

# 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.*

---

## CONTENTS

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| ECCLESIAL DIRECTORY .....                       | Inside Front Cover |
| EDITORIAL: An Open Door.....                    | 97                 |
| "MERCY TO SUCH AS KEEP HIS COVENANTS" .....     | 98                 |
| THE SOUND OF MANY WATERS (Bro. Thomas).....     | 99                 |
| THE BLOOD OF CHRIST (Bro. Roberts) Part 1 ..... | 101                |
| "SHALL A CHILD BE BORN?" .....                  | 105                |
| WISDOM .....                                    | 112                |
| TEXAS ANNUAL FRATERNAL GATHERING.....           | 116                |
| "LOOSE THY SHOE" .....                          | 117                |
| THE TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS (Part 2) ..... | 121                |
| LOVERS OF PLEASURE .....                        | 124                |
| "PRAY ALWAYS AND FAINT NOT" .....               | 127                |
| "ONE THING HAVE I DESIRED" .....                | 128                |
| ECCLESIAL NEWS: Houston, Mason .....            | Inside Back Cover  |
| <u>THE PSALMS .....</u>                         | <u>Back Cover</u>  |

**CHRIST IS COMING AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH**

# *The Berean Christadelphian*

Please send all communications and manuscripts to the Editor—

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

---

Vol. 43, No. 4

April, 1955

---

## **AUSTRALIA**

EAST MAITLAND (New South Wales)—D. T. James, 114 Victoria Street.  
ESPERANCE (West Australia)—K. H. Hodges.  
HARVEY (West Australia)—R. W. Hodges, St. James Avenue.  
INGLEWOOD (Victoria)—E. W. Appleby, Sullivan Street.  
MELBOURNE S 4 (Victoria)—E. Carter, 11 Point Nepean Road, Elsternwick.  
YANAC (Victoria)—H. R. Brown, Box 6.

## **CANADA**

HAMILTON (Ontario)—John Fotheringham, 7 Willow Crescent.  
LETHBRIDGE (Alberta)—William Blacker, 1225 Sixth Avenue South.  
LONDON (Ontario)—W. D. Gwalchmai, 173 Devonshire Avenue.  
MONTREAL (Quebec)—J. D. Baines, 1426 Clemenceau, Verdun 19, P. Q.  
MOUNT ALBERT (Ontario)—Howard Toole.  
TORONTO (Ontario)—George A. Gibson, 294 Glebeholme Blvd., Toronto 6.

## **GREAT BRITAIN**

BIRMINGHAM—T. Phipps, "Cantreff," Toll End Rd., Ocker Hill, Tipton, Staffs.  
CROYDON—A. A. Jeacock, 10 Garden Close, Wellington, Surrey.  
HITCHIN—Herbert S. Shorter, "Treetops," Charlton.  
KIDDERMINSTER—H. W. Piggot, "Eureka," Bridgenorth Road, Franche.  
NEWPORT (Mon.)—David K. Williams, 3 Constance Street, Caerleon Road.  
NEW TREDEGAR (Mon.)—Ivor Morgan, Pentwyn House, Cwmsyfiog.

## **NEW ZEALAND**

PAPAKURA—A. Starr, Ardmore R. D., via Auckland.  
PUTARURU—B. E. Brandt, Sweet Waters, Overton, R. D.  
WHANGAREI—K. R. Macdonald, Lillian St., Kamo (Write: Box 55, Whangarei).

## **UNITED STATES**

BALTIMORE (Maryland)—Russell C. Frisbie, 4037 Edgewood Road.  
BOSTON (Massachusetts)—Edgar A. Sargent, 27 Jersey Ave., Braintree 84, Mass.  
BUFFALO (New York)—George A. Kling, 386 N. Ellicott Creek Rd., Tonawanda, N. Y.  
CANTON (Ohio)—Kenneth Passwaters, 3210 Fifth St., S.E., Canton 7.  
CORAOPOLIS (Pennsylvania)—Frank Mohr, 1524 Ridge Avenue.  
DENVER (Colorado)—John Osborne, 432 South Emerson Street.  
DETROIT (Michigan)—G. V. Growcott, 15586 Normandy, Detroit 38.  
GLENDALE (Penna.)—David Sommerville, Glendale, Avoca, Penna.  
HAWLEY (Pennsylvania)—Harry A. Sommerville, Lake Ariel, Pennsylvania.  
HOUSTON (Texas)—Charles W. Banta, 10606 Wiggins, Houston 15.  
ISTACHATTA (Florida)—C. Bird, Box 133.

