We greet them in the name of the Lord, wishing them and praying for them grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Beloved, you are known to God, though you may not be discerned by man. You are scattered up and down the world, in a cloudy and dark sky, undistinguishable to human eyes, from the common mass of mankind. Your divine mark or seal, wherever you are to be found, consists of the belief, *obedience* and *LOVE* of the Truth which God has caused to be set forth in the writings of Moses, and the prophets, and the apostles.

Having this mark, you are precious in His eyes. Your faith is well-pleasing to Him; your obedience, your free-will offerings, your sacrifices in His service at a time when all the world ignores Him, ascend before Him as the odor of a sweet smell, and are acceptable to Him through the High Priest of our profession.

And they will be spoken of again to your great joy, in a day when they will seem to have been all forgotten, and when they will seem too small to be mentioned in the presence of the world-stirring events that will belong to the coming again of our Lord.

I write to you concerning our common affliction—common in a large sense. I do not write to you because I know you. Some of you, I doubtless know; but no man knows you as "the Lord knows

them that are His." A man cannot even know himself in this sense—as our beloved brother Paul has said,

"I judge not mine own self; he that judgeth me is the Lord."

We know the principles upon which men will be saved, because they have been revealed: but we are not capable of discerning infallibly where these principles have had their effectual work, *though we may discern where they are set aside and violated.*

I write to you, as those whom the Lord loves, and who will be banded together in a joyous company when the Lord comes. I write to you, as one of you, having the same experience and the same need. The scorner may mockingly enquire what right I have to write to such. I answer, *the right of brotherly love*, which belongs to every man who can rise to his privileges in Christ.

Brotherly love leads to brotherly concern in all things, but particularly in those that relate to our standing in God, our position in the present probation, and our hope concerning the purpose of God which will surely be accomplished. Your present lot is grievous in many respects; and at times you are greatly cast down, and nigh despairing altogether of the Lord's promised kindness in Christ. *I write to remind you of the cause you have for encouragement and joy.*

You feel unworthy of the great salvation to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ: remember, that though those only whom the Lord esteems worthy will enter the Kingdom, yet part of that worthiness consists in that very sense of unworthiness which oppresses you.

God's favor is for those only who rate themselves at God's standard; and by this standard we are, as Jacob confessed himself to be, "unworthy of the least of all the mercy and the truth" that the Lord shows to His people. For what are we at best but worms of the earth, fashioned in God's image, made of His clay, and permitted to live for a few years on the face of His glorious earth? The best can say with Job, whom the Lord approved:

"Behold I am vile . . . wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

If a *righteous* man could feel this abasement—(most reasonable abasement in mortal flesh in the presence of the divine glory)—is it a marvel that we who add error to weakness, and sin to corruptibility, should sometimes feel "broken in heart and contrite in spirit?" It is right: but be not destroyed by this abasement. It is pleasing to God. To such He has more than once plainly declared He looks with approval.

But your sins, they distress you. It is right they should. But look again and be comforted. There is a sin not unto death. You are not callous towards the Lord. You do not run in the ways He has forbidden. You do not love the present world and run with it in all its "ungodliness and worldly lusts—the lust of the eye and the pride of life." You do not deny God and live in deliberate disobedience of His commandments.

On the contrary, you love His Name and His word; you believe His testimonies, and rejoice in His institutions; you love, and look, and long for the appearing of His Son, whom He has promised to send; and you are striving in all the ways of life, so far as in you lies, to do His commandments.

But you fail often. You come short of what you would do. You frequently do the things you would not do; and you are distressed on this account. It is right to be so; but do not forget the provision that has been made; Christ has taken away our sins. We are washed in his blood.

He stands in the Father's presence, not only as the accepted sacrifice, but as the appointed High Priest for his house. He ever liveth to make intercession for us, according to the will of God. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to forgive us all our iniquity. *If*

we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sins. God forgives us for Christ's sake.

Perhaps you are oppressed with a sense of the unsuitability of such persons as you being promoted to honor and power in the Kingdom. Remember, it is God's deliberate plan to choose such.

"Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called . . . but God hath chosen the weak things of this world."

Jesus spoke of this, and said:

"Even so, Father for so it seemed good in thy sight."

He even *gave thanks* to the Father for proceeding on this plan. There is reason in it all. The Kingdom is to be established for *God's* honor, not man's; for the *Spirit's* objects and not those of flesh. Hence, it is a necessity that men be provided for its administration who are not proud and lifted up in their own eyes, but who are lowly, and who know and reverence God so deeply as to find pleasure in His exaltation. The blessing of man will come out of it all, but glory to God first. If God made choice of the aristocracy, His purpose—

"I will be exalted among the heathen"

—would not be accomplished. They are full of themselves. He chooses men who are *empty of themselves*, that they may be full of *God*. Poor men, in a day of evil, are the kind of material out of which He can provide the earthen vessels in which His eternal treasure can be deposited, that—

". . . the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of man."

But you say, "Such poor weak people as we are not fit to be kings and priests." True; *not as you are now*. It is not as you are now that you will be elevated to the position. You will be changed from the mortal to the immortal, and this change will fit you in every way for what you will have to do. It will give you strength and grace and capacity and gladness of heart. You will be able to carry yourselves as kings, and to sustain yourselves without fatigue, and to bring the wisdom of Solomon to bear in the judgment of all matters you may have in charge.

Qualification of this sort is all in God, Who will liberally crown His children with the highest gifts, in the day of their exaltation. *The one thing needful is a humble, loving, obedient heart, and pliant will*, which can only be developed and put to the proof by the exercise of faith in a day like this. And the operation can only be successfully performed, in most cases, in circumstances of poverty and self-denial. Consequently, your lowly position and inefficient state, instead of being a cause of dubitation, should help your confidence, as furnishing in your case, the *likely elements of suitability* for the glory to be revealed.

But in another way, you may feel the cloud return. The time is long, and human nature is weak, and power fails, and you feel yourselves walking towards the darkness which bounds the horizon of all natural life. Yea, the darkness will oftentimes steal into your inmost soul, and fill you with an indescribable horror, as you survey the vastness of the universe, in which God is apparently silent, and the almost infinite mass of abortive life that appears upon earth from generation to generation.

Be comforted concerning this also; this darkness is inseparable from God's plan. Nay more: it is *essential* to it. Human life on the earth can no more reach the glory to be revealed without this experience, than the fruits of the field can appear without ploughing and harrowing.

It is part of the plan. God's wisdom is in it, and His love, for God is love. We shall see it. Meanwhile we must exercise faith, without which He cannot be pleased. Faith working by love can see a little now—by starlight as it were. The darkness is prolonged for the world as a whole; but it is short for any one generation. It has been on the earth for ages, but no generation lasts for ages. We knew nothing of it last century; our turn had not come. Our turn has now come; it depresses, but it will soon be over, and when over, the next thing in our experience (apparently the *immediate* next) if actually delayed however long, is the eternal sunshine of God's manifested presence and glory.

We shall find then what has been done for us by our present exposure in the darkness and cold of earth's winter. It is the Father's appointment for us meanwhile. What can we say but, "*Thy will be done?*" He doth not willingly afflict. Not only so, but He ministers to our need while we pass through the darkness.

None of the elect of God is left alone. God is with him to guide and strengthen in many invisible ways. God cares for him; pities him; chastens him; upholds him; prepares him for the inheritance that is in store for all the sons of light; an inheritance in which they will commune with unspeakable joy, after the prolonged fight of faith victoriously waged in their several evil days.

"These are they that come out of great tribulation."

We cannot come *out* of it without being *in* it first. While in it, it is hard to bear. But remember the end. Remember the joyful muster of the Lord's elect!

This touches another sorrow you have. In your several spheres of probation, you are yearning for what you never realise. You hunger and thirst for the prevalence of a noble enlightenment among men. You love God yourselves with all your hearts and souls. You long to see others rejoice in Him and exalt Him in a sincere and intelligent way.

