

The Berean Christadelphian

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

Edited and Published by:
G. A. Gibson 294 Glebeholme Blvd., Toronto 6, Ontario, Canada

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

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CHRIST IS COMING AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

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Please send all communications and manuscripts to the Editor—

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

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EDITORIAL

The Spirit of Christ

This magazine is completely and reverently devoted 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. These are not empty words, for we have dedicated ourselves to building up and unifying the "Berean" fellowship, and to make it a haven for all who really want to unite on a clear-cut scriptural basis. At all times, we are deeply concerned about the welfare of our brethren and sisters throughout the world, and are doing all in our power to stir them up that they may fully realize the duty that rests upon us because of our belief and obedience of the Gospel.

With the deepest concern, we view what has transpired in the Household during the past two years. As Paul said, we have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in our heart, and so also do all those who can look past themselves and see the need of their brethren.

Where are the sincere and thoughtful brethren of yesterday? Can they not see the downward path of modernism and philosophy which is being crowded with tired and helpless pilgrims? It is the broad way that leads on from the wide gate where lovers of the things of this world like to congregate. Is it possible they have forgotten the covenant they entered into when they put on the Saving Name of Jesus through baptism?

What has happened to the meetings? Not many years ago, they were filled with the Divine fire of enthusiasm by those who labored in the work of the Truth. They all realized that they were a *separate* people, and rejoiced with unspeakable joy as they assembled each first day of the week to worship God in the beauty of holiness, and to participate in sweet fellowship one with the other. In recent years, however, there has been a trend toward the condition of the churches around us. Are the meetings becoming just a place to go on Sundays?

Of course it is necessary that we live in the world, but are we not commanded to keep ourselves separate from its institutions and pleasures? How can we, who bear the exalted Name of Jesus, expect to receive the transcendent heavenly gift of eternal life if we deliberately disobey God? An interpreter is not required, nor is a teacher necessary to explain the words of James, when he says:

"Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the **enemy of God.**"

Does this not mean *anything at all* to those who are engulfed in the activities of worldly affairs? Do they really think they can "always abound in the work of the Lord," at the same time they are abounding in the work of the god of this world? Any brother who is deeply interested in his own salvation, and that of his brethren, cannot remain silent when he sees the same trend in the brotherhood to-day as that which developed in the ecclesias in the first 3 centuries of the Christian era. We feel the time has come for the real friends of the Truth to take a stand against the loose, worldly, modern, learned and philosophical trends that are smothering the original standards set by bre. Thomas and Roberts—not standards of their own, but standards based upon the Scriptures of Truth.

We are convinced that the Berean fellowship is on a sound basic position, and we hope and pray that through the ministrations of this magazine, and the assistance of the zealous and strong brethren among us, we may develop a striking example of what it means to "walk in the Truth." Paul has said (Rom. 8:9)—

"If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

What is the spirit of Christ? Is it not a spirit of obedience and zeal in serving God, a spirit of deep interest in the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus, a spirit of sorrow and prayer as we strive to walk with God, and a spirit of holiness through which we stand apart from the world and its many evils?

In all seriousness, we ask, *is that the spirit we aim to develop in our daily lives*, or are we drifting back into the spirit of the world with all its *festivity, merry-making and foolishness*? If it is the latter, then let us awake to righteousness now and not wait until Jesus comes, and then discover that we have lost the Kingdom.

"Who shall receive the pebble, the raiment pure and white;
The holy name of Ail, the change to spirit light?
*He who has hands of cleanness, whose heart abides in truth.
Whose soul abhors to leanness the vanities of youth.*"

—Editor.

London Fraternal Gathering FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 1955

It is with joyful anticipation that we report that the brethren and sisters of the London, Ontario, ecclesia have decided once again to hold a Fraternal Gathering in early April.

These occasions of united worship and thanksgiving are sources both of pleasure and strengthening encouragement. It is hoped that all who can possibly attend will do so, for each additional brother or sister's presence adds to the mutual benefit of the occasion.

Please notify bro. Dan Gwalchmai, 173 Devonshire Road, London, Ontario, if you plan to be there.

"All They That Take the Sword Shall Perish With the Sword."

The Commandments of Christ not only enjoin meekness of character, but expressly forbid the use of violence in the resistance of evil, making **special mention** of the **sword** as a thing that Peter was to "put away" (Matt. 26:52).

One has only to imagine the effect of conscription on the brethren of two contending countries to see how inadmissible it must be for brethren to submit to it. Brethren who are commanded to lay down their lives for one another would meet on the battlefield in mortal strife!—**Bro. Roberts, 1885.**

Feet of Brass

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

“His feet, like incandescent brass, as if they had been glowing in a furnace”—Rev. 1:15.

We have here to consider the import of the *feet*; why they are symbolised by *brass*; in what sense they *glow*; and in what *furnace* the glowing is evolved. First, then, what is suggested by the feet of John's Spirit-Man of Multitude? The idea primarily suggested by feet is a *treading on*, and *advancing toward*, or after, anything.

The *flaming* attribute of the similitude as illustrated by the prophetic testimony which it symbolizes, has shown us that it has a mission *against* the nations. Hence, in relation to them the feet of the Son of Man suggests a treading down and a pursuing to the destruction of their power. This suggestion is in harmony with the testimony of Rev. 14, where—

"The clusters of the vine of the earth are gathered, and cast into the great winepress of the wrath of Deity" and "the winepress is **trodden** without the city."

The Feet that tread this winepress are the symbolic feet of the Son of Man. The following testimonies will enlarge our view of their operation. In Psalm 18:32-49, the Spirit inquires,

"Who is Eloah besides YAHWEH? And who a Rock except our Elohim, the AIL girding me with might? Even He will make my way complete.

"He causes **my feet to be like hinds**, and He will make me to stand upon my high places. He is training my hands for war; so that the bow of brass has been broken by my arms. Thou wilt cause my **going** to extend under me; and my **ankle-joints** have not wavered.

"I will **pursue** my enemies, and shall **overtake** them, and I will not return until they be destroyed; I will wound them so that they shall not be able to rise; they shall fall under my **feet**.

"Thou wilt gird me with might for the war (that styled, 'the war of that great day of Almighty Power'—Rev. 16:14). Thou wilt subdue under me those that rise up against me. And Thou hast given to me the neck of my enemies; and those who hate me, I will cut them off.

"They will cry for help, but there is none to save them—unto YAHWEH, but He answered them not. Then will I grind them as fine as dust before the Faces of the Spirit; as mire of the streets will I pour them out. Thou wilt deliver me from the conflicts of the nations. Thou hast appointed me for Prince of the nations.

"A nation which I knew not shall serve me. At the hearing of the ear they shall obey me; the sons of the foreigner shall submit to me; the sons of the foreigner shall fall, and tremble from their strongholds.

"YAHWEH lives, and blessed be my Rock; and He shall raise the Elohim of my salvation. The AIL who giveth avengements to me, even He will subdue the nations under me.

"Thou wilt exalt me. From the Man of Violence (Paul's 'Man of Sin,' the 'Lawless One') Thou wilt deliver me. Therefore, O YAHWEH, I will give Thee thanks among the Gentiles; and sing psalms unto Thy Name, magnifying the deliverance of His King, and performing the promise of His Messiah, to David, and to his seed, during the Olahm (or thousand years)."

In this passage the Eternal Spirit through the prophet speaks of Messiah in the crisis of his controversy for Zion, in which as the head or chief of John's Son of Man, he puts his feet upon the

necks of the kings of the earth, scatters their armies like dust before the wind, and becomes *Prince* of the nations in their stead.

But this is true also of all the other individual members of this "New Man." If the *New Adam* himself thus make war upon and trample in the mire the kings and armies of the *Old Adam*-nature, he has promised that all approved believers "in him"—all who are Abraham's Seed by being Christ's—that is, *all the Saints* shall do the same; and share with him in the fruits of his and their victory. In proof of this the reader is referred to the following testimonies:

"The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance; he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. So that a man shall say, Verily, there is a reward for the righteous; verily, there are ELOHIM ruling in the earth" (Psa. 58:10-11).

"All the horns of the wicked, I will cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted" (Psa. 75:10).

"He shall cut off the spirit of princes; He is terrible to the kings of the earth" (Psa. 76:12).

"Arise, O ELOHIM, judge the earth; for thou shalt acquire possession in all the nations" (Psa. 82:8).

"He will exalt the horn of His nation; the glory of all His saints; of the sons of Israel, a people near to Him" (Psa. 148:14).

Now the phrase "*all the saints*" is comprehensive of Jesus and his Brethren, who collectively form Daniel's "Man of the One Spirit;" Paul's "New Man;" and John's "Son of Man." The same things are therefore affirmed of all, both Jesus and the faithful in him. Hence, as a body, their feet will be like hind's feet, swift in the pursuit of their enemies, whom they will overtake and destroy.

These will fall before their power; and as Malachi says, they will trample them as ashes under the soles of their feet: and when they have got the victory, they will rule with Jesus as "princes in all the earth"—Ps. 45:16—the resurrected "ELOHIM ruling in the earth," "the Elohim of Messiah's salvation."

The feet, in the next place, are symbolized in *brass* to connect them with the *temple-pattern* of heavenly things. While *gold* was peculiar to the interior apartments, or Holy Place and Most Holy Place; *brass* was characteristic of the Court of the Priests where the sacrificing and washing were performed. The Altar of Burnt-offering and the Laver with his Foot, and the Two Pillars of the porch, and many other things of the Court of the Priests, were all of shining brass, or overlaid therewith.

The brass pertaining to the Temple was all holy. The Brazen Altar was "most holy," so that whatever touched it was holy. No Israelite, however, was permitted to touch it, unless he belonged to the seed of Aaron; and even they were not permitted to approach the Altar till they had first washed their hands and feet in the Brazen Sea.