JERSEY CITY (New Jersey)—Nicholas Mammone, 338 Whiton St., Jersey City 3.  
LAMPASAS (Texas)—Samuel S. Wolfe, 1704 Avenue J East, Lampasas.  
MASON (Texas)—Alva C. Stewart, Voca, Texas.  
MIAMI (Florida)—Thomas S. Lumley, 3428 S. W. 65th Avenue.  
PHILADELPHIA (Penna.)—B. J. Dowling, 1011 Stratford Rd., Melrose Park, Pa.  
POMONA (California)—Oscar Beauchamp, 742 East Sixth Street.  
PORTLAND (Oregon)—Rbt. Roberts, Apt. 8, 10263 S. W. Riverside Dr, Portland 1.  
SOAP LAKE (Washington)—H. Milonas, Box 872.  
WARREN (Ohio)—Thomas Tullock, 1041 North Park Avenue.  
WEST LAKE (Louisiana)—M. H. Bostick.  
WORCESTER (Massachusetts)—R. A. Waid, 5 Pomona Road, Worcester 2.

## WEST AFRICA

ACCRA (Gold Coast)—James Neal, Box 136.

---

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.

Please write bro. Growcott if you miss an issue or receive imperfect copies.

---

## EDITORIAL

### An Open Door

When we hear the word *door*, we usually think of that which forms the entrance to a house, or other building. These applications are common in the Scriptures where we read of the door of the Tabernacle, and the door of the Temple. The word is also used figuratively as the entrance to any thing. In the parable of the GOOD SHEPHERD, Jesus says, "*I am the door*," and the writer of the Acts speaks of "the door of faith" and, finally, in his message to the ecclesia in Philadelphia, Jesus says,

"I have set before thee an OPEN DOOR."

An "open door" is an excellent thing if it provides an entrance to a good place, and admits guests of a proper class. Such a door is that which opens for the proclamation of the Truth. But once the Truth has taken root and grown into an ecclesia, the door, while remaining open, should be carefully guarded, for many an ecclesia has been ruined because of the entry of unfaithful brethren. In the days of the apostles, there were many types of unfaithful brethren, and thus it has been throughout the history of the Household of Faith. One form of unfaithfulness was brought to our attention recently by a brother who said—

"When a people who have been called to a Divine service—who are in the world, but commanded to remain separate, who bear the Name of the Father—become submerged with the world in its activities, they cease to witness for God, and they witness for the world, and thereby bring the reproach of the world upon the Name of God."

On what *authority* does this brother make such a statement? Why should it be necessary to ask the question at all? Any brother, or sister, who has sufficient knowledge of the Truth to pass the examination for baptism, must surely know the answer to the first question. They *do* know, and so do all of us. Yet, in spite of apostolic warnings, one writes to us—

"I do hope ere long that you and your separated brethren will see the untenability of your stand, and will make the re-union complete to the honor of God's Name."

The matter of re-union was not looked upon from a prejudicial viewpoint, but was given serious, prayerful consideration, and it was realized that if we were to accept the reproach of the narrow way, many close friends, with whom we had taken sweet counsel together, would accuse us of being without love towards them. We did not refrain from participation in re-union because of personal feelings, or because of the friendship of some who are now with us. If we had been guided merely by friendship, we would not be where we are today. It was known then, and it has since been confirmed, that the cause of the 1923 separation has not been removed. How, then, could re-union bring honor to God's Name?