You have a compassionate regard for the condition of mankind, and desire, with even a tearful earnestness, to see them in a blessed condition. *You sigh and faint for the delights of sanctified and intellectual friendship* in which the hearts of companions should open with a noble warmth to the great and noble topics that the universe presents to the mind, instead of gravitating heavily to the *petty accidents of animal life*.

Ah, and you are afflicted with your own incapacities that blur the sight and enfeeble the hands, and drag you into abysses of gloom as dreadful as Jonah's habitation in the storm-tossed sea.

Now, there is comfort concerning all this. It is somewhat negative in its form; but, then, it is *true*, and true comfort wears well, whereas false comfort fails you in the long run.

The comfort is that these things are unattainable in the present condition of human life upon earth, but that they are attainable and will be realised in their very perfection in the Kingdom of God. The recognition of this is a help. We reconcile ourselves hopefully to our lot, enduring the hardness of the desert by knowing that it *is* desert, and in the confident anticipation of the land of promise at the end of the journey.

One comfort more. It is not displeasing to the Father that we thus hunger and thirst—to the point even of misery—after righteousness. On the contrary, Jesus said:

"Blessed are ye that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for ye shall be filled."

Finally, you are troubled and distressed by dissensions in the Household of Faith. Many of you have been plunged into deep grief, even unto many tears.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial."

It is nothing new. It is the modern form of a very ancient and frequent experience, resulting from the fermentation of diverse elements brought together by the knowledge of the Truth. We must trust to God's wisdom in permitting of the admixture of these elements. He has done so from the beginning. Do not be too much distressed by it.

The results that come of it do not alter things. *They only prove and try and manifest things.* The Word of the Lord standeth sure amid all the chafes and changes and corruptions of men. The Lord Jesus, from the serene exaltation of the heavens, has for centuries beheld the confusions and commotions and wars that have wrought havoc among men in his absence.

He has beheld them without surprise. He foresaw them and foretold them. He said there would be strife and division: that iniquity would abound; that the love of many would wax cold: that the trial would be too severe for some, but that *he that should endure to the end would be saved.*

Can we imagine that such things are permitted without a purpose? There is but one answer on the part of enlightened reason: and that answer will help us to stand in the midst of the evil and to hold fast unmoved the hope of the Gospel, looking to Christ, who lives—distrusting ourselves, who die. Our life is fleeting away; the battle will soon be over.

Be strong and of good comfort. Stand fast; quit you like men. *Keep close to the Word in daily reading,* and the peace of God will rule in your hearts and minds and preserve you amid all chafes and tumults, unto His glorious kingdom, which will heal all sores, and chase all darkness for ever away.

Your fellow-sufferer, fellow-soldier, fellow-pilgrim, and fellow-suppliant of the mercy of God unto eternal life.—Robert Roberts.

Destroy the Sinners, the Amalekites

"The Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation"—Exodus 17:16

As we have followed our daily reading of God's Word, we have again had our attention focussed upon Saul, Israel's first mortal king. We have noted his humble acceptance of the task of freeing Israel from their enemies, his success against them, while he followed a righteous course, only to witness his rejection by God as his self-will asserted itself against the purposes of the Creator.

Today we have seen an old man with a horn of oil fearfully taking his journey to an obscure town to anoint a man king in the room of Saul. The background of this lesson we have had imprinted on our minds for a number of years. Perhaps in the simplest parables of Old Testament history are contained some of the most important lessons for us to receive. We discover some of the most basic elements of God's plan of salvation, and the operation of a Divine hand over a wide range of events.

The events which led up to the rejection of Saul and the anointing of David had their roots many hundreds of years earlier in Israel's history. We see the exodus of Israel from Egypt and their journey toward Mount Sinai. On the way we find that the Amalekites attacked Israel from the rear and Moses appointed Joshua to lead Israel in battle against them. While Moses' hands were held up by Aaron and Hur the battle was successful for Israel, *who finally routed the enemy at the going down of the sun.* It was at this time that God required Moses to make the following record:

"Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under the heaven . . . Because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation" (Ex. 17:14-16).

It is interesting to note also from this 17th chapter of Exodus that Moses had just previously smitten the Rock in Rephidim and brought forth the living waters for Israel at the commandment of God. The association of thoughts from this reading gives us the foundation for later events. *The smiting of the Rock speaks of the crucifixion of the Master.*

"Thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink" (Ex. 17:6).

It shows us the necessity for the death of Jesus, that the waters of life might be provided for the Israel of God. We think of Christ's words to the woman of Samaria (John 4:14) —

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

And we are instructed that Christ is the Rock upon which all our hopes rest—the foundation stone and the chief corner stone.

The war with the Amalekites from generation to generation until they are completely destroyed, and the necessity of holding up of righteous hands, speak of the overcoming of the evil of the world in whatever form, whether manifest in the nations of the world, or in the sin-principle which all flesh manifests. This defeat of Amalek came after the provision of water by the smiting of the rock. It thus shows the ultimate outcome of the smiting of the Savior, and that it will finally end in the removal of sin and death from the earth. This is the meaning of the words of God addressed to the serpent in Eden:

"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15).

It will be a struggle *until the going down of the sun*. We find then that the Amalekites are a type of the power of sin, which must be overcome. God has declared it is His purpose to destroy this force, and cause His glory to abound in the earth. While this nation was there, they stood between God and the ultimate purpose He has in mind. Thus in type of the intentions of God, Moses said (Deut. 25:19)—

"When the Lord thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about . . . thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it."

One of the most remarkable prophecies of Scripture God caused to be uttered by Balaam. Balaam, in blessing Israel in the plains of Moab, spake of the coming Savior who should deliver Israel:

"There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and shall destroy all the children of Sheth" (Num. 24:17).

And in this same connection, we find the linking of the thought of Amalek being destroyed, and we are afforded a clue to the meaning of the name Amalek as well—

"And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations; but his latter end shall be that he perish forever" (Num. 24:20).

Amalek was the first nation to afflict Israel in their wilderness wandering. Thus they became a type of the first opposing influence to the children of God. The Hebrew word for "*first*" in v. 20 is "*Rosh*," meaning chief or head. Bro. Thomas has clearly outlined the use of this word "*Rosh*" in connection with the latter day Amalekite (Russia) who afflicts the natural seed of Abraham on the mountains of Israel. We are acquainted with the Revised Version rendering of Ezekiel 38:2—

"Son of man, set thy face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophecy against him."

The word translated "chief" in the Auth. Vers. is thus the name of Russia. The end of this confederacy of nations by Divine destruction is in line with the words of Moses many years before,

"I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone" (Eze. 38:22).

Therefore we find Balaam being caused to exclaim—

"His (Israel's) king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted" (Num. 24:7).

"Agag" was the title of the rulers of the Amalekites. We recall that Haman is described as an "Agagite," and Josephus says, in this connection, that he was an Amalekite. This may or may not be true, but in any case it illustrates Israel's concept of Amalek as their traditional enemy and gives added point to the events of the book of Esther as typical of the final struggle with the Gogian Amalekite of the latter days.

This major world event which draws upon us so quickly is but one act upon the world stage, as the Divine drama unfolds, revealing a wise and merciful plan for the earth's inhabitants. The final act is when death itself is swallowed up in victory; all the other references being but types of that which is to be done. How fitting then that *Amalek* should be the chief or head and stand for that force which shall finally be mortally wounded by that which has been accomplished through the seed of the woman.

Wherever we find the enemies of the children of Israel, we find the remnants of Amalek in their midst, continuing their work. They appear with the Moabites who oppressed Israel in the days of Eglon. The Amalekites are among those who suffered defeat by the hand of Deborah and Barak. They joined their energies with the Midianites against Israel, stealing Israel's food in the days of Gideon (Judges 6:3-4)—

"The Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east . . . and destroyed the increase of the earth . . . and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass."