The Altar of Burnt offering prefigured the One Body in sacrificial manifestation. The idea of an altar of sacrifice representing a personal, and Divine plurality, is frequent in Scripture. Thus, Jacob erected an altar at Shalem in the land of Canaan, and called it AIL-ELOHAI YISRAAIL; that is, *the Strength of the Mighty Ones of Israel*—Gen. 33:20. And Moses, before the Law was given, and in memory of the victory of Joshua over Amalek, "built an altar, and called the name of it, YAHWEH-nissi," that is, *He shall be my Ensign*—He who was symbolized by the altar—Exo. 17:15; Isa. 11:10-12; 18:3; 31:9; Zech. 9:16.

This Yahweh-nissi altar was superseded by an altar overlaid with plates of brass. These plates represented "the flesh of sin" purified by fiery trial:

"Gold, silver, brass, iron, tin, and lead, everything that may abide the fire, ye shall make go through the fire, and **it shall be clean**; nevertheless, it shall be **purified with the water of**

separation; and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water" (Num. 31:22).

The connection of the plates with sin's flesh is established by their history. They were "the censers of those sinners against their own souls"—Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and their company, 250 of them, who rebelled against the Strength of Israel. He commanded Eleazar, Aaron's son, to melt them, and roll them into "broad plates for a covering of the altar," and "*a sign to Israel*" (Num. 16).

The Brazen Altar, which was foursquare, had four horns of brass, one at each corner; and in sacrifice, the blood was applied to the horns by the priest's finger, and the rest was all poured beside the bottom of the altar—Exo. 29:12. These Horns represent the same thing as the Four Cherubim, the Four Carpenters, and the Four Living Ones, of Ezekiel, Zechariah, and John; only in the *Brazen State*, which precedes the *Golden Olahm*, Aion, or Millennium.

As Horns of Brass they "execute the judgment written," as a consuming fire; for brass and offering by fire, is the association of things in the type. The Brazen Altar and its Horns of Brass, then, are symbolical of ALL, the Eternal Power in *Elohistic*, or sacrificial and judicial manifestation in flesh. Saith the prophet—

"Eloah will come from Teman, The Holy One from Mount Paran. Consider! His glory covers the heavens, and His praise fills the earth: and the splendor shall be as the light: He has **Horns** out of his hand; there is **the covering: of his Strong Ones**.

"Before His Faces shall go pestilence, and from His feet lightnings shall proceed. He stood and measured the earth; He beheld, and caused the nations to tremble: and the mountains of antiquity were dispersed; and the hills of the Olahm did bow; the goings of Olahm are His" (Hab. 3:3-6).

The Horns of the Brazen and Golden Altars are the Eternal Spirit's Strong Ones who disperse the empires of antiquity, and subjugate the kingdoms of the latter days to Him and His Anointed; so that the current of the world's affairs will be directed by His Elohim in the ensuing 1000 years, Daniel's "season and time."

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

The Eagles and the Cedar

By brother Robert Roberts

We are here for purposes of memory, we know. How important is memory! Without memory no human being would be fit for the commonest relations of life. Suppose we were to forget who we are, where we belong to, what friends we have?

There have been cases of that sort. They are not common, but they happen. I knew of a case when I was young, in which by some strange and sudden affection of the brain, memory vanished in a night, and the person, otherwise apparently well, had to begin her lessons all over again.

It is not memory of the common sort we are here to exercise, or at least not on common objects. It is memory concerning a long past, having a longer future which meet and blend in an invisible present, and all combined furnish a strong and ennobling mental motive. Most men's minds and memories act on objects confined to the 70 years or so of natural life. They are indifferent to that which was before their day; doubtful of that which will come after; and insensible to present facts which they cannot see; such as the existence of God and Christ, and *their* views and purposes concerning human life and action.

Mental action thus circumscribed is necessarily petty, and tends to check all noble development of the mind. *The man whose eyes are open to the past, present and future, walks with a firmer and a nobler tread, and is an unspeakably more precious person than those whose minds are walled in, as you might say, by the four walls of our threescore years and ten.*

Men whose discernments cannot go beyond the facts of the moment, and who have no faith except in what they can handle, have hold of the short-lived and the transitory. You see how poor such a position is *when it comes to an end*—for come to an end it must. All must die in the ordinary course; and when a man is dead, how unimportant the affairs of his closed mortal life appear!

They are important enough in their place, when subordinated to the views and demands of wisdom in other relations; but how *utterly worthless* in the day of death if they have been lived for! This is the case with the majority, because their minds are not in touch with anything else. Their attention is confined to what they can see and hear and feel. If a man let nothing else into his mind than what he can see and hear and feel, he will necessarily be a fool, whatever his natural mental parts may be.

Our meeting this morning stands related to matters we can neither see, hear, nor feel personally for the time being. Such is the fact with reference to what God has done and spoken in the past, and what He proposes to do in the future. We have not seen or heard for ourselves; but who will say we therefore place faith in myths? Are things any less real because they occurred long ago?

Shall we deny our own existence because the lives of our grandfathers, out of which our existence sprang, are closed and passed away? The fact of God having spoken and wrought in time past, is far more thoroughly authenticated to us than that we have had ancestors. We have to rest on argument for the fact that we have had ancestors; but the fact of God having spoken and wrought is *evidenced by things visible before our very eyes*, such as the existence and dispersion of the Jews, the ascendancy of Christ's name in the earth, and the currency and actual character of the Bible.

No, no; we have not followed cunningly devised fables. We stand on demonstrable truth, and we are here for the purpose of refreshing memory concerning it. *There is no better method of doing this than the plan we have of daily reading the Scriptures, and pondering the matters that may come before us in the use of this method in our public assemblies.*

Whatever is read is found on consideration to have a bearing in some way or other; for nothing was written by inspiration that had not some spiritual value. There might not appear to be much for us in Ezekiel 17—the political riddle of the two eagles. *Let us see.* The meaning of it is settled for us in v. 12. Babylon is the one eagle: Egypt the other. The vine, which was planted by the one and which turned to the other, is the kingdom of Judah, which, after being overthrown by Babylon, was re-established by that power as a vassal kingdom in the hands of Zedekiah, who took an oath of fealty to Nebuchadnezzar: and was, at the date of the prophecy, looking towards Egypt in hope of being able, with its help, to throw off the yoke of the king of Babylon. The point of the prophecy lies in the condemnation of Zedekiah's perfidy—

"Shall he prosper? Shall he escape that doeth such things? Shall he break the covenant and be delivered? As I live, saith the Lord God, surely in the place where the king (Nebuchadnezzar) dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon, he shall die.

"Neither shall Pharaoh, with his mighty army and great company, make for him in the war, seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when lo! he had given his hand, and hath done all these things: **he shall not escape.**"

To see the precise bearing of this prophecy, we must have in mind the position of Ezekiel and his fellow captives in relation to Jerusalem, and the scornful men who supported Zedekiah in his breach of faith towards Nebuchadnezzar. Ezekiel and others had been removed from the Holy land,

and settled in the country of Babylon, "by the river of Chebar," at the time of the first deportation of captives by Nebuchadnezzar, years before the overthrow of the Kingdom of Judah.

Those who were removed numbered several thousands. Those who remained behind gloried against those who were taken away, as if those who had been taken captive must have been "sinners above all men," and those who were left behind were favorites with God. The matter is referred to thus in Ezekiel 11:15—

"Son of Man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and all the house of Israel wholly are they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get you far from the Lord; unto us is this land given in possession."

The *appearance of things* seemed to favor the complacent view entertained by the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The Eliphazes always go by the appearances and shake their heads over the misfortunes of the Jobs. But the appearance is generally contrary to the fact. It was so in this case. God expressly informed Jeremiah (24:5) that *those who had been removed to Babylon were the good part of the community*, and had been sent to Babylon "for their good;" while those who had been left behind, in apparent prosperity in Jerusalem, were only comparable to the refuse of fruit which had been picked, and that they were *left there for calamity* which would be "for their hurt."

They would, in fact, be given over to destruction, while those who were in Babylon against whom they harbored jealous and spiteful thoughts, would be Divinely visited after a while, and brought back in blessing (see Jer. 29: 4-14; Eze. 11:15-16).

The riddle of the two eagles had a bearing on this situation. It was an intimation that the intrigues in which Jerusalem, under the leadership of Zedekiah, was engaged, would end in calamity for them all (Eze. 17:20-21), and that, in fact, the scornful speeches in which that community were indulging would be silenced in desolation and death. But the noticeable feature in the prophecy is the *sidelight it sheds upon all kinds of covenant obligations entered into by men* as they are estimated from God's viewpoint.

Zedekiah had "given his hand" to be a faithful vassal of Babylon. Now, according to human principles, it would be considered legitimate and even praiseworthy, to break away from a bargain of this sort. In this particular case, there would not be lacking apparently strong arguments in its favor. Here was Babylon, a pagan power, imposing its yoke on Judah, a Divine people; could it possibly be wrong to throw it off by any means available? Nay, must it not necessarily be a righteous thing to regain independence for Jerusalem on the first opportunity?

Such is the way human courtiers would have whitewashed Zedekiah's procedure. But here is the Divine view in a directly opposite direction. "*Shall he prosper? Shall he escape that doeth such things? Shall he break the covenant and be delivered?*"

We must be blind if we do not see a lesson for ourselves here. It is the lesson of Psa. 15—

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? . . . He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not."

Covenant-keeping is one of the things God requires in us. He is a covenant-keeping God, and He expects all His children to be the same. They are not His children if they depart from their word to escape an inconvenience. This is the way of the world; they tell the truth and stick to their promises *as long as it is to their interest*, but as soon as the current sets the other way, their words are flung to the wind.

This was Zedekiah's case, and nothing but wrath and ruin came of it, and it will not end differently in any case, though for a while the way of the wicked may prosper. We see how contrary

the Divine law is to all human theories on this point; and the Divine law will judge us at last, and not human traditions.

*It is worth noticing that submission to an enemy sometimes becomes a duty, as in the case before us. Zedekiah had "given his hand"—had entered into a covenant. He was bound on that head to be faithful to Nebuchadnezzar though Nebuchadnezzar was an enemy. The stringency of the obligation as recognized from a Divine point of view is seen from the fact of God calling the covenant in that case *His* covenant—*

"**My** covenant that he hath broken, **Mine** oath he hath despised."