"Peace" and "brotherly love" are beautiful companions, but they are not only found in the Household of Faith; a form of them can exist in any religion, or outside of religion altogether. Therefore, they are not the foundation stones upon which the Truth builds its Temple, nor are they the stones of the Temple; but they are the embellishments that gild the Temple and make it beautiful. Is it not evident, therefore, that before we can have true peace and brotherly love after the *Divine* pattern, there must be something to come first? There is no question whatever that the belief of the Truth and submission to the Commandments is the true basis of apostolic fellowship, and there is no other.

Even though a man consent to the Truth in all its first principles, and declare his unreserved loyalty to our Statement of Faith, if he disobeys the commandments by being engulfed in the world's social life, his belief is nullified by his personal conduct:

"He that **saith**, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him"—1 John 2:4.

Those words are severe, stern and exacting; but they state a solemn and poignant truth which, if we have not been hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, will bring upon us a pitiless introspection, and cause us to realize that—

"If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"—1 Peter 4:18.

Those who are striving to walk in the Truth, and laboring day and night to make their calling and election sure, realize that to stand up for the Truth against those who would undermine it by walking contrary to its obligations is a difficult task, for such are hampered by considerations of right and wrong that do not trouble those who are careless. From a natural viewpoint, it would be easier to partake of the free and easy spirit that has developed in the brotherhood; but the prize is too great to trifle with, and the reproach for Christ far greater riches than all the treasures that this present world can offer.

The open door that Jesus has set before us is not an unguarded one, but the open door of the narrow way that leads to life. Jesus stands at that door and bids us come. If we come and remain in his company, our stand shall not be untenable. —*Editor.*

---

**"All the Paths of the Lord Are Mercy and Truth Unto Such As Keep His Covenants and His Testimonies"—Psalm 25:10**

This is something of which we need to be constantly reminded, for we unconsciously tend to absorb from the religions world around us dangerous conceptions concerning the indiscriminate operation of God's mercy. God said, "I will have mercy on whom I **will** have mercy"—"Great is His mercy **toward them that FEAR Him.**" And those that fear the Lord are defined in Psalm 112:1 as those that "delight greatly in His commandments."

If we "delight greatly" in a commandment, it ceases to be a commandment and becomes a loving expression of communion and desire. We draw near to God and meet in fellowship with Him

whenever we obey Him. Obedience is the truest form of prayer, for actions speak louder than words. This is the perfect law of liberty—the ultimate perfect merging of duty and desire. Law, we are told, is not for the righteous but for the disobedient. Love eventually absorbs all law, as it does all fear, by removing all cause and necessity for it. "All His paths are mercy to **such as keep His covenant.**"

---

## The Sound of Many Waters

"*Many waters*" is defined to be "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (Rev. 17:15). This would give us the interpretation that the voice of the Son of Man was the voice of a multitude; and that, consequently, the similitude was the symbol of a multitude—a *Multitudinous Son of Man*. And this accords with the voice of Daniel's symbol, of which he testifies (10:6), that—

"The voice of his words was as the voice of a multitude."

Ezekiel describes the noise made by the Cherubim's wings thus—

"I heard the noise of their wings like the noise of many waters, as the voice of Mighty Ones (Shaddai) in their goings, the voice of speech, as the noise of a camp: in standing they let down their wings" (Eze. 1:24).

The meaning of this is, that Ezekiel heard the voice of a multitude of Mighty Ones, speaking as the warriors of a camp in motion against an enemy; and that when they were not in progress, their voice was not heard—

"In standing they let down their wings . . ."

—and consequently, there was no sound of war. The wings of the Ezekiel Cherubim, and the Man-like Similitudes of Daniel and John in speaking, sounded forth as the roar of mighty waters. This was when they were in progress, advancing in body and wings their brazen-footed battalions against the Fourth Beast, or the apocalyptic Beast and False Prophet, and the kings of the earth and their armies—the former utterly consumed in the furnace, or "lake of fire burning with brimstone," and the kings of the earth and their armies slain with the sword of the resurrected and Glorified Mystic Man.