It was by faith in God that this innumerable host, described as "grasshoppers for multitude," were completely overthrown by 300 men of Divine choice. This speaks to us of the victory over sin, when the resurrection day arrives and the faithful few—typified by Gideon's little band—have the sin nature removed by glorification.

It is with renewed interest that we again read the life of Saul and David, two men who were called to be kings, two who were selected by God from the natural seed. And as we analyse their lives we are impressed with the similarity to the call of all God's servants, and of the lessons which have been preserved for our spiritual well-being.

Saul accepted the call in a humble way and prepared to shoulder the responsibilities in a godly manner. He was at first even reluctant to appear before the people—

"And when they sought him, he could not be found."

His early frame of mind is declared by Samuel some years later—

"When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?" (1 Sam. 15:17).

The very purpose for which Saul was anointed is expressed in the following verse:

"The Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly **destroy the sinners, the Amalekites**, and fight against them until they be consumed" (1 Sam. 15:18).

This is the same as the call of all God's servants. *They are called to kingship with Christ*. They are sent on a journey toward the kingdom. They have been expressly appointed to destroy the sin nature within themselves, to prepare themselves by obedience to God's commands for the co-rulership with the elect in the final and complete destruction of all forces typified by Amalek.

The political and ecclesiastical forms of government which have oppressed and deceived the earth's inhabitants will be removed from the scene. All vestiges of worldliness must be destroyed for the glory of God to abound to the ends of the earth. When God's judgments are executed through the glorified host of the saints, then shall the nations learn righteousness. All that is man-glorifying must be abased.

Hereby we realize the urgency of the command to Saul,

"Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass" (1 Sam. 15:3).

All were to be destroyed—a complete crucifixion of the flesh and the things which are most dear to it. This command was more personalized by the apostle Paul, when he said—

"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24).

The Word of God which came to Saul from Samuel indicates the failure of the king in that unto which he had been anointed. It forms a basic lesson for all the "called-out ones" to take seriously to heart (1 Sam. 15:22-23)—

"To obey is better than sacrifice . . . because thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, He hath rejected thee from being king."

Amalek, the sin-nature, had been successful over Saul. Because of it, he lost his kingdom and crown. It is not a coincidence therefore, when we read in 2 Sam. 1, of a young man coming to David from the battle of Gilboa, where Saul was slain. When asked by David who he was, he replied,

"I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite" (2 Sam. 1:13).

This statement is twice repeated in this chapter. Saul asked the young man to slay him. He stated that he slew him because he knew *he could not live after he had fallen*. How pointed is this remark! It is the most important point which comes out of this incident and it impresses us with the seriousness of the battle against Amalek and how important it is in our warfare.

"I took the crown that was upon his head" (2 Sam. 1:10).

Because Saul disobeyed the command of God he had his crown *taken by an Amalekite*. Jesus brings this lesson home to us when speaking through the apostle John to the ecclesia at Philadelphia,

"Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man **take thy crown**" (Rev. 3:11).

Though we may fall, yet there is hope if we turn unto the Lord with faith and trust. There is hope of our living in His sight. The elevation of Jesus to the right hand of the Father is an extension of His merciful kindness.

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord . . . though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand" (Psa. 37:23-24).

Saul's failure to carry out this command is an indication of his lack of perception of the high calling unto which he had been called. He stands for the class of individuals who become associated with the purposes of God, but fail to finish the course in an acceptable manner. The fundamental lesson being impressed was obedience to specific commands and not to interpret the Divine will to suit fleshly desires or ambitions. This incident of Saul's failure points up the fact that we shall not be saved just because we are associated with Israel. How sad will be the realization that we have only crucified those things which are vile and refuse to *ourselves*, and have assembled around us many things pleasing to the flesh but vile and refuse to God.

"Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal."

It is interesting to note that this took place in *Gilgal*, the scene of the circumcising of Israel after they came out of the wilderness, as recorded in Josh. 5:2-9.

"This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the place is called Gilgal unto this day."

It was a type of the removal of sin at the judgment seat—the removal of all that offends or is related to Egyptian darkness. How important it is then for us to destroy all the Agags in our lives, those things of the world which we think are so desirable. They will be destroyed at the judgment if not before and *we with them* if we do not heed the command (1 John 2:15)—

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

* * *

"And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul" (1 Sam. 15:35).

Why did Samuel mourn for Saul? Because he had anointed him at God's instructions as captain over His people. He had seen Israel as it were sheep without a shepherd, or so it seemed to him. He had placed his hopes for national rebirth in this man of favorable countenance and height. He had seen Saul start his work with promise, only to have his hopes dashed to the ground after a number of years.

Samuel would now be an old man. Would he feel that his life as one "sent by God" (the meaning of "Samuel") was lost—that he had placed his hopes on man and not on God? God was the One Who was to bring salvation. It was not to be by the height of the stature nor the arm of man.

Samuel mourned therefore because he felt that there was no man. The words of Jacob to Judah should have guided Samuel to seek further counsel of God, rather than feel the uselessness of the struggle:

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. 49:10).

Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin, Samuel of the tribe of Levi, and thus were types of national Israel. They together reflect the nation's attitude toward that which was being done. How could

salvation come if not by them? It was necessary for Samuel to come to realize that salvation was on a higher plane. Thus we read:

"How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel?" (1 Sam. 16:1).

"Fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons."

"Fill thine horn with oil." This statement is the antithesis of the thought of Samuel mourning for Saul. With the assurance and promises of God there was no cause for mourning in the sense of futility. It is true that the position of God's servants is now comprehended in the symbol of sackcloth wearing. But it is not of those who have no hope. Samuel's state of mind gives the impression of overlooking the promises of God. Was God's arm shortened, that it could not save? The fact that he was told to fill his horn with oil speaks itself of an unprepared state, even though he had told Saul that God was to give the kingdom to one better than himself.

Do we not recall the five foolish virgins who took no oil in their vessels? Is it not an exhortation to us to be in a prepared state of mind at all times, to turn to the Word of God when the way seems dark, when the path is obscure? The purpose of God is sure. It only becomes dim by our failure to dip deeply into the oil of the declarations which God has made from time to time, mercifully revealing His plan.

Oil is a symbol of light, revelation and the Word of God. It is associated with joy and happiness. It is therefore the opposite to a state of darkness and mourning. One of the first instructions to Israel was in the bringing of olive oil for the light of the tabernacle to cause the lamp to burn always (Exo. 27:20). Then there were special preparations for the holy anointing oil (Exo. 30:25-31). The full import of all these typical appointments is seen in what we read in Psa. 45:7—

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

This anointing of the Savior was a prospect of that which was to come. His anointing by the Holy Spirit as witnessed by John the Baptist brought about persecution and tribulation; but the outcome of all this was to be joy and peace:

"Jesus . . . for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame" (Heb. 12:2).

The ultimate reality of these things is when God tabernacles with men, when His glory fills all things; when—

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain" (Rev. 21:4).

This command to Samuel was a definite move in the direction of the specific purpose of God in Christ; that is to *destroy Amalek*. It was a witness or recognition by God of the line of the seed and the nature of the seed by which salvation would come.

"I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite"—1 Sam. 16:1.

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

The Origin of the Texas Gathering

The following items of Ecclesial News, from the Christadelphian magazine of 1879 and 1880, will be of interest in connection with the notice of the 76th Annual Texas Gathering in this issue. These extracts describe the first and second gatherings. Local brethren will be able to reconcile the apparent difference as to the location. The gathering is still held at the same place.

April, 1879: Bro. J. Banta states that the brethren of several ecclesias have come to an understanding to have a fraternal gathering on Williamson's Creek in Blanco County, Texas, to commence on the 2nd Sunday in August next. The proposed place of meeting is near a stage stand, on the Austin and Fredericksburg stage line.