Then Nebuchadnezzar's getting the upper hand was *God's arrangement*; though Nebuchadnezzar was unaware of it. Nebuchadnezzar was "His servant" (Jer. 25:9). He worked for God though he did not know it (Eze. 29:20; Isa. 10:7, 12, 15), and it was the duty of Zedekiah to submit to the servant of God.

From this we clearly get a principle of action of practical value to us now. God rules in the kingdoms of men for His own ultimate ends, and it is our duty to *submit to the powers-that-be so long as He tolerates them*. So Paul teaches (Rom. 13:1-7; Tit. 3:1). The doctrine requires but this qualification—that our submission to the powers-that-be respectfully *ends when they require us to disobey God*. This is exemplified in the case of the Apostles (Acts 4:19; 5:29), and it is according to reason.

Therefore, when we are called upon by the institutions of our country to act as if we were "of the world," which Jesus says we are not; when we are called upon to act as constables, to take part in politics, or to serve in the army, we must fall back on the Commands of Christ, saying, "*We ought to obey God rather than men.*"

In the parable of the two eagles, the tributary Kingdom of Judah is represented by a cedar of Lebanon, which the Babylonian eagle would pull up by the roots and leave to wither. There is a very interesting statement in the chapter concerning this plucked-up cedar, in which we recognize the Gospel of the Kingdom.

"I will take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it: I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon a high mountain and eminent. In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing: in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell."

The fulfilment on both points has been quite remarkable. The Israelitish tree was "plucked up by the roots" effectually, first by Nebuchadnezzar, and afterwards by Titus. But the stock has not perished. Israel's race is extant in the earth, where the Babylonian tree has been extinct for ages. But *it is more particularly in the case of the young twig cropped off, that the prophecy has received its most signal and most important fulfilment.*

It was to be taken off "the highest branch." The highest branch of a political tree is the royal family. From this highest branch, "the house of David," has the young twig been plucked, and the plucking has been God's own act—

"He hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David, as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets which have been since the world began."

So spake Zecharias, the father of John the Baptist, in view of the birth of Christ. In this birth, and what it led to, we have the cropping of the young twig illustrated. It was due to the Divine interference. It was due to the action of the Spirit of God on a virgin of the house and lineage of

David. By this a young twig was cropped off, *from which the Israelitish tree will again sprout at the right moment to the filling of the world.*

Jesus, of Nazareth, the Son of David, "the man whose name is Branch," "the Branch of David," "the Branch of Righteousness," has been plucked off the Israelitish tree. He has now nothing in common with it except historic extraction. He was finally broken off in death, and glorified and exalted to the Father's right hand, reserved against the day of the "planting upon the mountain of the height of Israel," when it will become a great tree affording refuge to all creatures—a figure of the Kingdom of God. By a happy coincidence we have this shown to us in the New Testament portion of our reading (Luke 13:18).

"Unto what is the Kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it? It is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and cast into his garden; and it grew and waxed a great tree, and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it."

This is the day we are looking for. We look eastward to "the mountain of the height of Israel" and see little at present but emptiness and desolation. Those who judge by appearances would say there will never be anything else. Those who believe in "the sure Word of prophecy" are certain of the reverse. The Word of God cannot fail. The plucked twig will certainly be planted there. He who is "The root and offspring (branch or twig) of David" will certainly perform his word and "come suddenly," and show us the cedar fair and flourishing to the ends of the earth.

Of this time Jesus spoke at the table when he said—

"I shall eat no more of this Passover **till it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.**"

"I appoint unto you a Kingdom as my Father hath appointed unto me that ye may eat and drink with me at my table in my Kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

In that day songs of joy will be sung in the land of Judah (Isa. 26:1). Happy will it be for us if we are able to say—

"Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation!"

"Deceiving and Being Deceived"

The Scriptures have much to say in condemnation of "*deceit*," but it is almost invariably considered as referring to premeditated, presumptuous trickery, as practiced by bold, designing, worldly men, or wilful, unprincipled brethren, if indeed it can be applied to brethren who understand God's Truth.

However, the almost constant repetition of warnings against being deceived, should impress the thoughtful minded with the realization of the *imminence of danger in not sensing the prevalence of deceit*—in every vocation, in advertising every product, every commodity, as superior to that of competitors. Every exhibition is better, every actor or participant is lauded as wonderfully clever, until one unconsciously believes the cleverly-worded, but *deceptive*, statement. These methods have been followed in training salesmen until many who really have no intention of making any untrue statements, are gradually and imperceptibly taking that mental attitude which believes fiction of speech is inevitable in impressing others with the need of certain things.

If deception were confined to worldly society there would be no point in warnings against being led astray, for worldly losses are not endangering our salvation. Jesus warns us that—

"The LIFE is more than meat, and the BODY than raiment."

It is when danger of being deceived into accepting wrong teaching or accepting misrepresentation for truth, we should heed the warnings divinely given for our thoughtful, prayerful acceptance. Taking the surface meaning of Paul's warning in Gal. 6:7 the evident danger is "*God is not mocked*," and if we associate with worldly or dissolute characters in the lower strata of society, and become workers of iniquity, we will not receive the crown of life.

The whole history of not only Israel, but of the Ecclesias of Christ, is an eloquent illustration of the folly of depending on the formal but habitual attendance of assemblies convened to worship the Lord with *apparent*, but not *actual*, conformity to all that God commands.

The inevitable result of tampering with Divinely-prescribed, though apparently trivial, requirements by introducing more modern methods is disaster. It is difficult to *realize*, although we glibly quote it, that—

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9).

From the time that Eve was deceived by cunning carnal reasoning, down through the history of the nations, of Israel, and of the Ecclesias called out and Divinely instructed by chosen and Spirit endowed leaders, there has been continual deception practiced, with the inevitable result of falling away from Divine teaching and Divinely raised up examples of righteous and obedient walk. Peter admonishes us (2 Pet. 2:1)—

"But there were false prophets among the people (even while the **true** prophets from God were warning—ch. 1:21), even as there shall be false teachers among you."

And verse 2—

"Many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."

Again Ephraim (often used representatively of the ten tribes) is described in Hos. 7-8 as mixing himself with the peoples, and (v. 11) "like a silly dove without sense."

"Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity, ye have eaten the fruit of lies; **because thou didst trust in thy way**, in the multitude of thy mighty men" (Hos. 10:13 RV).

Moses had repeatedly warned them, as in Deut. 11:16—

"Take heed to yourselves that your heart be not **deceived**, and ye turn aside and serve other gods, and worship them."

And Psa. 78, where the recapitulation of Israel's wanderings occurs (v. 36)—

"Nevertheless they did flatter Him with their mouth and they lied unto Him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with Him, neither were they steadfast in His covenant."

Jesus denounced the generation of pretended followers of Moses who made long prayers and were circumspect in observance of the very letter of the law—

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, fill ye up then the measure of your fathers: how can ye escape the judgment of Gehenna?" (Matt. 23:32-33 RSV).

And he said to his disciples (Mark 13:5)—

"Take heed lest any man deceive you (lead you astray—RSV)."

And James solemnly warns (1:26)—

"If any man among you SEEM to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but **deceiveth** his own heart, that man's religion is vain."

Does not this imply many are *deceiving their own hearts*?

The Apostles constantly warned against deceit—

"Evil men and **seducers** shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13).

"Little children, let no man deceive you" (1 John 3:7).

By what reasoning—short of fleshly complacency—this does not *now* need to be applied is difficult to explain. The fleshly mind is ever ready with a multitude of "reasons" which provide a loop-hole. It seems incredible any able brethren would or could deceive those with whom they commune and who trust them implicitly; yet it is not **new**.

If, as we must admit, the time in which much deception occurred was when there were Spirit-endowed leaders supposedly guarding them from just such dangers, is it not highly necessary to sound even more warnings today, when the Spirit has been withdrawn from the lightstands?

The expression "deceiving and being deceived" seems to imply a certain amount of *self-deception*, which is perhaps the hardest to detect. The way to guard against deceiving ourselves is to obey Jesus' command, given when undergoing severe trial himself—

"Pray that ye enter not into temptation" (Luke 22:40).

"Why sleep ye? Rise and pray lest ye enter into temptation."

Paul also exhorts to prayer and supplication, see Phil. 4:6—

"Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

Also similar admonitions are found in Col. 4:2, 1 Tim. 2:1, Acts 2:42, James 3:16, and as we are all well aware, in many more prophetic and apostolic exhortations.

Those who trust in the Lord implicitly, will continually supplicate Him for guidance. Continually do the Scriptures forbid us to put trust in men, in ourselves, or in aught else but in the Eternal God. We find it beautifully expressed by the "sweet Psalmist of Israel" in Ps. 43:3—

"O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let THEM lead me; let THEM bring me to Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles."

Again, what supreme confidence is expressed in Psa. 57:1, and what a model of prayer for Divine guidance it really is for us! —

"My soul trusteth in Thee: yea, in the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge."

Do we not wish to make it our supplication, renouncing all our trust in ourselves and others?—

"We should not trust in ourselves, but in God that raiseth the dead."

Of Jesus it was deridingly said—"He trusted in God; let Him deliver him." *And what a deliverance he received, after trial.*

The parable in Luke 18 was said to be given unto those who "trusted in themselves that they were righteous." Does not this in some measure apply to us at times? We can esteem brethren highly for their works' sake, but we should guard against *trusting in them* because they have education or ability to use beautiful language, for many—if not all—those leaders who introduced error into the Household were highly gifted in this respect, and were therefore the more dangerous.

It is not that we would denounce our brethren as deceivers, but that there is *constant necessity for warning*. We are simply reiterating the warnings of prophets and apostles, which brings us into reproach.

Finally, let us bear in mind Nahum's solemn counsel—

"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him."

—H. A. S.

It is necessary, as often as possible, to gauge ourselves by Christ's standard to see whether we be in the Faith. Christ's own standard was OBEDIENCE, and it is only in the doing of his will that we shall find any peace of mind now, or joy and rejoicing hereafter. Let no man deceive himself. Only those who keep his commandments, and who hearken unto the voice of his word, will be accepted of him.—**Christadelphian, 1882.**

Armageddon

"Thou didst march through the land in indignation; Thou didst thresh the nations in anger"
—Hab. 3:12.