The multitude of mighty ones, apocalyptically denominated "the Almighty," is that great multitude referred to in Rev. 7:9—

"A great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands."

These are the "many waters," when their work is done. Ezekiel heard "the voice of speech," and in uttering their great voice, some of the things they proclaimed are—

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honor, and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they exist, and were created" (Rev. 4:11).

"Salvation to our Deity Who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb" (Rev. 7:10; 5:14).

John likens the voice to the sound of a *trumpet* speaking, by which similitude it is connected with Paul's testimony, concerning the descent of the—

"Lord himself from heaven, with a shout, with a voice of an archangel, and with a TRUMPET OF DEITY" (1 Thess. 4:16).

The Apocalypse of the Son of Man is an affair of *trumpets*. His manifestation is preceded by the sounding of six trumpets; and it is in the sounding of the seventh and last that the Saints are raised, and apocalypted in clouds to meet their Lord the King. The last period of the seventh trumpet is a momentous and terrible epoch in the world's history. It is the sounding of the voice of the Almighty Host, that is to make the world to tremble. Isaiah says:

"All the inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, when He lifteth up an Ensign upon the mountains, tremble; and when He **bloweth a trumpet**, they shall hear" (Isa. 18:3).

The prophet tells us that this is to be at the time when Israel shall be brought to YAHWEH *Tzvahoth* in Mount Zion, as a present, to the place of the *Name* of YAHWEH *Tzvahoth*; which, as Jeremiah testifies, will at that time be called "*the throne of YAHWEH*" (Jer. 3:17; Isa. 24:23).

This is the trumpet of Israel's restoration, among other events. This is manifest from Isa. 27:12-13, which says—

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that YAHWEH shall beat off from the channel of the river (Euphrates) unto the stream of Egypt (the Nile), and ye shall be gathered to one another, O ye children of Israel.

"And it shall be in that day, that the GREAT TRUMPET shall be blown, and. they shall come who were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall bow down to YAHWEH in the holy mount at Jerusalem."

This Great Trumpet shall be blown, and Zechariah tells us *by whom*. In 9:14, having told us previously that Zion's Sons should be raised up to become a sword upon Greece, it is said—

"And YAHWEH shall be seen over them, and his arrow (the Ten Tribes) shall go forth as the lightning; and ADONAI YAHWEH (Yahweh's Lords) shall **blow the trumpet**, and shall go forth with whirlwinds of Teman. YAHWEH TZVAHOT shall defend them, and they shall devour, and disregard the stones of the sling."

The trumpet blown is for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps; *first*, for the gathering of the princes, the heads of the thousands of Israel; *then* for the convocation of all Israel; and *thirdly*, for war against their enemies—the antitype of the Memorial of blowing of trumpets, and of the trumpet of the jubilee, on the first and tenth days of the seventh month—(Num. 10; Lev. 23:24; 25:9).

The Sons of Deity, His Kings and priests, shall blow the trumpet, and proclaim, as the roar of many and mighty waters, to the inhabitants of the world, that *they* are "the "Beginning and the Ending," the "*Elohim* of all the earth" (Isa. 54:5)—the Eternal Spirit multitudinously manifest in flesh.

---

**"HE THAT SEEKETH MISCHIEF, IT SHALL COME TO HIM"—Prov. 11:27**

The Revised Version says, "He that searcheth after evil." The warning is against the natural tendency to impute evil, to stir up trouble and sow dissension. That which is evil cannot be ignored, but we are never on more dangerous ground than when we are absorbed in the pleasant task of putting someone else right. It is then that we need all the care and caution and spiritual wisdom can muster. Let us be very sure our motives are love and kindness and true concern for the welfare of all involved. Here, above all other times, Divine instruction, BOTH in spirit **and** in letter, must be rigidly obeyed.

---

## The Blood of Christ

By brother Robert Roberts

There is no operation of Divine wisdom that has been so completely misapprehended and misrepresented as the shedding of the blood of Christ. Popular preaching brings it down to a level with the sacrifices of idolatrous superstition, by which wrathful deities are supposed to be placated by the blood of a substitutionary victim. Christ is represented as having *paid our debts*—as having died *instead* of us—as having stood in our room like a substitute in military service, or like a man rushing to the scaffold where a criminal is about to be executed, and offering to die instead of him (a favorite illustration in the evangelical pulpit).