Dec., 1879: Bro. J. Banta reports that the fraternal gathering came off in August, in proper order, with beneficial results to all concerned. Nearly all the ecclesias in Texas were represented, and there were several isolated brethren from different parts. There was one case of obedience at the close of the meetings—bro. HALEY, of Blanco County, who has been reading and hearing the Truth for several years.

May, 1880: It is decided among the brethren in Texas to hold another fraternal gathering at the same place it was held last August—on the Piedernales River, in the lower end of Gillespie County. The gathering will be held the 3rd Sunday in July at 10 a.m., at an arbor constructed for the purpose.

Oct., 1880: A number of brethren and sisters from several of the ecclesias of Texas met in a fraternal capacity in the eastern portion of Gillespie County. The meeting was convened Saturday, July 17, and continued until the next Tuesday at 12 noon. Edifying addresses on the practical phases of the Truth were delivered, and the beloved expressed themselves greatly benefited by the meeting. At proper hours first principles were exhibited for the enlightenment of strangers.

It was agreed to hold a similar meeting in August, 1881, should the Lord not call us to the great gathering together unto him, before that time.

A knowledge of the Truth will be of no value to us if it fail to effectuate that purification of heart—that moral and intellectual assimilation to the Divine character which it is intended to produce in all who are called to the holy calling. Christ made the state of the heart and the character of our actions the most prominent feature of his teaching.—Bro. Roberts.

"Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge"

"Where there is no vision, the people perish; but he that keepeth the law, happy is he"—Prov. 29:18.

The two books of Chronicles are a brief resume of God's dealings with men from the Creation to the destruction of the Kingdom. Today we are brought to the final chapter in that history—a tragic history of wasted opportunity and unfulfilled expectations.

What glorious possibilities were open to Israel!—a holy nation, a chosen people, a sanctified vessel through whom God had condescended to reveal Himself to mankind.

But how miserably they failed! What prolonged distress and wretchedness could have been avoided if they had only hearkened to the gentle voice of divine instruction, speaking to them as a Father to His children. What useless sorrow, just because they would not learn!

Is it indeed true that we can only learn wisdom by the path of bitter experience?—only learn it when it is too late? Does man lack entirely the faculty of avoiding evil by timely self-discipline? Must human experience always be one endless cycle of heedless folly and hopeless regret?

Fortunately, we have the assurance that this is not the whole picture, although the broad course of Scripture and experience indicate that it is almost universally true.

But there have always been the exceptions. Our hope lies in discovering and applying that hidden source of divine power by which these exceptions succeeded in breaking the strong, downward gravity of the natural and drawing themselves upward toward God. From both the success of the few, and the failure of the many, we must take lessons that will enable us to succeed.

What happened to Israel? What went wrong with their bright beginnings—their eager enthusiasm for God? And how could it have been avoided? Did they voluntarily and consciously choose the path of self-destruction, or did it overtake them without warning from behind as the accumulated consequence of deeper and deeper self-deception and neglect?

To the very last moment they did not see the blow falling. Each increasingly ominous portent of disaster found them further blinded and emboldened by the perverted fleshly exhilaration of a still lower descent into abomination and rebellion against God.

If they could have seen to the end the consequences of their course—if they had fully realized what was in store—if they could have *clearly perceived things in their true light*—would they have acted differently, before it was too late? Unquestionably, unless they were entirely devoid of reason.

So, in the final analysis, the whole trouble lay in their perception. True, what led them astray were the natural motions of their flesh, but everyone has them. A man is not a helpless slave to his flesh in any respect, *unless he chooses to be*. There is always available an inexhaustible supply of divine power, if man will only accept it to help fight himself.

But sometimes we are not very anxious to get rid of our idols, and after a few half-hearted attempts as a concession to our conscience, we find it easy to convince ourselves that it cannot be done.

THE PLEA OF WEAKNESS WILL NOT BEAR THE LIGHT OF DAY. God delights to make the weak strong, if they will unreservedly give themselves to Him.

The trouble with Israel lay in their perception. They could not see. Darkness enveloped them, and they stumbled on to destruction, fighting against the light, mocking the messengers of God, twisting themselves tighter and tighter in the net of their own blind obstinacy until the wrath of God arose like a flood, and there was no remedy.

Now all this is recorded for our admonition. There is something here for us. Something we must have. Each chapter adds its particular ray to that light which alone can deliver us from the same sad end.

Israel illustrates the *almost inevitable* course. The course which the overwhelming majority follow. The course which can be escaped only by constant, tireless effort and application, and by being *very different from the majority*.

God only proposes to save a very small remnant of the countless millions that come and go. And God is no respecter of persons. It follows then that those whom He selects must be exceptional to a very marked degree, *and they must be constantly on guard to maintain this distinction*.

Of what must this necessary distinctiveness consist? Not in accomplishments, or ability, or intellectual pre-eminence—but just one thing, *putting God FIRST*. Putting God first consists primarily in keeping Him constantly in the forefront of our daily consciousness. Remembering and not forgetting.

Many things fill our minds, and come and go as memory is provoked, but *it is what occupies our interest and attention that counts*. What or who is it to whom our mind irresistibly turns whenever the pressure of the immediate present is relaxed? *That* is the acid test of our affections. Here we stand face to face with our real selves.

What or who occupies the secret, inner sanctum of our heart where at every opportunity we delight to retire and muse? This is where God looks, in making up His jewels, and if He does not find Himself there, *He passes on*. We may have lots of other things laid out to show Him, but He will not be interested in them. David said,

"Thy testimonies are my delight and the rejoicing of my heart . . . I have longed after Thy precepts . . . I have loved Thy commandments . . . Thy statutes have been my songs in my pilgrimage . . . how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day."

David realized what the Scriptures are—not a book of ordinances for the regulation of servants, but a *divinely-provided medium of intimate communion between a Father and His children*.

Many express regret that the Bible is not more simple and precise. They complain because it does not give a clear-cut, straightforward list of just what we must and must not do, and a catalogue of just those things we must believe. But such people entirely miss its purpose. God has made it as little like a legal document, and as much like an affectionate personal message, as possible.

In the Old Testament, employing every shade of literary style, He tells us a story filled with vital and living characters, and in telling this story, He skilfully weaves in all the lessons He wants us to learn.

In the New Testament He partly follows the same plan, but much of what He has to say does not lend itself to this, so He writes us a series of very personal letters and sends them by a man who wins our heart by his simple humility and unconcealed affection. Paul does not dictate—he beseeches and entreats—pleads that he may be spared the sorrow of having to exercise his authority.

This method of presenting the Scriptures to us necessitates much application to draw out its treasures. But this is not a disadvantage. God has a reasonable right to assume that a message from Him will be eagerly received by His true children—that they will delight to dwell upon it day after day and search patiently for its hidden mysteries.

The Bible is circulated in uncounted millions. It is found everywhere—this personal message from a Father to His children. But, written as it is, there is no danger that rude and unsympathetic intruders will pry into intimacies and confidences that are not for them. To all such it is a sealed book—an incomprehensible mystery.

* * *

Wherein did Israel fail? What lessons are we to take from their failure? They lost their grip on the one thing that could save them. It seeped away, because they neglected it. It is natural to think, "How utterly depraved they were! At least *we* do not do *those* things. Murder, violence, every conceivable form of wickedness. We ourselves must be doing quite well, considering how bad the flesh can be!"

But such a view misses the point. These things did not begin in this form. They started to slip very gradually and imperceptibly. They are recorded to show, *not how good we are in comparison, but how far it is possible to go, once the foundation is undermined.*

They did not realize that the only safeguard was to keep a vision of God and His law bright in the forefront of their consciousness. Lose this, and there is no solid ground left. The descent is just a matter of time.

Hosea, in the second reading, continues the same theme:

"Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel; for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land . . . My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

"They did not like to retain God in their knowledge, therefore He gave them over to a reprobate mind and vile affections."

They would have preferred, perhaps, just to go partway. The depths to which they ultimately descended would have appalled them at first. *But there was no partway.* God did not allow it. When once they had chosen forbidden fruit, God saw to it that they had their fill.