An interesting illustration of the wonderful unity of the Scriptures in matters concealed beneath the surface, and not visible to the casual reader, is to be found in connection with the meaning of the symbolic expression, "*Armageddon*."

Harmony is almost a matter of course where two or more writers are treating of the same subject, and if the Bible failed in this, it would be a serious defect. The Bible is, however, not only harmonious throughout on the surface, but in regard to matters apparently having no connection, investigation reveals the same consistency and unity.

"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing."

—and when we find the concealed things of the Bible are in such complete harmony with its plain revelations, we have an additional assurance that the Scriptures are of God, and that though many writers have been used in their production, they are but mere instruments conveying to us the mind of the Deity.

In the great future gathering of the kings of the earth to "the war of the great day of God Almighty," the name of the place to which they are brought is styled in the Apocalypse "Armageddon" (Rev. 16:16). This we recognize to be a symbolic name conveying a Divine Truth. The word is given in the "*Hebrew tongue*," therefore we must go to Hebrew for its meaning.

Dr. Thomas tells us it is a combination of three words: *Arma-gai-don*, the whole signifying, "A heap of sheaves on the threshing floor in the Valley of Judgment." This symbolic word then brings before us three things:

1. God's **purpose** with the nations who are gathered, namely, to **thresh them**.
2. The **result** of such threshing, namely, their **complete destruction**—a heap of sheaves on the threshing floor.
3. The **locality** of such threshing—the **Valley of Judgment**.

Keeping these ideas in mind we shall perceive in examining other portions of the Scriptures that the same things are strikingly brought before us in an *apparently* unintentional manner, but establishing a beautiful harmony when compared with each other. Turning first of all to Joel's prophecy, ch. 3, we have brought before us the same gathering of the nations—

"I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.
"Let the heathen be wakened and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there will I sit to judge all the heathen (or nations) round about" (Joel 3:12).

Where is the "Valley of Jehoshaphat"? Any map of Jerusalem will show that it is on the east of that city, and lies between it and the Mount of Olives. This connects the judgment of the nations with the gathering spoken of in Zechariah 14, and with the appearance of Christ on the Mount of Olives. But what does *Jehoshaphat* mean? The answer is: "*The Judgment of Yah.*"

Here then is the *Valley of Judgment* referred to in the word "Armageddon"—the valley of the Judgment of Yah. It is also termed the "Valley of Decision"—

"Multitudes, multitudes in the Valley of Decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the Valley of Decision" (Joel 3:14).

What is the meaning of this expression? The margin explains it—"the Valley of *Threshing*." Here, again, the connection is seen with the symbolic Armageddon. The nations are to be gathered as a heap of sheaves on the threshing floor in the Valley of Judgment, which is, therefore, fitly termed "*The Valley of Threshing*."

The gathering of the nations is also brought before us by the prophet Micah, and still the same figure is used—

"Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they His counsel: for He shall gather them **as sheaves into the floor**."

Here is a distinct connection with the symbolic word Armageddon—"A heap of sheaves on the threshing floor." They shall be gathered, says Jehovah, as "sheaves" into the "floor." For what purpose? The next verse tells us: that they may be threshed—

"Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people."

Here we learn that the daughter of Zion is to be used by God for the purpose of threshing the nations. The Children of Israel, are to be constituted God's "battle-axe and weapons of war." Turning to the prophet Isaiah, we have Israel's mission in the direction spoken of, and again the figure of threshing is used—

"Behold, I will make thee a new sharp **threshing instrument** having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff" (Isa. 41:15).

Israel, now down-trodden, despised, and weak, is to be strengthened mightily by Jehovah, and made a fitting instrument for the coming work of Judgment. Their preparation for this work is also brought out in the quotation from Micah—

"Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion, for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass" (Mic. 4:13).

What is the meaning of this expression? The explanation is found in the fact that it was customary in Palestine to thresh their corn by means of oxen or calves (see Deut. 25, and with the marginal reading); and in order that the animal might do its work effectually its *hoofs* were tipped with *brass*. How appropriate then is the figure! When the daughter of Zion is called upon to thresh the nations, God will make her hoofs brass.

The Saints are to be associated with Israel in the work of Judgment. They will be with Him whom Habakkuk saw going forth to thresh the nations—

"Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst **thresh the nations** in anger" (Hab. 3:12).

In harmony with this the promise is given—

"Unto you that fear My Name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall" (Mal. 4:2).

Why as *calves of the stall*? The reason is apparent. They are to be used for the purpose of threshing the nations, and we at once see the connection between this passage and the one in Micah. As such calves God will make their hoofs brass. The next verse in Malachi shows this clearly—

"And ye shall **tread down** the wicked" (Mai. 4:3).

They are spoken of as calves of the stall because their mission is the down-treading, or threshing, of the wicked in that day.

In the first chapter of Ezekiel we have the vision of the Cherubim—a symbol of the glorified saints energized by the Spirit, going forth to accomplish the purpose of God. Ezekiel sees four Living Creatures, each with four faces and four wings. The faces are the same as those of the Living Creatures described in Rev. 4, who are represented as singing—

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

—thus establishing the fact that they are symbolic of the redeemed saints. In regard to those we are told—

"The second beast was like a calf" (Rev. 4:7).

And in Ezekiel we have brought before us a feature in connection with the Cherubim which, in view of the passages already quoted, is most striking. He says,

"Their feet were straight feet, and the sole of their feet was like the **sole of a calf's foot**: and they sparkled like the color of burnished brass" (Eze. 1:7).

How vividly this brings to our recollection the promise—

"Ye shall go forth and grow up like calves of the stall . . . I will make thy **hoofs brass**: thou shalt beat in pieces many people."

The meaning is at once suggested, and the appropriateness and beauty of the symbol recognized.

The prophet Daniel brings this Divine threshing of the nations and its result before us in the vision of the destruction of the great image of the kingdom of men by the little stone. As a result of the smiting of the image, it is declared,

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken in pieces together and became like the **chaff of the summer threshing floor**; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them" (Dan. 2:35).

With a knowledge of these testimonies, how eloquently does this single word "Armageddon" speak to us! To those enlightened in the Scriptures it conveys in a most graphic and forcible manner the purpose of God with nations as revealed in the Prophets, but apart from an acquaintance with the prophetic writings, the word would convey no distinct idea to our minds.

Here, then, we have an illustration of the wonderful character of the Bible. We see that the various writers are merely inditing what the Spirit moves them to place on record, and thus we have in the Bible, in all its parts, and in the very smallest detail, a beautiful harmony and consistency, which is surely calculated to increase our love and reverence for that Book which God has given us to make us wise unto salvation. —F. W. P.

"Where Hast Thou Gleaned Today?"

"Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?"—Ruth 2:10.

I have found in the history of Ruth, a beautiful study, and an exact illustration of the Daughter of Truth, or the Bride of Christ. Ruth was a Gentile, who came from the land of Moab, with Naomi, her mother-in-law, who represents Truth, or the Household of Faith. Naomi was an Israelite, returning to her own country. Ruth, with an affection which works obedience, not only came unto her, but faithfully *followed* her, declaring Naomi's people should be her people, and Naomi's God should be her God. Ruth is a wild olive tree, grafted contrary to nature, into a good olive tree (Rom. 11:24).

Jesus declared his sheep would *hear* his voice, and would *follow* him. Ruth turned not back as did Orpah, but she forgot her father's house. Bereft of all she once thought dear, with only one friend, she journeyed toward Bethlehem or the *House of Bread*. This is the only place where the daughter of Truth can find spiritual food; but *must she stop here?*

No! like Ruth, she must listen to the voice of Truth, and *go and glean*. Many fields were before Ruth, but it was her hap to light on a part belonging to a mighty man of wealth, whose name was Boaz, meaning "*strength*" who proved to be her kinsman.

The *first* command he gave her was *not to go into any other field*, but to abide fast by the reapers, to follow them, and let her eye rest only on the field they were reaping. As Gentiles, many fields have been before us, but only Truth, with her unerring finger, points us to the field of our kinsman, who is indeed a mighty man of wealth, full of strength. Truth bids us not to glean in any other field, but to follow the reapers, who are the Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles.

Like Ruth, the daughter of Truth also *feels her unworthiness*. In a childlike spirit, she bows before her kinsman, saying—

"Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?"

The kinsman declared he had heard of her fidelity to Naomi; how she had left her father and mother, the land of her nativity, and had joined herself to a people which she knew not before.

Boaz rejoiced in her faithfulness, and prayed a reward might be given her by the God of Israel, under Whose wings she had come to trust. Ruth was greatly comforted, and prayed she might find favor in her kinsman's sight, for she perceived she was not like one of his maidens. She, like the daughter of Truth, was not the natural tree, but *by faith* she stood.

The kinsman invited her to *come and dine*; she sat beside the reapers, did eat, and *was sufficed*, after which she repeated her gleaning. Her kinsman commanded the reapers to let her glean among the sheaves, and reproach her not, and let fall also some of the "handfuls of purpose," and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.

Ruth as a stranger, according to the Law, could only glean the portion allotted for the stranger, which was the *outskirts* of the field. As Gentiles we could glean no more, although we have all had the Word of Truth in our possession; but only Truth, beautiful Truth, showed us the *field of our kinsman*.

As Ruth progressed after Boaz she became acquainted with the mighty man of wealth; so do we. Truth whispers, "*Gather not only the stranger's portion, for you are no longer a Gentile, but a fellow-citizen of the Household of Faith. Gather amongst the sheaves, and glean the 'handfuls of purpose' dropped for thee by the prophets, Christ, and the apostles; none shall reproach thee; none shall rebuke thee, for behold, art thou not in the field of thy kinsman, a mighty man of wealth, His Name Eternal Strength?*"

Ruth did not weary with her work, though she toiled all day until evening; and it is written, she beat out what she had gleaned. What a lesson for the daughter of Truth! Like Ruth we should, in a well-directed mind, *husk the wheat of the Word*. The Scriptures of Truth are a system of Divine ideas, which are often concealed at first view, as the fruit hides the seed alone in the productive part, so the Divine ideas must be searched out.