Such views are contradicted by even the most superficial facts of the case; for if Christ died instead of us, then we *ought not to die* (which we do); and if he paid the penalty naturally due from us—death—*he ought not to have risen* (which he did). And if his death was of the character alleged, the redeeming power lay in itself and not *in the resurrection that followed*; whereas Paul declares to the Corinthians that—notwithstanding the death of Christ,

"If Christ be not **raised**, your faith is vain: ye are yet in your sins."

Further, if Christ has *paid* our debts, our debts are not "*forgiven*," for it would be out of place for a creditor to talk of having forgiven a debt which someone else has paid for the debtor; and thus is blotted out the very first feature of the Gospel of the grace of God—the forgiveness of sins "through the forbearance of God."

It is a subject calling for great reverence of mind in order to grasp its proper apprehension; for it is the subject of a Divine procedure, with Divine objects. Those who have little faith in God, and little reverence for Him, can have but very small interest in it. Those who love God approach it with deep humility and fervent desire and strong interest. At the same time, it requires something besides reverence; *it requires understanding*.

While, in a sense, all Divine ways are too high for human understanding, wherein He has condescended to invite us to understand, we must respond. We see many people of a reverent mind, even to the degree of superstition, who have no understanding.

There are two extremes which it is desirable to avoid. They may be taken to be represented by the red-hot Salvationist, and the very cool moralist. The Salvationist talks a great deal about "the blood of Christ" but talks in a way that outrages understanding and throws a cloud over God's dealings. The moralist avoids reference to the blood of Christ altogether. With him it is a mere phrase without a practical meaning. Wisdom steers a middle course, and aims to get that nice equilibrium of facts which results from a comprehensive study of the Scriptures.

First let us recognize as against the moralist that, *according to all the apostles, the "blood of Christ" represents an integral element in the system of wisdom placed in the earth for the salvation of men*, and that, therefore, if it is a something that we cannot place in our conception of man's relation to God, it is evidence that we are out of harmony with the apostolic scheme of things, and that we stand on the foundation of human thought alone, which is *no foundation at all* as regards futurity.

There is no power in human thought to affect the future. God only can do this, and He will do it in harmony with His thoughts and not ours. *Therefore wisdom lies in getting inside of His thoughts*; thinking in harmony with Him, which is being "spiritually minded," the end of which is "life and peace."

Let us look into the subject in an orderly manner. Realize first, how prominent in the apostolic scheme of teaching is this subject of the blood of Christ. We can only do this by passing in review quotations from the apostolic writings, which, though a tiresome operation to those not wise enough to be interested in the subject, is otherwise with the other class.

We have Christ's own words at the breaking of bread. "This is *my blood*, he said, in handing the cup to them, "which is *shed for many*" (Matt. 26:28). Then Paul remarks, Heb. 10:19—

"Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest **by the blood of Jesus**, by a new and living way."

Eph. 2:13—"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh **by the blood of Christ.**"

1 Pet. 1:2—"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit and sprinkling of **the blood of Jesus Christ.**"

1 John 1:7—"The **blood of Jesus Christ** His son cleanseth us from all sin."

Heb. 9:12—"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but **by his own blood** he entered in once into the Holy Place."

Rev. 1:5—"Unto him that loved us, and hath washed us from our sins **in his own blood.**"

Those so referred to are described (5:9) as singing together:

"Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God **by thy blood.**"

Again in chapter 7, verse 14:

"These have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

*No one can say or think after the reading of these statements that a system of morality or of any kind of wisdom can be Divine that leaves the blood of Christ out of sight, or attaches to it no importance.* At the same time, there is a possibility of looking too closely at the expression, and thinking; only of the *blood*, as some of these extreme sectarians do: "Only the blood for me," say they. What do they mean? We must open our minds to understand.