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

Transgression is just ignorance. Trying to battle the inevitable. Taking issue with the omnipotence of God. A persistent delusion that we are different from everyone else and that somehow we will escape the consequences of our folly.

Sin is obstinate and childish refusal to face the facts. God is the central fact of the universe. God's will, His power, His purpose— these are the basic facts which dominate eternity. They are inescapable. Sin consists in acting in a way that ignores these facts. Sin therefore is ignorance; often wilful, intentional ignorance. Peter says of the ungodly,

"For this they are WILLINGLY ignorant of" (2 Pet. 3:5).

To transgress divine law, we must either not know, or else not give full weight to, all the facts of the case. *The cure is fuller knowledge.* Paul says (Eph. 5:29),

"No man ever yet hated his own flesh."

Yet sin is self-destruction. If a man holds his head under water, he will drown. He transgresses against the laws of nature, and nature is stronger than he, and he cannot escape from it.

This is far more true if he transgresses against the laws of God. He will perish. He is setting himself up against irresistible forces—he is making himself an obstacle in the way of an unalterable purpose. God has said,

"The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9).

This leaves no room for ignorance, for the purpose is that knowledge shall be universal. Knowledge is light.

"If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not."

Here is the safeguard: keep out in the open daylight—away from the hidden things of darkness. Keep in the safe narrow beam of revealed light, accepting it in simple faith and holding to the center of the beam.

There are always myriads of unanswered questions along the edges on either side where the light only half shines and fades off into the darkness. It is very easy to become preoccupied with these—to spend precious time elaborating theories regarding partially perceived shapes, or to halt stubbornly in the half light demanding answers where none are given.

"Fear God and keep His commandments . . . The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."

Sin is lack of knowledge—natural darkness and ignorance—the blind groping of the thinking of the flesh.

The remedy is knowledge, divine knowledge, constantly increased by study. A gradual building up of enlightenment and education—line upon line, precept upon precept—gradually displacing the shifting chaos of ignorance and undisciplined natural feeling with a solid framework of knowledge and clear perception of eternal fact.

The textbook is the Scriptures. It has often been said by prominent men that a knowledge of the Scriptures is better than a college education—that is, even from a *natural and worldly* point of view and for *natural* ends. It gives a fuller and more rounded view of life and background of experience.

But its real purpose is to prepare us—not for the pre-eminence in the life that now is—but for that which is to come; to school us in the *knowledge of God*; to give us a proportioned groundwork for balanced and constructive self-development. Its peculiar suitability in this respect is occasionally brought vividly to our attention by our conversations with others who have no knowledge of it.

The average individual, for example, appears singularly ignorant of history—even of the little uncertain light on the past which secular history offers. The reason is quite obvious—the average natural man has no *incentive* to investigate history. Apart from a knowledge of the plan of God, history is uninteresting, purposeless, and depressing to the mind.

The natural man, like an animal, lives within the restricted sphere of his own personal activities, absorbed in himself, ignorant and heedless of either the future or the past.

But the student of Scripture finds his view extended boundlessly in every direction. The world around him, and the long, colorful cavalcade of history is invested with intense interest and purpose. He is like a man suddenly released from a dungeon and placed on a mountaintop.

The alphabet of Scriptural education is the historical detail of the Old Testament. This sketches, often in the briefest terms but always sufficiently, the general background upon which the inner significance of the play is developed. This background is essential to a proper knowledge of the whole. Not, of course, every detail of it but at least the general outline in its proper proportions.

We learn, and sometimes it seems that this is more important than anything else, that *there is nothing particularly unique about ourselves, our lives, our problems*. An endless procession of humanity has preceded us. Every phase and shade of human experience and emotion has come, and gone, and come again, time without number. We are no different. We are no exception.

The rules of life and death were written long before we came. Every situation that confronts us is a well-trod path in which, of those who have passed, a few have succeeded by accepting divine guidance and the rest have failed.

And now it is our turn. *The rules will not be changed on our account*. We must write a record to put beside the rest. Life is complex, but the rules of life are simple:

"FEAR GOD, AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS."

Not asking for special favors and consideration, just because it happens to be us, but asking instead for the wisdom and strength and courage to take our place with the rest and fill our part as it comes to us.

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

The great, consuming pity was that *the knowledge had been there* but it had slipped through their fingers. Gradually they forgot all about it. Once or twice they ran across it by accident, as in the days of Josiah, and there was a great scurry of self-searching for a while, but it soon slipped away again, and the old self-satisfied slumber returned.

How strenuously Paul labored against this deadly tendency to relax and fall asleep! His constant keynote is, "*Watch, and remember.*" In the chapter read this morning (Acts 20), as he takes his leave of the brethren at Ephesus, we enter perhaps more closely into his inner feelings than anywhere else.

A man of great capabilities, signally honored in the service of God, yet appealingly simple and sincere. He was wholly unreserved and unashamed in his demonstration of affection for those whom he had begotten and labored over in the Truth, knowing as he left them that many would not be able to hold on to the end—"Watch, and remember."

V. 31: "Therefore WATCH, and REMEMBER, that by the space of 3 years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

Remembrance—

"Have these things always in, remembrance."

"Stir you up by putting you in remembrance."

"Put the brethren in remembrance of these things."

And the words of Jesus, the night he was betrayed—

"Do this, in remembrance of me, until I come."

THE READING OF THE WORD STANDS FIRST

The reading of the Word stands FIRST in the process of spiritual horticulture. We are told to "desire the sincere milk of the Word, that we may GROW thereby." Apart from the Word there will be no growth.

You cannot see a tree grow while you stand and look at it, nor during many visits. Would a gardener be wise in stopping the cultivation because of this? —Bro. Roberts

Young Men

The record of wicked king Ahab's reign reveals to us a glimpse of one who was an exception to the national apostasy. He was none other than the governor of Ahab's house—Obadiah (I Kgs. 18:3). It is mentioned parenthetically that he "*feared the Lord greatly,*" and in proof thereof it is said that—

"When Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah took 100 prophets and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them."

That one occupying a position so near to royalty should have been of such a different mind in religious matters, is very remarkable. He must have been far from comfortable in it, and his successful effort to thwart Jezebel's murderous device could not have been carried out without risk to his own life.

What is the explanation of this fidelity to Jehovah in the midst of such an idolatrous palace and people? Is it not seen in this?—

"I, thy servant, fear the Lord **from my youth**" (v. 12).

To give oneself to God when young in years has several advantages: the mind gets less corrupted by human follies and is provided with a safeguard against the pitfalls of an evil world. By reason of exercise at a time when pliant and sensitive, it grows strong in spiritual things, and thus as age advances it obtains greater power of resisting evil, and doing good. So we are told—

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

* * *

To be raised to a throne when of tender age is, in the ordinary course of things, a calamity. The whole history of Israel testifies to the *greater difficulty of serving God in high places than in low ones*. Among the few successful instances Josiah must not be omitted. Placed on the throne of Judah when but 8 years of age, he was not long before his righteous disposition manifested itself. At 16 he began to seek God, at 20 to purge Judah from idolatry.

Not content with uprooting evil in his own territory, he extended the cleansing process to the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon and Naphtali (2 Chr. 34). At 26 he proceeded to repair the Temple, and while this was in progress an incident occurred which exposes the degenerate state of things at that time.

A copy of the Mosaic Law was found by Hilkiah the priest. It was immediately taken to the king, to whom it was read. The reading produced anger. Was it the anger of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, when a prophecy specially written by Jeremiah was read to him? Quite the reverse. He was not angry with the words read, nor with the writer, but *with himself and his people* for their dereliction of duty—

"He rent his clothes."

But he did not stop there. He enquired of the Lord, through the prophetess Huldah, what they should do; "For," says he—

"Great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the Word of the Lord, to do after all that is written in this book" (v. 21).