If we divide rightly the Word of Truth, we shall find the little germ in which there is life. "*To him that hath, it shall be given.*" Ruth brought the pure grain to her mother-in-law, for she left the chaff on the threshing-floor of her kinsman; and a bountiful supply it was; so that after she was sufficed, she had a reserve.

Naomi knew she had been in no stranger's field, and declared Ruth's gleanings proved to her that the God of Israel had not left off His kindness to the living, and to the dead. The daughter of Truth must thus glean, bringing to the Household the pure grain, and *plenty of it*, so that the faithful may say to her, "*Where hast thou gleaned today?*"

Naomi clearly showed Ruth the mighty man of wealth could alone redeem her, for he was her kinsman. She charged her to enter no other field, and to keep company with none but his reapers.

Ruth continued to glean as her kinsman commanded her, until the barley harvest and wheat harvest was ended. Be faithful unto death. The barley harvest beautifully represents the Old Testament; the wheat the New; but *the barley must be reaped first*.

"No man can come to me except the Father draw him."

The wheat next. Truth whispers to her daughters, "Follow the reapers until the harvest is ended." If we do this we shall know of the doctrine, and Truth will seek for us rest, as did Naomi for

Ruth; but like her, we must listen to Truth's gentle voice, and say as Ruth did, "All that thou sayest to me that will I do," for to hearken is better than to sacrifice.

Many, yea, very many, of the beloved and faithful are now sleeping where their kinsman—"the mighty man of wealth" whose name is "Strength"—once lay, and must remain in the threshing-floor until morning. But the Man of Strength will *take off the veil*, which Paul calls the flesh, and as Boaz did to Ruth, will *fill it*, so that she went not empty away.

Naomi declared the kinsman would finish the work *that day*, and would not rest until it was accomplished. How suggestive! We perceive the land to be redeemed must as it were, have the signature both of *natural* Israel and the *wild*. For Boaz said,

"What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabite, to raise up the name of the dead."

It was proved that there was a nearer kinsman to Ruth than Boaz, but he *could not redeem the inheritance*. But Boaz, the mighty man of wealth, who said, "I AM AFTER THEE," declared *he* would redeem it, if the nearer kinsman would give him the right. He did so, and the mighty man of wealth not only redeemed the inheritance, but *purchased Ruth to be his wife*, and they two became one flesh.

Blessed be the Lord God Who hath not left us this day without a kinsman, whose name is famous in Israel, who has indeed been a Restorer of Life, to raise up the name of the dead that the name of the dead be not cut off from his brethren, and from the gate of his place!

The people and elders prayed that Ruth also may, like Leah and Rachel, *build the house of Israel* and be famous in Bethlehem. Gentile Ruth did from her issue fill up the "Holy Square," the 144,000: but for Obed there would be no Jesse; but for Jesse, no David; but for David, no Christ, *the mighty man of wealth, whose Name is Eternal Strength*. —R. S.

A New Name

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but ISRAEL, for as a prince thou hast had power with God and with man, and hast prevailed."

We have been following again in our daily readings the very interesting and instructive events of the life and wanderings of Jacob. We are told that God has caused these things to be recorded that we may receive instruction, comfort and hope.

The first lesson we learn is that—in the lives of the people of God—*nothing happens by chance*. All is arranged in God's wise purpose for the development of His children, and His hand is ever-present to control and direct.

The reading of God's Word is the most important activity of our lives. It *should* be the most looked-forward to and enjoyable. Each day as we begin we should meditate upon the solemn and wonderful fact that *this* Book—alone of all books ever written—has been composed by *God Himself*, for the express purpose of saving man from death and making him "wise unto salvation." Each word is there because God specifically caused it to be there.

And the pleasure and impressiveness of reading these daily portions of Divine authorship are increased by the realization that, throughout the world, faithful and earnest brethren and sisters are reading and thinking upon these very same incidents, day by day. It is an intimate, worldwide communion of minds in the glorious deep things of the Spirit of God, of which the natural man, like the beasts of the field, knows nothing.

We have just read again of the blessing of Jacob and Esau by Isaac. Many questions arise in our minds. Some we cannot answer. But we should remember that in all these things the basic purpose is not to satisfy our curiosity, but to *give us guidance* that will help us to order *our* own lives in a way that will please God.

We may wonder why the faithful patriarch Isaac appears so out of step with the Divine purpose as to attempt to give the blessing to Esau. We read in Gen. 25:28—

"Isaac loved Esau, **because he did eat of his venison**, but Rebekah loved Jacob."

We know that before the birth of Esau and Jacob, Rebekah enquired of God and was told the elder should serve the younger. But—*did Isaac know?* Or did she "keep these things in her heart?"

As we look back and survey the whole broad sweep of Israel's history, Jacob stands out so clearly and unmistakably as the chosen seed that we are apt to assume that the distinction must have been obvious from the first, and that Isaac should never have considered for a moment giving the principal blessing to Esau.

But in view of Isaac's life, and his especial mention as one of the great examples of faith, we should hesitate to attribute to him a complete disregard of God's expressed will.

True, it is sadly evident in this whole incident that there is something *wrong*, and it would appear that all concerned in it had lessons to learn. We must remember that there was no Bible to turn to then. To a large extent these early patriarchs must work out in their own lives, for their sakes and ours, the lessons that are now left so plainly on record for our guidance.

We see *Isaac*—misguided and overly influenced by the robust, worldly qualities of Esau. It is true, however, that Isaac grieved because of Esau's alien wives. He would realize how vital it was that the people of God be preserved from the destroying influences of alien marriage. Abraham, in choosing Isaac's own wife, had strongly impressed him with this basic scriptural principle.

We see *Esau*—whom the Scriptures describe as a "profane person"—a worldly, animal, unspiritual man to whom the present appeal of a tempting hot meal was stronger than his perception of a Divine birthright. Doubtless Isaac hoped and prayed that Esau, his eldest son and heir, would awaken to the great responsibility of carrying on the purpose of God. It is possible that, superficially and naturally, Esau appeared to be—at this stage of their development—a warmer and more intense character than Jacob. *But Esau was not a man of faith*—and the pillars of God's eternal house must, above all things, be men of faith.

We see *Rebekah*—with her Divinely-imparted knowledge that Jacob, the younger, was the chosen seed. But Rebekah did not seem to realize that God's plan of the ages is too great and too holy to be built upon deceit and falsehood, however well-meant.

Rebekah must learn that God's way is not man's way—that man's concern and duty is to glorify God by a strict adherence to His righteous, upright principles of truth, and humbly and trustingly leave the consequences to Him.

In the final view, we have but one concern in life—to *please God*. We do not have to do great things, nor assume an anxious personal responsibility for preventing the failure of God's plan. Our ability is very limited, even at best. Our circle is very small.

Consider Jacob's life. Like that of all God's people, it was filled with frustration, disappointment and trial. Jacob did not accomplish very much that could be seen by the natural eye.

Yet how many since his day have been instructed and inspired by the simple story of the way he met the daily problems of his life! He had the nucleus of an unshakable faith in God and recognition of His ever-present *reality*, passed on to him through Abraham and Isaac, but that faith had much to learn and much to suffer before it came to perfection.

Jacob was the fourth actor in this strange incident of the blessing. On what a shaky and shady, humanly-contrived foundation it was that he attempted to secure the birthright and the blessing! For the first he took a sharp advantage of foolish, careless Esau's exhaustion; for the second he used falsehood and deceit.

He had to learn by bitter experience that sharp practice and deceit are the way of natural, grasping man, and have no place with the people of God. Patience, straightforwardness, broad uncalculating generosity and unselfishness are the noble, infinitely satisfying ways of godliness. The man of God has nothing to fear. He need not scheme and bargain, fret to get more or to prevent loss, for he *cannot lose*. Paul, by the Spirit, gives us the overwhelming message—

"All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

All things are ours! What difference then does it make if we do not get them today? We shall tomorrow, if we are faithful—the great Tomorrow of eternal promise.

The one thing the Scriptures remember about Esau is that he "despised his birthright"—the eldest son of the chosen family—chosen to keep alive the Truth of God in the earth. Today God has chosen a few and has revealed to them His way of life. Can it be that there are Esaus among them—too concerned about their mess of pottage to realize the great glory and responsibility of their call? Paul reminds all such that when it was too late, Esau sought God's blessing in vain with bitter tears.

Because of Esau's anger at the deception, Jacob is forced to flee from home. Rebekah said:

"Flee thee to Laban my brother, and tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away; then will I send and fetch thee."

These "few days" stretched into 20 long years, and some time during that weary waiting for the return of the son whom she loved, Rebekah appears to have fallen asleep. We are not told about her death. She never appears again, but her last words here have been the concern of many a faithful mother since:

"I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob take a wife of these daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?"

This speaks well concerning Rebekah's outlook. Her interests were wholly in the purpose of God. She knew her family were the chosen seed. So intense were her feelings about this that if Jacob were to follow Esau and defile the line by alien marriage, Rebekah had no desire to live and witness her family's betrayal of the Divine trust and covenant.

The story of Jacob's life really just now begins. Previously there are but two brief references—his birth and the purchase of the birthright. At life's end, standing before Pharaoh, he says—

"Few AND EVIL have been the days of the years of my life."

Jacob is an outstanding example of learning godliness by suffering. The days of his years were truly filled with evil. This incident of the blessing sends him out alone into the world. Sharp practice and deception stalk his path from this time forward, and give him no rest.

Jacob desires Rachel but is tricked into marrying Leah also, and consequently his household henceforth was filled with jealousy and contention. He serves Laban 20 years, during which time Laban constantly endeavors to impoverish and defraud him. When he leaves Laban to return home in search of peace, he soon after loses his beloved Rachel. The fearful meeting with Esau, the trouble involving his daughter Dinah, and the disgraceful conduct of Reuben, are incidents of the long return journey.

Soon after he resettles in Canaan, his favorite son Joseph, Rachel's firstborn, is taken from him, and he is victim of another heartless deception which is perpetuated by his own sons for 20 cruel years—the supposed death of Joseph.

Yet during this eventful last half of his life, many *wonderful* things happen to Jacob too, as he learns by personal experience about God's great purpose of preparing a people for His Name.