Literally, the blood of Christ which was shed on Calvary would be of no use to them. It trickled down his side; it oozed from his hands and feet; it gushed from the spear gash; and fell on the ground and dried away like any other blood, and nobody could find it if they tried, and if they could, it would not be of any spiritual value. It is one of the Roman Catholic superstitions that the real blood of Christ was preserved and caught and bottled. We read in history of one of the kings of England receiving a small phial of the said liquor from the Pope.

There must be something wrong in such a close, limited, microscopic view. In a literal sense, the blood of Christ was the same blood as our own; as is said:

"Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise took part of the same."

As such, it could be of no benefit to any human being. It is not the blood as literal blood that is precious or efficacious, but its relation to something of which the blood-shedding is expressive.

If there is anything that proves this conclusively, it is the fact that the *same efficacy* is associated with the *body* of Christ in apostolic phraseology. Let us see the evidence of this fact—

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own **body** on the tree."



"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the **body** of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:5-10).

"And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the **body** of his flesh through death" (Col. 1:21).

"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one **body** on the tree" (Eph. 2:16).

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the **Lord's body**."

"The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the **body** of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16).

If it was all the *blood* in the way that people talk, there would be no place for this other series of expressions about Christ's *body*.

And now there is another series of expressions which carries the same modifying consideration with it, forbidding us to confine our thoughts to the blood of Christ, or to think of it as something magical in itself, and showing us a larger thought. The expression I refer to is "*Death*." Begin with Heb. 9:15—

"For this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that **by means** of DEATH, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

Here is neither blood nor body, but *death*. How common is this expression! Let us have a few illustrations by way of laying our foundation strongly, deeply, and surely, so as to have a scriptural conception. All unscriptural conceptions come from taking a *part* instead of all; it is like looking at a man through a microscope. You see the hills and valleys of half-an-inch of skin, but you do not see the man. That is how some people read the Scriptures. We must broaden out our views so as to take *all* the elements in, and the result is we see the whole object we may be contemplating. Take, then, a few of these expressions—

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should **taste death** for every man" (Heb. 5:9).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that **through death** he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil" (v. 14).

"For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God **by the death** of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Rom. 5:10).

"For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the **Lord's** death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26).

Here are several synonymous expressions that demand some other understanding of the matter than that exhibited in popular preaching. Such an understanding we shall find supplied in the system of the truth as revived in our age by the instrumentality of Dr. Thomas, giving us a *simple central idea* in which these various expressions converge—"the blood of Christ," "the offering of the body of Christ," "the death of Christ."

Before attempting to exhibit this convergent harmony, let us notice one strong point of contrast between the popular and the scriptural view. The popular view is that Christ's blood was shed that we might go free on the principle on which a man about to be beheaded has been supposed to go free if some one comes and takes his place. The day of execution arrives, and some strong lover of the doomed man rushed forward in the crowd, and says, "Behead me instead of him." The proposal is accepted; the substitute is beheaded, and the other goes free: so Christ's blood is shed, and we go free from our condemnation.

Now this *cannot* be the *right* view, for this remarkable reason, that *Christ himself is exhibited to us as coming under the beneficial operation of his own death*, thus (Heb. 13:20)—

"The God of peace, Who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, THROUGH THE BLOOD OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT."

This is stated perhaps still more clearly in Heb. 9:12, in a passage we have already considered, but it has a new bearing here—

"Neither by the blood of goats or calves, but BY HIS OWN BLOOD he entered in once into the holy place, having **obtained eternal redemption** for us."

You will observe that the two words "for us" *are not in the original.*\* They are added to the translation, and they are added in *defiance of grammatical propriety*. The verb is in the middle voice, and the meaning of that is remarkable in this connection. We have no middle voice in English: we have passive or active voice: you either do or are done to in English; but in Greek, there is another voice—a *middle* voice—a state of the verb in which you *do a thing to yourself*. "Having obtained *in himself* eternal redemption." In Phil. 2:8 the idea is more literally expressed:

"He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. **Wherefore** God also hath highly exalted him."