The answer from God was comforting in regard to Josiah, but the reverse as to the nation. With a view to imbuing his people with his own zeal, he called together—

". . . all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests and the Levites, and all the people, great and small; and he read in their ears all the words of the Book of the Covenant that was found in the house of the Lord" (v. 30).

He publicly entered into a covenant with the Lord to keep His commandments, and caused all that were present to stand to it. Having effectively swept away the idolatrous abominations from all the country of Israel, he used the authority of his kingship to make all Israel serve the Lord. His

subjects cheerfully responded, and cooperated with great cordiality in keeping a Passover—the like of which had not been seen since the days of Samuel.

The striking feature of Josiah's character is *promptitude of action*. He was not of those who read the law of God and immediately forget it; who see the way, but go not in it. His very promptness no doubt increased his strength for carrying to a successful issue the process of national purification. *Delay in executing a good resolution weakens the power to perform it*. How important, then, to allow the least possible time to elapse between purpose and performance!

Especially is this so in fulfilling divine commands, for the old man of the flesh is always ready to take advantage of delay. If Josiah had delayed, he might have been overcome by the surrounding lethargy and infidelity. But, through vigorous measures, his zeal for God was imparted to the whole nation. As an instance of the wide-spread influence which can be exerted by a youth, Josiah stands out prominently as an example for all time.

* * *

The young man who next claims notice is introduced to us, not in the land of Israel, but in a foreign country. *Daniel* appears on the scene very early in the record of the Babylonish captivity, and we find him still alive at the close of the seventy years (Dan. 9:2).

He must, therefore, have been comparatively young when the incident recorded in the first chapter of his prophetic book took place. He was at that time one of the children of Israel—

" . . . in whom was no blemish, but well favored, and skilful in all wisdom, cunning in knowledge, and understanding science."

On this account he and his companions were selected for the purpose of being taught—

" . . . the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans,"

—that they might—

" . . . stand in the king's palace."

But before being permitted to "stand before the king," they had to undergo a three-years' dietetic regimen, consisting of "the king's meat" and "wine." When this became known, Daniel—

" . . . purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself."

No explanation is given as to the reason for this resolution. Most probably it was based upon the Mosaic interdict respecting certain kinds of food declared to be unclean. Whatever the reason the decision shows an early determination to carry out a course deemed necessary, *regardless of consequences*.

That his purpose was divinely approved is evident (v. 19)—

"God had brought Daniel into favor with the prince of the eunuchs."

—thus preparing the way for the comparative test which Daniel proposed to "the prince of the eunuchs." That test was of a very simple character, namely, a ten-day's diet of pulse and water, and in proposing it Daniel associates with himself three Hebrew companions; from which we may conclude that Daniel's decision had influenced Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to adopt the same course. The result of the test was a complete victory for these four Hebrews, and immediately afterwards—

"God gave them knowledge, and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams."

Their fidelity in this matter is clearly the cause of their subsequent display of divine wisdom before the King of Babylon, who,

". . . found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm" (v. 20).

The most remarkable of these displays is recorded with great detail. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, but after he awoke he forgot what it was about. With the despotism of an arbitrary monarch, and the superstitious fear of an idolater, he demanded of the "magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans" to reveal to him that which had passed from his memory, and then to interpret it.

Death was the penalty for failure; gifts and honor the reward of success. Humanly speaking the task was an impossible one, and this the Babylonian wise men were compelled to confess. Hence the decree went forth that they should be slain, and Daniel and his companions were sought for this purpose. It would appear that Daniel had not previously been aware of the matter, for he asked what it meant. After receiving an explanation from "the captain of the King's guard," he "went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time." He did more; he promised—

". . . that he would shew the king the interpretation" (v. 17).

The request was evidently granted, for Daniel—

"Went to his house, and made the thing known to his companions."

And what was his next step? He proposed that—

". . . they would desire mercies of God concerning this secret."

This proposal will present Daniel's conduct in two opposite aspects according to the mind of the spectator. The natural man will say that the interpretation promised to the king was an act of *presumption* on the part of Daniel, seeing that it was made without divine authority. But, the true son of Abraham will say it was not presumption, *it was strong faith which gave him such courage*. He had had experience previously of divine tuition in the interpretation of "visions and dreams;" he had tasted the special favor of God since being placed in a position which he did not seek; and he recognized the God of Abraham to be the preserver of Israel.

The present was no ordinary occasion; it involved the question of life or death to Daniel and his companions. They were faithful to Jehovah, and had done nothing to merit such an untimely end. *Would God allow them to be slain in such circumstances?* Daniel's faith and perception led him to conclude otherwise. Hence his boldness in promising the desired revelation.

In this he rested not on his own power but, like Joseph of old (with whose case he was doubtless familiar), he relied upon God. He manifested this by approaching the Almighty in prayer. And what was the nature of his petition? It is not recorded, but its substance may be gathered from the proposal to ask "mercies" that he and his fellows—

". . . should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon."

His attitude was purely that of a suppliant; he did not claim anything from God as a matter of right, and we can scarcely suppose that he approached God in a complaining spirit. There was no question in his mind as to God's *power* to reveal the dream. If any doubt existed at all it was to God's *willingness* to do so.

In asking it as an act of mercy he adopted the most effective method of obtaining a favorable response. On this basis only is prayer of any avail; *there must be complete subjection to the divine will and a disposition of mind to accept anything from God as an act of pure favor:*

"The secret of the Lord is **with them that fear Him.**"

What is that "secret"? *To see things not from a human, but from a divine point of view.* It is another way of saying—

Divine wisdom is a "secret" whose revelation is as necessary to save from endless death as was the revelation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream to save Daniel from brutal slaughter.

The "wisdom" which was given to him is but an illustration of God's readiness to grant wisdom of another kind to those who do all things as in His sight, and approach Him in the right way.

In giving the interpretation of the dream to Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel abased himself and exalted God. "Art *thou* able," said the king, "to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?" But Daniel replied,

"This secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have."

In like manner it may be said that the "secret of the Lord" is not revealed to any because of the intellect or knowledge they possess. It comes through the enlightening power of the Word and divine training; and *these are influences which only operate on those in whom dwells humility and fear of God.*

The Texas Fraternal Gathering

By the merciful provision of God on behalf of His people, the 76th Annual Texas Fraternal Gathering was held at Hye, Texas, for six days as planned. Most of the Texas brethren were there, and the attendance from other states and Canada was good. Those from Canada were, bro. & sis. W. J. Pickford (Lethbridge), bro. & sis. C. Clubb and sis. Ola Barber (London). From Detroit, bro. G. Growcott & sis. Anne Growcott; from Lake Ariel, Pa., bro. & sis. H. Sommerville; from Jersey City, N.J., bro. N. Mammone; from Soap Lake, Wash., sis. Hilda Milanos; from Pomona, Calif., bro. & sis. O. Beauchamp; from Carlsbad, N.M., sis. Mary Cooper; and from Denver, Colo., sisters Icle Osborne & Ethel Hoage.

Three services were held each day except the last. The Sunday morning meeting on August 1 brought to a close one of the most upbuilding and encouraging Gatherings ever held here. The inspiring messages of life and hope that the brethren gave in their lectures and exhortations will be a fruitful source of strength in the hearts and minds of those who were privileged to hear them for a long time to come. Tape recordings were made of all the talks and will be available through the loan service conducted by the Houston brethren.

Beside the three meetings, the daily portions were read each day at 5 in the Tabernacle, and during the various intervals tape recordings of addresses by brethren throughout the country not able to attend, were listened to.

TUESDAY

The opening service came at 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, July 27. Bro. Pickford spoke on the subject, "**The Glorious Day of Promise for the Bride That Hath Made Herself Ready.**" Rev. 19 was read, from which the title of the subject was taken. Bro. Pickford spoke of the many days of sadness, of

wrestling for the prize, of being made perfect through suffering, of bearing the cross, and of the great tribulation: all of which are a part of the necessary preparation that will finally make the Bride ready, "that she might be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for fine linen is the righteousness of the saints."