Jacob's name means "supplanter or usurper." We remember that Esau exclaimed bitterly:

"Is he not rightly named 'Jacob,' for he hath supplanted me these two times!"

Jacob's life-struggle is symbolized in the changed name that God gave him in the midst of his trials. The time was to come when God would say to him:

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but ISRAEL (meaning, A Prince of God), for as a prince thou hast had power with God and with man, and hast prevailed."

A wonderful testimony to the Divine success of Jacob's new, patient, self-controlled way of life! There is great significance in God giving a man a *new name*, especially such a glorious name as this, and the taking away of a name of shame. Jesus said:

"To him that overcometh will I give a **new name**, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it . . . On him that overcometh will I write the Name of my God, and my new Name."

Jacob overcame. He overcame his fears, and he overcame himself.

Let us go back and follow his journey from the beginning. It was a great change when he set out alone from home. He was not young as we consider youth today, but he had hitherto lived a protected and quiet life. We are told that Esau was a man of the open field, but Jacob was a "quiet man, dwelling in tents."

From what he says later, it would appear that he set out on foot, with just a staff for the way. Therefore it could hardly have been the first night of his journey that God appeared to him at Beth-el, for Beth-el is over 50 miles from Beersheba, through hilly country.

And it was fitting it should not be the first night. It would give him time to think, test his determination, and be a clearer separation from the old life he is leaving behind. A night or two in the open, wondering about what lay ahead, would prepare his mind for the heavenly vision. Yet he was not left alone too long, for God, in His infinite love and mercy, knew Jacob's need. One night, before he had gone very far on his journey, he had a dream in which he saw a ladder (more properly, a stairs) reaching up from the earth to heaven. Angels were ascending and descending upon it, and above it stood the Lord, and He spoke to Jacob, repeating the covenant of Abraham and Isaac, and said—

"I am with thee, and will keep thee, and bring thee again to this land. I will not leave thee."

There is much to be learned from this vision. First, it was clearly a revelation and assurance to Jacob that God was closely watching over and controlling the lives of His people. Nothing could more

strikingly convey this thought than a ladder directly connecting heaven and earth, with God's messengers travelling back and forth upon it as they carry out His will on behalf of His children. And there is a deeper import in the ladder that Jesus unfolds in his words to Nathaniel—

"Hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

He is clearly alluding to Jacob's dream. *Jesus himself is the ladder*—the God-provided connection and way of communication between Himself and man. And angels ascend and descend upon him—that is, through and by him God's purposes are accomplished. Without him the angels could not do their Divine work of leading men to a place in God's Kingdom, for Jesus is the essential keystone to the whole plan. He "prevailed to open the book" and to make possible the fulfilment of its contents.

The common version gives the impression that Jacob is *bargaining with God*: "If God will do certain things, *then* He shall be my God." But the whole atmosphere of the event teaches us that this is a totally incorrect impression. This is a solemn and grateful self-dedication, in view of God's great mercy and revelation.

It would appear, too, that in this revelation of God to Jacob, the initiative was entirely on God's part, but here again a later remark of Jacob's gives us a different picture. Of this incident, he says:

"God **answered** me in the day of my distress" (Gen. 35:3).

This tells a little more about those first few anxious days as he set out from home. It is reasonably certain that from the time he left home, Jacob's mind was occupied with thoughts and prayers concerning God's help in the lonely and unknown path ahead.

This was the turning point in Jacob's life. His conduct from this time on is that of an active, yet patient, faith. We can hardly regard the incidents of the birthright and the blessing as manifestations of true faith. They were attempts to secure by natural and questionable means what God had already promised He would give. They were not necessarily proofs of *lack* of faith, but rather of a misconception of how faith should work.

On the other hand, it is not faith to make no effort at all. The incidents of the breeding of the sheep and of the preparation to meet Esau seem to be examples of how faith should operate. That is, putting all reliance on God and none on self, but at the same time striving to merit God's help by diligent application to all *legitimate* efforts and precautions.

We cannot sit back and presume on God. If this were not a vital principle and a common danger, it would not appear as one phase of the 3-fold temptation of Christ. That temptation symbolizes all temptation—lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life.

"Cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee."

We must carefully follow the narrow road between presumption on God on the one hand, and the foolish vanity of self-reliance on the other. Jacob succeeded, and is a lesson to us.

* * *

"Leah was tender-eyed (that is, we believe, gentle, patient, amiable)—but Rachel was beautiful and well-favored."

Jacob had another Divine lesson to learn—

"Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, **she** shall be praised."

Leah had the sadder life, but the nobler position in God's plan.

It is significant that, as he was about to die, Jacob commanded his sons to bury him in the cave of Macpelah, beside Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah—and *Leah*. Rachel is not mentioned. *She was not buried there*. She died and was left along the way.

It is significant, too, that it is the unloved Leah, and not the favorite Rachel, whom God selected for the line of the royal seed.

There is a patient sadness, and a deep reverence, in Leah's naming of her children. *Reuben*—the Lord hath looked on my affliction; *now* therefore my husband will love me. *Simeon*—the Lord hath heard that I was hated. *Levi*—now *this time* will my husband be joined to me. But years later, at the birth of the sixth and last son, it is still the same unfulfilled hope: *Zebulun*—NOW *will* my husband dwell with me!

The enmity in the house of Jacob was carried down through the history of the nation, finally ending in the disruption of the kingdom. The first, faithless king was of the seed of Rachel. Following Saul's rejection, God set the throne forever in *Judah*, of Leah.

Proud and wilful Ephraim, of Rachel, became the leader of the opposition, soon breaking away with 9 other tribes to form a separate and Godless kingdom. Beth-el, the "*House of God*," where Jacob at the beginning received the everlasting covenant and made his vow dedicating the nation to God—this same Beth-el became the center of Israel's idolatrous worship—

"Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone."

Ephraim had gone back to his mother's stolen idols.

The immediate cause of Jacob taking Leah was Laban's deceit, but the real cause was the hand of God. Through Leah came the great prophet-leader Moses and priestly tribe of Levi; through her too came the greater Prophet than Moses and Judah's royal tribe.

* * *

For 20 years Jacob faithfully served Laban, under stringent and unfair conditions, submitting patiently to repeated changes of agreement as Laban schemed for his own advantage. Why did he stay? Could there have been something in it of David's thought:

"Let him alone, for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day" (2 Sam. 16:11-12).

Both Paul and Peter teach us that faithful service in all things is a first principle of the Truth, regardless of the character of the ones served. (In our obsession with what we may term "doctrinal" matters, we can so easily overlook these EQUALLY VITAL "first principles" of *conduct and life*. Of such stuff is hypocrisy made). The one served in incidental. Our *real* employer is always *God*.

Jacob stayed with Laban because he (Jacob) was really serving God and laying up treasure in heaven. He was learning not to scheme for himself but to wait in patience for God's direction, in the meantime laboring diligently at what came to hand.

Finally, in the dream concerning the colored sheep, God directed him how to prepare his affairs so that he might become independent and self-supporting and be able to leave Laban. Then some time later God appeared to him and said—

"Get thee out from this land; return to the land of thy kindred."

So Jacob set forth on his journeys again. He had come on foot with only a staff. He leaves with wives, servants, children, and cattle. But he had found no satisfaction in outward things. There is no peace in Jacob's family, but bitter enmity between his wives and among his sons.

On leaving, Rachel steals the household idols of Laban her father. When Laban overtakes Jacob, he angrily charges him with theft. Jacob, who knows nothing of the matter, makes a great show of innocence and righteous indignation, and vows that *whoever is found with them shall die*.

Laban searches through everything of Jacob's but Rachel, by *deception*, is able to conceal them. Again Jacob condemns Laban for his charges, and protests the innocence of his company. The long trail of deception is still plaguing Jacob's house, and will follow him through life.

Later on in the journey, Jacob's overconfident vow is fulfilled in a terrible way which he least expected—*his beloved Rachel dies in giving birth to Benjamin*.

Perhaps Rachel would have died in any case. Perhaps it was necessary in the plan that she be removed out of the way at this time. But perhaps on the other hand a little humility and caution on this occasion of Laban's charges would have spared Jacob his rash vow and the loss of what he cherished most. Overconfidence and the temptation to sweeping self-justification has trapped many.

Rachel, as she died, called her son Ben-oni—*Son of My Sorrow*; but Jacob renamed him Benjamin—*Son of My Right Hand*.

Rachel and Leah typify natural and spiritual Israel, just as do Hagar and Sarah. Rachel is the first chosen, but at the marriage-feast, *Leah is the first espoused*, then Rachel is added to the family. So it will be that the spiritual Israel is first at the marriage-feast of the Lord, *then* natural Israel will be taken in. Laban said—

"It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the **firstborn**."

The Spirit through Paul declared (Gal. 3:17)—

"The Law of Moses (which was 430 years after) cannot disannul the Covenant to Abraham."

So the *apparently* first-chosen natural Israel must take second place to the true Israel of God, for actually the children of faith were chosen in their father Abraham 430 years before the giving of the Law to natural Israel.

Rachel's outward, surface beauty fittingly typifies natural Israel; Leah's tenderness and gentleness the true "*beauty of holiness*." Rachel took her Syrian father's gods. Israel's downfall was that she turned to the gods of their idolatrous ancestors. Of King Ahaz, for example, it is recorded that he worshipped Syrian gods, and—

"They were the ruin of him, and of all Israel" (2 Chr. 28:23).

Rachel in dying gives birth to a son. The nation, too, died in giving birth to their long-awaited son of whom the prophet Isaiah had spoken: "*Unto us a Son is born*."

They, like Rachel, called him the "son of their sorrow," but his Father called him, "*The Son of My Right Hand*," In both cases, too, the son was born at Bethlehem-Ephrata. And there Rachel—the natural Israel—was buried, having fulfilled her purpose. The Spirit by Jeremiah says—

"A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted, because they were not."

Matthew fittingly applies this to Herod's murder of the children at the birth of Jesus, but that was but a symbolic fulfilment of what was to happen to Rachel's children because of the birth of this son and their treatment of him.