At 3:00 p.m. the same day bro. Mammone spoke on the subject, "**The Marriage of the Lamb.**" Matt. 22 was read: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son." In the beginning marriage was divinely instituted. "I will make an help meet for him" (one answering to him.) The chaste virgin is being called out now. She must be faithful in doctrine and practice, and she must be separate from other entangling influences as she prepares her wedding garment, clean and white, without spot or wrinkle, for the great occasion when the marriage of the Lamb has come. The Lamb "had been slain" but now appears "with seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven (completeness) spirits of God."

Bro. Beauchamp spoke at 8:00 p.m. Tuesday on the subject, "**God's Eternal Purpose with the Earth and Man Upon It.**" Isa. 45 was read. "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain; He formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord and there is none else." Several friends were present to hear the speaker expound from the Word of Truth the Eternal Purpose of God to fill the earth with His glory and to redeem man from the curse of sin and death. "Look upon Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am the Lord and there is none else."

WEDNESDAY

Bro. Growcott spoke at 11:00 a.m. Wednesday. His subject was: "**Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit.**" Matt. 5 was read. "This chapter, together with 6 and 7, contain the very heart and center of divine teaching. In these chapters," said the speaker, "we find the deepest and most comprehensive presentation of spiritual principles that Christ taught and lived by. All claiming relationship to him, should be more familiar with these chapters than with anything else in the world." The word "poor" used here was used to signify, "crouching, abased, destitute, emptied of all respect and self-esteem." It was always used in a bad sense until Jesus used it as a badge of His followers. Those closest to him most vividly appreciate their own lack of worthiness. "Divinely blissful are those whose self-searchings have led them to the depths of the realization of the meaningless vanity of all human endeavour, and who are reconciled and ready to relinquish all."

At 3:00 p.m. bro. Sommerville was the speaker. His subject was, "**Wisdom's Temple.**" From the reading of Prov. 9 the speaker developed, with clarity and force, the subject he had in hand. "Wisdom, hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars." In Eph. 4:4-6 is found an enumeration of these seven pillars of wisdom, which taken as a whole form the completeness of those holy things to which we stand related in the Truth: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even, as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

At 8:00 o'clock Wednesday evening bro. Pickford spoke to the brethren and many friends who were present, on the subject, "**Many of Them that Sleep in the Dust of the Earth Shall Awake.**" The title of the subject was taken from Dan. 12, which was read: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." To await this time when. "Michael shall stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people"—"the time of the dead, that they should be judged," was the hope of the saints of all ages. As it is expressed by Job (19:25-26), "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

THURSDAY

On Thursday at 11:00 a.m. the assembly met to hear bro. Beauchamp on the interesting subject, **"The Promises Made of God to the Fathers of Israel Are Our Only Hope."** The reading was Eph. 2, where the striking words of Paul in v. 12, show that outside of God's purpose with Israel as expressed in the covenants of promise, there is no hope for anyone. "At that time (when they were Gentiles in the flesh, see v. 11) ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the World." These promises made of God to the Fathers of Israel form the subject matter of the Gospel of Salvation by which men can be saved.

Bro. Clubb spoke at 3:00 p.m. on the subject, **"The Message to the Seven Ecclesias."** Rev. 2 was read. "I know thy works," said he who walked in the midst of the golden candlesticks, which are the seven ecclesias. As he knew their works in the first century, so he knows ours today in the 20th. It is our wisdom, then, as the brother remarked, to cling with single-mindedness to our first love, to be "Israelites indeed," not allowing false teaching to corrupt our minds, but hold fast and "strengthen the things that remain." Jesus says, "He that overcometh will I give power over the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father."

Bro. Growcott spoke at the evening service Thursday on the subject: **"The Return of Christ to Reign on the Earth, the Basis of All Christian Hope."** The reading was Matt. 24, in which chapter Jesus speaks to his apostles of the signs that would prevail on the earth heralding his second appearing. "Therefore, be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." Scriptural evidence both from the Old and the New Testaments was adduced to show that the faithful men of old expected their reward, not at death, nor in heaven, and not until "the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom

FRIDAY

At the Friday morning service bro. Pickford again took the speaker's stand before the assembly of brothers and sisters. **"Set Your Affections on Things Above, Not on Things on the Earth"** was the subject of his discourse. The reading was Col. 3. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." He spoke of the complete devotion and consecration that must be characteristic of the believer's life in the Truth. It is not natural for the human mind to seek divine things. There must be careful cultivation with continued diligence and utmost care. "He that putteth his hand to the plow and looketh back is not fit for the kingdom of God."

Bro. Mammone was the speaker at 3:00 p.m. His subject was, **"God is Our Refuge."** Psalms 61 and 62 were read. "My soul, wait thou upon God; for my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God. Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us." Bro. Mammone emphasized our own helplessness, our need for a refuge, a place of safety, a shelter of trust and confidence, a sanctuary from the great enemy sin in its many manifestations. He said, "In order to survive the dry, parched wilderness of the present, passing order of things, we must be in the ark of safety which God has provided, eating and drinking of that spiritual food and drink, after the example of him whose meat was to do the will of the Father."

Bro. Beauchamp was the speaker at the 8:00 p.m. service. He spoke on, the subject, **"God Has a Remedy for the Removal of Sin and Death from the Earth."** Romans 5 was read: "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." A clear

presentation was made of the divine principles involved in God's plan of redemption for fallen man. "As sin reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

SATURDAY

Saturday morning at 11:00 bro. Growcott spoke on the subject: "**Filled with All the Fulness of God,**" basing his remarks on the reading of Jude. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which He has given us." "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh unto thee." "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." The speaker said concerning these and other like passages which were quoted: "We are convinced that the only salvation for the Berean body and for the Christadelphian movement as a whole, is—by the inspiration of such promises as these—to develop generally an exalted frame of mind and habit of thinking that dwells on a far higher plane than the natural mind of the flesh. This **MUST** be the general condition of the membership." "We have," says Paul, "the mind of Christ." Can we say it with him?

Bro. Erby Wolfe conducted the **Children's Program** which came at 3:00 p.m. Sunday School children from all the Texas ecclesias sang hymns, and recited from memory things they had learned. It was good to see the young ones being brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and having their minds directed in their youth toward the eternal things of God in the place of the passing frivolities of modern worldly life. Bro. S. S. Wolfe spoke words of encouragement to the children, urging them to continue their studies, so that they could take their places in the ecclesias as brothers and sisters.

Bro. Beauchamp came on the program Saturday evening, and spoke before a full tabernacle on the subject: "**We Live in the End of the Gentile Age.**" Joel 3 was the reading. Scriptural evidence was given by the speaker to show that God, Who arranges the times and, the seasons, has long ago shown by the mouth of His prophets that the kingdoms of men, or the Gentile nations of the world, would all come to an end at a definite time in the purpose of God. The political affairs of the world today present a picture answering well to the words of the prophet Daniel when he said, "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

SUNDAY

We heard the bell under the tabernacle for the last time of the 1954 Gathering at 11:00 o'clock Sunday morning, when the brothers and sisters were called together for the Memorial meeting to "show the Lord's death till he come." The faces of the brothers and sisters, charged with interest and emotion, showed plainly that they were there, not as a matter of duty, but for the love they had for him they came to remember. Romans 9 was the basis for the exhortation by brother Growcott. "The liberating power from the bondage of sin," said the speaker, "is all of God, Who showeth mercy, working perfection and holiness in us, through His Spirit, which must be the basic and motivating power of all our life." Recognition of the power of love, the necessity for man to submit himself to God's workmanship and to humbly seek to be among the vessels shaped by His mercy, are the principles that should guide us now.