Jeremiah's context makes it clear that this weeping of Rachel is the long desolation of natural Israel. But to Rachel and her children the prophet says:

"Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; they shall come again from the land of the enemy."

We hope too that Rachel will "come again from the land of the enemy." We cannot presume to pass ultimate judgment in any case, especially not in view of the brief record we have here. We can but attempt to faintly trace the marvellous types and shadows that show the hand and wisdom of God in the affairs of men.

Rachel's children will in God's mercy, be finally purified and redeemed by the life-work of the great son of Leah whom we meet weekly to remember, who will not rest until he has removed all enmity and sorrow from the family of Jacob. —G.V.G.

Correspondence

LAODICEA, THE CITY OF COMPROMISE

In the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ—which God gave unto him to show to His servants things which must shortly come to pass, and he sent and signified it unto his servant John—there is a wonderful message of encouragement and warning to the ecclesias of those far off days, and equally so in our time. Jesus said:—

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

Laodicea was the last of the Seven Ecclesias addressed by Jesus Christ through his servant John, and in order to give a realistic background as showing the state into which Laodicea had drifted, we quote an extract from a book by E. M. Blaiklock, on the "Seven Churches of Asia Minor and the Topography of Laodicea and its Material Wealth."

"In the broad glen of the Meander river and in close proximity, forming a triangle, were the cities of Colosse, Hierapolis and Laodicea, situated on the trade route down which rich commerce flowed past Laodicea. Laodicea was rich, not only as a leading banking center where traders cashed their drafts, but rich from her own industries.

"In A.D. 60 a great earthquake prostrated the city, and the Roman Senate apparently offered help which was refused, for as the historian writes with surprise, 'Laodicea rose again, with no help from us,' hence Laodicea was able to boast they were 'rich and increased in goods, needing nothing.'

"The industries of Laodicea consisted of a strain of sheep from which a valuable glossy black wool was produced which made Laodicea rich.

"Laodicea was also the home of a medical school, and manufactured collyrium a powder used for common ophthalmic diseases. In his letter John refers to 'eyesalve,' and doubtless the powder was mixed with oil, and applied as ointment."

From this we perceive how pointed was Jesus' advice to the Laodiceans to "anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see."

A presaging of the condition into which Laodicea was drifting, and that all was not well there, appears to be indicated in Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, 4:15-18, which he sent by Tychicus, whom he told to—

"Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the Church which is in his house, and when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read in the Church of Laodicea, and say to Archippus: **Take heed** to the ministry that thou fulfil it."

Thirty years later, owing to its lukewarm condition, it was described by Jesus as neither cold nor hot, but fit only to be spued out.

The history of the past reveals the fact that the lightstands of the whole of the Seven Ecclesias addressed by John have long since gone out, and it seems as the "Signs of the Times" multiply, and the end visibly approaches, history is repeating itself. The lightstand of the Christadelphian Brotherhood is slowly but surely going out, bringing to mind Jesus' prophecy—

"When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find the faith?"

Notwithstanding the somewhat dreary outlook, we believe a few faithful ones who have understood the signs and acted on them, will be found ready to meet Jesus at his coming.

At this stage we desire to draw attention to some of the main causes over a long period of the latter-day Laodicean Apostasy, quoting extensively from that noble band of warriors in the Truth's warfare of a past generation, and trust the lessons gained may prove of inestimable value to all who love the Truth in its purity.

In the years of 1885-6 there was a great ecclesial controversy on the question of the inspiration of the Scriptures, many contending that the Bible was only partially inspired. The full details will be found in the "Christadelphian" for those years.

Bro. Roberts met the challenge in a firm and uncompromising manner, and in the division which followed he was severely criticized by many. We quote from Bro. Roberts' rejoinder,

"The reading of the Prophets shows us that though God bears long with inattention and insubjection on the part of His people, there come times when events are permitted that distress and destroy those who do not honor Him with a full subjection to the privileges He has given them . . . But I believe more good than evil will result.

"Adherents have been multiplied 'denominationally,' as we might say, without in many cases becoming **assimilated to the spirit of the system to which they have attached themselves**. Many have accepted the doctrines in "theoretical" form, without that **thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures, which results in submission to their sentiments and practical requirements**.

"They have in many cases merely changed their creed, and their denominational profession without coming into sympathy with the spirit of God as brought to bear on us in the writing of Moses, the Prophets and the Apostles. They have become nominal Christadelphians without receiving the spirit of the Bible . . .

"But whatever be, or be not, the purpose of God in allowing us to come into this affliction, there was but one course for those who have made the Word of God their portion of life, and who aim to know no man after the flesh, prepared if necessary to sacrifice father and mother, husband and wife, houses and lands; that course has been taken by many.

"The work of the Truth will recover itself after the present crisis has passed away—and no crisis can last for ever. A severe check will be followed by revived and accelerated activity. It must be so from the nature of things. Mown grass springs again.

"It is not as if there had been any change of basis among those who have been faithful to the Truth from the beginning. THEY REMAIN AS THEY WERE, strongly rebuilt on the original foundation, and they cannot be dismayed by any eruption of hostility that may take place.

"The Truth is a perennial thing. It does not depend upon the limited interests or the personal support of a particular generation. It rests upon no man. True it is that only a few find it, and fewer appreciate it at its true value. Still, in the hands of that few it is indestructible. In the hands of true disciples the work of the Truth will not—cannot—die. It will revive again with the beauty and freshness and fragrance of the cut grass after a shower."—R.R.

These words are an inspiration to go on in the full assurance of Faith, and God will in due time reward those who worship Him in sincerity and Truth.

As showing the faith of the stalwart in a past generation, we will take a few excerpts from a fellow-watchman with bro. Roberts, which appeared in the "Christadelphian" for July, 1886:—

"The history of the Truth in the earth represents a series of apostasies. Whether we look back to its earliest beginnings when "God made man upright" or to its latest phase as revived in the earth by Dr. Thomas, or to any of those great occasions when God revealed His mind and purpose to mankind attesting them by signs and wonders, it is the same; the thoughts of man's heart are evil continually; "he delights to seek out many inventions," he has itching ears.

And so it has come to pass that whenever a revelation of God has been made, and a number—perhaps only a few—have been begotten by the Word of Truth, we **invariably find a subsequent declension and departure from it**. Its history must be thus regarded as a series of births and deaths. That the Scriptures themselves testify to this state of things is seen in the fact that the prophet speaks of a time when it shall be no more necessary to say, 'Know the Lord,' when His work 'shall be revived in the midst of the years' (Hab. 3:2)—**finally and completely**, to be no more made of none effect by the traditions of successful apostasy . . .

"And now today we behold the same principle at work . . . The mystery doth already work, then let those who love God and delight in His Truth be free from such evil work. Let them take a fearless and uncompromising position against the introduction of doctrines which undermine and will ultimately destroy the Bible—God's revelation to man."

The next ecclesial trouble was on the Resurrectional Responsibility question, raised by Bro. J. J. Andrew, which caused a further division, the details of which we will not go into now.

In 1904-5 there was a Division in Sydney, Australia. At that time there were two large ecclesias in Sydney, not in fellowship. Overtures for re-union were made, and after exploratory meetings were held apparently a compromise agreement by both sides was reached by an alteration of the 5th Clause of the ABSF. "A sentence which **defiled** Adam," was altered to read, "A sentence which **degraded** Adam," with a vastly different meaning, which made way for the "Clean Flesh Heresy" which denies that Jesus came in the same sinful flesh common to us all. The alteration passed unnoticed until a bro. Davis from Newberry, England, visited Sydney on holiday, and on looking at the Statement of Faith drew attention to it not being in accord with the original. The result was a division which extended to New Zealand and caused disruption among the ecclesias.

Thereafter many weaknesses manifested themselves, when finally the great division of 1923-26 took place, and some 150 ecclesias were formed which later went under the name of "Berean Christadelphian," because like the Bereans of old they "searched the Scriptures to see if these things were so."

The breach revealed many divergent views which prevailed in faith and practice among the ecclesias, and as in the days of Bro. Roberts, history repeats itself. No doubt through slackness and

lack of ecclesial discipline, many have become apathetic and say as they did in Laodicea, "I am rich and increased in goods (whether material or spiritual) and have need of nothing," while professing to accept the ABSF, their manner of life and walk does not accord therewith, or they would not fellowship with those who hold or tolerate doctrines subversive to the teaching of the ABSF.

Bro. C. C. Walker, in the "Christadelphian" for 1922, pg. 404, published and endorsed the following:—

"The author of 'Out of Darkness' (bro. A. D. Strickler), has issued another pamphlet . . . A reading of these pamphlets reveals a chronic mania for pernicious teaching, a devotion to basic error that is pleasing and delightful to a mind enslaved by its own passions. The author's words are without understanding and evidently God's method of putting away sin has never been truly apprehended by him."

18 years later, in the Chdn. for Feb., 1939, Bro. Carter wrote:—

"A correspondence of eighteen months with Bro. A. D. Strickler led us to the conclusion that he did not accept without reserve some of the clauses of the Statement of Faith concerning the Nature of Man."

—and in May 1939, page 228,

"We believe it necessary to maintain the truth on this subject by declining fellowship with any who uphold to the contrary."

"Renunciationism (the denial that Jesus came in the flesh), has been revived in recent teaching in America."

Notwithstanding Bro. C. C. Walker's condemnation of Bro. Strickler's error, he fellowshipped him to the end, as did also Bro. Carter on his own evidence: neither of these brethren stood aside from the error they condemned.

In a little book written by Bro. F. G. Jannaway, March 1927, entitled "Then and Now," issued as a warning, is the following:

". . . read what our beloved pioneer informs us in Eureka I, especially the last 35 pages (and which we heartily endorse). There we have historical evidence showing how the teaching of Christ was first subverted, and then finally lost. It was not the work of a day or a generation, it was "here a little, and there a little" (items of Truth compromised), and why the little? Evidently as the evidence shows, to retain or admit some 'worthy' person or persons. The result was as Dr. Thomas shows, the Truth was supplanted by the Apostasy, the Spirit was quenched by the flesh."

This is exactly what is happening at the present time, although apparently unperceived or realised by the majority who are content to seek the company of numbers, though in the great day of account it will be an individual matter for every brother or sister in Christ in the earth.