As we look back now upon this Gathering of brothers and, sisters of the Berean fellowship from all parts of the country, we are greatly encouraged by what we saw and heard there. It was evident that the spirit that motivated the brethren in 1923, as they held out against the latter day coldness and weakness that was creeping into the brotherhood, was not dead. There is yet determination and strength in the Berean body that could well form the basis for the development and preparation of a people who would maintain in their lives a holiness of walk, a living faith and a pure doctrine that would answer well to the apostolic system of Truth brought to light by Dr. Thomas.

The spirit of the brethren as a body was, not only to hold fast, but to reach out for higher and better things toward the perfection of a spiritual life that will be pleasing to God, that He might work in us, "to will and to do of His good pleasure."

God willing, the Texas Fraternal Gathering for 1955 will continue eight days—Sunday to Sunday—closing on the first Sunday in August. —bro. E. W. Banta, State Secretary

Ecclesial News

BIRMINGHAM, Eng.—174 Edmund St.—Memorial 11 a.m.; Evening Meeting 6:30.

In view of the unrest created in this ecclesia by the outcome of the "J. C. Conference," it became necessary to take a ballot of its members. We regret that the majority voted for reunion with the "Central" group, and forthwith departed from us.

We are saddened by their action, and by the lack of understanding of the apostolic doctrine of fellowship and of the Spirit's teaching to "be all of one mind" and to "all speak the same things." This has now become of little moment to many—which had meant so much for so many years.

How easy it has become to see the difference between profession and principle. How one longs for our Lord's return. How refreshing it will be to experience just judgment, for he will not judge after the sight of his eyes!

We are also saddened by the death of bro. Thomas Hunt who fell asleep in Christ after some 40 years' probation. Until his last illness he was an example of steadfastness by his regular attendance at the meetings. He now awaits the call of him who is the Resurrection and the Life. —bro. T. Phipps.

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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, Avoca, Penn.—Memorial 9:30 a.m.; Bible Class Wed. 7:30 p.m.

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

HAWLEY, Pennsylvania.

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

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—YWCA Hall—Memorial 10:30 a.m.; Lecture 7 p.m.; Bible Class Wednesday 6:45 p.m.

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

We were very pleased to have the company of our brethren and sisters from Boston with us on June 27 and July 11. We in turn met with them in Boston on June 20 and July 4. This latter was a very happy occasion as we met for the first time our bro. & sis. Beauchamp of Pomona. We had a delightful time reading and meditating on those things we so dearly love, with those of like Faith and who are of the same mind and speak the same things—brethren and sisters who have not been carried away in the recent time of testing.

Let us, in these last closing days of evil, "choose to suffer affliction with the children of God . . . having respect unto the recompense of the reward," realizing that the words of the Spirit through the Psalmist David assure us: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all." We strive and pray that these words of comfort and consolation may apply to us.

Our bro. Beauchamp exhorted in Boston on June 20, and lectured at 2:30 in the afternoon on July 4. On June 27 and July 11 he lectured here at 2:30, giving the exhortation on June 27 also. We advertised the lectures very extensively, but the response was poor.

Bro. & sis. Beauchamp left Boston for a few days with the ecclesia in Buffalo, going from there to the Texas Gathering.

Again we were overjoyed to have the company of bro. & sis. Gibson of Toronto, from July 21 to 23. We had a meeting in our hall on the 22nd, so that all might make their acquaintance. We had a very enjoyable evening together around the Word.

On July 25 we all went to a joint meeting with the Boston ecclesia, where bro. Gibson exhorted and lectured to a very good attendance. His words of exhortation stirred us up, reminding us of what manner of persons we ought to be in these last days of the Gentile times, when men's hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after those things that are coming upon the earth.

We have also had the company of bro. Mark Russell and bro. Harry Thompson of the Boston ecclesia, who comforted and strengthened us by the word of exhortation relating to those things we so dearly love.

With love and fraternal greetings to all our brethren and sisters,

—bro. Russell Waid.

Bro. Dowling's 100th Birthday

On May 24, 1954, bro. B. J. Dowling reached the age of 100 years. A small group of brethren and sisters, intimate friends for quite a number of years who have been, and are, a great help and comfort to him, gathered with him on the occasion. They found him with a mind clear and of keen penetration and discernment, and able to converse with them intelligently, reminding them of his younger days when he was a vigorous contender for the apostolic faith.

To fully appreciate how bro. Dowling has served in the work of the Truth, it would be necessary to review the history of the Christadelphian body for the past eighty years. Many of his writings stand out, and we hope to publish some of them in the near future, if the Lord will.

On July 20, in the company of bro. & sis. H. A. Sommerville and sis. Frisbie, of the Hawley Ecclesia, and my sister wife, it was our pleasure to call on bro. Dowling. We found him in excellent condition, and enjoyed an hour's conversation on the things of the Kingdom and the Name. He asked us to convey to his brethren and sisters his sincere thanks for their great kindness to him in these days of loneliness, and that we would pray that, if it be the Father's will, his closing days would be days of comfort and not a period of suffering.

We are saddened that this aged brother should be the only one in Philadelphia at present supporting the Berean position established in 1923 in an effort to maintain the integrity of Truth and fellowship—a position which we believe to be a basically sound scriptural foundation—but we pray this estrangement may only be temporary.

—Editor.

A Letter to Our Children

Hello, dear children! This month we are going to prepare to leave this land we have been visiting. All the time we have been visiting this country we have been calling it "England." This month we are going to call it by the name the Bible uses for it.

We read in the Scriptures of the "ships of Tarshish." We also read that these ships were very large and strong. This brings to mind the English song "Britannia," in which they boastfully sing, "Britannia rule the waves." We all know that Britain's power has always been in her ships, and that all down the line of history the "ships of Tarshish" have established Britain's sea supremacy.

This is not all we find that refers Britain to Tarshish. We find that Tarshish was the land from which the Tyrians obtained their supplies of tin. Ezekiel tells us this (Eze. 27:12). Let us look it up. We find that silver, iron, tin and lead are mentioned as merchandise of Tarshish. Now as far as can be determined Spain and Britain were the only countries supplying tin in those days. Historians mention that British Isles were called the "Tin Isles," and that these isles were visited by the Phoenician traders from Tyre.

I would like you to ask your parents to help you look up in the Bible the references there are to Britain. (If you have the little booklet, *The Destiny of the British Empire*, it will give you a lot of interesting information on this). We will look up a few passages:

Isa. 60:9—"Surely the isles shall wait for me, the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, for the Name of the Lord thy God."

We all know that the Jews are returning to their homeland (Israel). We all know that Britain has been the instrument in God's purpose of bringing this about, though in blindness they have at times obstructed and opposed. Their ships have played a large part in this work, though the principle fulfilment of this prophecy concerning Britain will come when Jesus sets up his kingdom.

Here is another proof that Tarshish may be called the now-known Britain. In Ezekiel 38:13 we read of "The merchants of Tarshish with all the young lions thereof." If you will read the chapter you will see that this speaks of a time in the "latter days" when a terrible enemy from the far north comes down upon the "mountains of Israel"—a time when Israel will be gathered after ages of desolation. The "merchants of Tarshish" oppose this enemy.

Now you remember how some of the flags that symbolize different things in Britain have lions and young lions on them. In cartoons in the paper we usually see Britain represented as a lion, just as Russia is shown as a bear. When people refer to Canada, Australia, India, and other countries related to England, they often speak of them as the "young lions." Of course this does not mean real lions that roam the jungles of Africa—it is only comparing them to young lions that surround the mother lion, which is England.

Let us now read this portion once more, changing it a little: "The merchant-power of Britain with all her Commonwealth countries." Britain, with her ships, has depended for her existence and her prosperity on being the world's merchant and trader. With your concordance, look up other prophecies concerning Tarshish in the last days, then read them with "Britain" in place of "Tarshish."

Well, dear children, next month we will (God willing) take a trip to another country—one very much to the south of England. Can you guess what it will be? I would like you to write to me and tell me how you get along with looking up the different passages referring to Britain.—Uncle Joe.

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