And while on the matter of warnings, let us take another issued by Bro. F. G. Jannaway in the "Treasury," published in 1921:

"Once again danger threatens—all the more serious because of outward calm and lack of warning. THE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES IS THE SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE. Christendom—apostate Christendom—calls for unity among the harlot daughters of the great Mother Church, and the call is being heard. The same cry is heard in the Brotherhood, The plea for Union. Re-Union of divided Ecclesias! Forget the past!! Those who caused the division in the past are

dead!! Why perpetuate the difference!! Why make non-essentials tests of fellowship!! Let us co-operate, let us unite!!

"The plea for unity has deceived many, especially those young in the Truth, and who did not have the sobering experiences of the Inspiration and Responsibility Divisions. The plea for re-union amongst divided Ecclesias appeals now, as it has always done to emotion and sentiment and generous impulse, but it does not deceive brethren and sisters who remember the essential and fundamental questions raised in those great divisions. Nor does it deceive younger brethren and sisters who have taken the trouble to read up and master the issues at stake.

"No vain talk about 'non-essentials,' 'mere matters of personality,' or 'out-of-date controversies,' can hoodwink a true brother or sister into letting slip one of the fundamentals of the whole counsel of God. Nor will they be parties to any false distinction drawn between 'Membership' and 'Fellowship.' The spirit of compromise is abroad, it threatens the brotherhood. Let us face it in the spirit which animated the worthies of the past."

In putting before you the records of a past generation in a world of strife as a timely warning in this last hour, it is not to stir up strife, but to show that—owing to the apathetic and careless condition into which the ecclesias have drifted and become lukewarm neither hot nor cold, because of which Jesus found it necessary to say: "I will spue thee out of my mouth"—there is a striking analogy between the ecclesial condition of John's day and of our own times.

When we look at the records of the "Jersey City Conference" in America and the conditions for the discussion, we find:—

1. No writings of a controversial nature were to be discussed.
2. Not to discuss the past as to who was right or wrong.
3. Not to prove any brother wrong.

The scriptural injunction of confession and repentance is completely ignored.

We believe most God-fearing brethren and sisters dread division, but let every one by a sincere and faithful examination of themselves in the light of the Scriptures, consider whether they be in the Faith, and whether by their apathy and failure to observe God's laws they are not a contributing cause of division.

Where there are faithful brethren and sisters determined to hold fast at all costs that which they have (Rev. 3:11), and there are those who are not, division is always inevitable, for it is written:—

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

In the recent endeavors of the Jersey City Conference not to take into consideration past errors, but cover them up, they go directly against Scripture, which says:—

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. 28:13).

However there are many who say—"Forget the past, those who took part are now dead." They overlook the fact that the Scriptures as a whole are of the past. Do not forget that there is to be a resurrection, both of the just and unjust. Jesus said:—

"But I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:36).

Again it is written (Mai. 3:16-18)—

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared the Lord and that thought; upon His Name, and they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not."

To the brethren and sisters who are influenced by numbers we may say that it is practically always the few that are right.

Danger is, and has always been, ever-present. Even in apostolic times, the apostle Paul had to write—

"Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote you with many tears."

"Therefore watch and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20.31).

If any realise their error, let them remember Jesus' message to the 7 Ecclesias—"Repent." Brethren and sisters who have the courage to repent are the most noble characters in all history.

Therefore let each one determine not to be a citizen of the City of Compromise like Laodicea, but—

"Holding fast that which thou hast that no man take thy crown . . ."

—they become pillars in the Temple of God—

"Built upon the foundation of Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

When confronted with attractive proposals for mass reunion, let thoughtful brethren and sisters ponder well the painful but necessary separations of the past that have been caused by the general conditions that bro. Roberts so clearly defines in the extracts quoted.

—bro. K. R. Macdonald, New Zealand

Ecclesial News

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

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.

CANTON, Ohio—1322 Fourth St. N.E.—Memorial 10 a.m.

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.

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

We have had the pleasure of visits from our brethren in London and Toronto. On Nov. 14 bro. & sis. D. Gwalchmai Sr., of London, were with us and bro. Gwalchmai gave the word of exhortation. On Nov. 28 we had the pleasure of the company of bro. & sis. Gibson, sis. Beasley, and bro. Jos. Jackson of Toronto. Bro. Gibson favored us with a word of comfort. On Dec. 5 bro. & sis. Heathfield of London, were with us and bro. Heathfield spoke a word in season. We are indeed grateful, and were much refreshed and strengthened in the Word which liveth and abideth forever, and if we hold fast it will give us a place in that order of things for which we daily pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as in heaven."

Another calendar year has ended, and as we enter the new one, we trust, if the Lord will, that it will bring a better outlook for the brotherhood. Let us hope and pray that, if the Lord does not come in 1955, God will manifest His Word in the brotherhood, and bring us all to a clearer understanding of the things that have torn us apart. This reminds us of the words of Paul—

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ"— Phil. 1:9-10. —bro. John Fotheringham

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HAWLEY, Pennsylvania—Memorial Service 10:30 a.m., house-to-house.

Since our last report bro. and sis. David Sommerville of Glendale have been received as members of the Hawley ecclesia. This gives us added strength and courage, as bro. David assists in exhortation and sis. Ruth helps with the singing. We also are pleased that bro. N. Mammone comes up quite frequently from Jersey City, and often exhorts for us. This is all very opportune, as bro. and sis. H. A. Sommerville are planning, Lord willing, to visit some of the Texas ecclesias this winter, and we are few in number here.

The continuing revelation of complete failure of efforts for the formation of a western block of military power to offset the threat of invasion by the northern colossus, is reassuring to Zion's watchers who realize the Power that CAN accomplish that great work will soon appear! With the many encouraging signs of our Lord's coming now seen in the political heavens surely we can renew our faith and courage.

We send greetings and love to all of like precious faith. —bro. H. A. Sommerville

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

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

LETHBRIDGE, Alta., Can.—633 7th St.—Memorial 11 a.m.; Sunday School 12:30 p.m.; Lecture 7:30 p.m.; Bible Class Wednesday 8 p.m.

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

MASON, Texas—Christadelphian Hall, Highway 386.

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 pm.

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.

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

**"A GRACIOUS WOMAN RETAINETH HONOR: AND STRONG MEN RETAIN RICHES"—
PROVERBS 11:16.**

The word here rendered "strong" usually has a bad sense. The Revised Version gives: "A gracious woman obtaineth honor, and violent men obtain riches." It is a parallel and comparison between the spiritual and the natural—between different ways of achieving desired ends. As a violent man gathers riches, so a gracious woman gathers honor. The one uses force, pressure, cleverness and domination; the other gentleness, faith and wisdom. The one is spectacular and passing; the other is unassuming but enduring. We must each choose which path we shall attempt to follow. The gracious woman is the bride of Christ, the violent men are the men of the world.

Let people meet every Sunday and choose one from among themselves who can read best, and let him take the stand and read the Scriptures to them, beginning at Genesis. Let every man who goes take a Bible with him, and follow the reader in his reading. When several chapters have been read, let the reading be discussed as freely as men discuss the weather and crops.

No doubt many foolish things will be said, but be not deterred from seeking to understand the Scriptures for fear of that. After such a course as this, people cannot fail of becoming more knowing in the Word, and this is the first step in escaping from the errors which destroy them, and will be more highly beneficial than all the preaching they are accustomed to hear. **STUDY THE SCRIPTURES**, for these only can make wise to everlasting life in the Kingdom of God.—**Bro. Thomas, February, 1855.**

A Letter to Our Children

Hello, Dear Children. We have missed one another for the last two months. The printers wanted the articles for the magazine ahead of time and we didn't get the letters done for them.

We are going to continue our trip to Africa this month, and we are going to visit a certain section of Africa called **Egypt**. Now most of you have heard of Egypt. We know that Egypt is one of the first countries we hear about in the Bible. We are finishing up the life of Joseph in our daily readings and we have read that he was taken captive into Egypt and there our Heavenly Father was with him and Joseph found favor in God's eyes and He blessed him. Pharaoh, who was actually the

king of Egypt, made Joseph one of the chief rulers of the land. Now this was unusual for Pharaoh to do to a **captive**, but Joseph through the instructions of God saved Egypt from a terrible famine.

God caused this famine to come on the land and we wondered what He did to nature to cause this to happen. We find that a river called the Nile is one of the longest and largest in Egypt and without this river they would finally have to leave the country because no crops would grow. This river Nile overflows every year and when it does it brings with it rich and fertile soil for the land. This spills over the ground and when the water goes back to its natural course it leaves this soil behind. The Egyptians sow their seed now, and in the fall the harvest is wonderful. Year after year this happens and finally the Egyptians have realized how to save some of this overflow water to use during the dry summer months.

The land becomes very, very dry in the summer because the Nile does the very opposite from what it did in the spring. It becomes so very small that the farmers cannot get enough water from it for the crops. Now, however, they build dikes so they can hold back the water in the spring. All during the year they take quantities from this large pond, or reservoir to water the crops. At the time when the crops are ripe and ready to be picked the harvest is great.

In the time of Joseph they could not do this because God said that there would be seven years of famine in the land. No one could save water for seven years for the grain. God was merciful however; He told Joseph that He would first give him 7 years of excellent crops then 7 years of famine would follow. Joseph stored as much grain as he could, and during the 7 hard years he allowed people to buy the grain but only a little at a time. This way the grain would last everyone for the 7 years of famine.

Now, there is something similar between the saving of the grain and the saving of the water for the harder times that came. We can compare them both to our walk and study in the Sunday School, and when we come into the meeting. Instead of the water covering the land every year we will say that it represents a day. Now in the morning **our first thoughts should be about God** and His plans, and it should overflow in our minds so that during the day we may bring a little at a time to think of the things we have learned. Like the farmers do every day, every year, so must we every day and every year, **study** and continually through the days **think on what we have studied**. If we do this we will find that when that glorious Kingdom is set up we may have life everlasting and forever increase our knowledge in the things pleasing to the eyes of our Father that is in Heaven. —Uncle Joe

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