Orthodox conceptions leave no room for the idea that Christ was benefited by his own death and exalted by reason of his submission.

\* The Revised versions correctly omit these two words.

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

---

## "Shall a Child Be Born?"

*"And he said, Where is the lamb? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb"—*  
Gen. 22:8.

At the command of God Abraham severed all his connections with his home and his native land and went forth in simple faith, "not knowing whither he went."

Abraham's outstanding characteristic was faith. He is presented to us as the pre-eminent example in this respect—*"The Father of the Faithful."* Faith that hesitated at nothing and rose triumphant above every obstacle and contrary sentiment and desire.

It is one thing to be so vividly convinced of God's closeness and reality as to be able to defy universal opinion and—dropping everything—to follow an unseen Voice through strange, wild lands for 1000 miles with no idea of the destination or perils of the way.

It is an even far greater thing to wait more than 25 years in that alien land for even the first beginnings of the fulfilment of the promise that had drawn him forth. What were Abraham's thoughts as year after year rolled by, each one making the realization of the promise appear even less possible?

Then, finally, when he was 99, God appeared to him again and renewed the promise.

"Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is 100 years old?

"And shall Sarah, that is 90 years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before Thee!"

Does this mean that Abraham's faith wavered? Paul says of this very occasion—

"And being **not weak in faith**, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was **strong in faith**, giving glory to God; and being **fully persuaded** that what He had promised, He was also able to perform" (Rom. 4:18-21).

*Why* then, after God has just promised a son to Sarah, did Abraham laugh, and then say,

"Shall a son be born to him that is an hundred years old? O that Ishmael might live before Thee!"?

The Scriptures show us the *conflict* of Abraham's faith—the tremendous strain that was continually placed upon it—and the way in which it rose above every trial. Not without stumblings, but with constant renewal. *God* can distinguish between failure and the working out of an inner struggle—although often *man* cannot. Abraham's faith did not operate effortlessly or automatically. He did not wait with serene and placid unconcern. He had to extend every effort to steel his faith against the natural tendencies of doubt and unbelief.

Faith had already carried him far, but still it was an effort of the Spirit against the flesh. How much finer and more inspiring Abraham's faith appears when we see its inner struggle! How much closer we feel to him!

The example of Abraham would be valueless to us if his faith were something that took over automatically and guided him without effort. It was something that he himself had to *put to use*. And he did, and won out, and so became the father of all who follow in his steps.

"Abraham laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old?"

That was the immediate, natural reaction, always present with him, which he fought and subdued for many long tedious years of disappointment and delay. "*Hoping against hope*," Paul tells us. Doggedly shutting his eyes to the things that seemed to cry out that his faith was foolishness, and keeping the vision of the promise before him.

"He considered not his own body now dead, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb."

"*He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief.*" His faith battled on, girding itself resolutely against the ceaseless assaults of doubt and delay.

And finally the promised son was born. How infinitely precious the seed would be, after such a long and trying period of waiting! Abraham and Sarah were now old. All the hope of the promise for which they had waited for a quarter of a century was centered in the boy Isaac as he grew to manhood.

But still God had not finished the trial and perfecting of Abraham's faith. The greatest test was yet to come, when it seemed that all testing must now surely be over—

"And God said to Abraham, "Take now thy son, thine **only** son Isaac, **whom thou lovest**, and get thee unto the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering."

But that was much later. First we must consider the events that intervened.

Besides the long years of waiting, Abraham had been subject to many trials, often in jeopardy of his life. His life's course was one of insecurity and instability—a continual wandering and waiting

among alien perils. He left a comfortable, settled civilization in Chaldea and spent his life as a pilgrim—

"Dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob" (Heb. 11:9).

One hundred years in a tent—in summer's heat and winter's cold—just as a symbol of obedience and faith. "*The father of the faithful.*" Excavations in Ur reveal that he had left behind him houses as substantial and comfortable as ours.

Leaving his country and kindred at God's first call, and finally reaching the promised land, he had immediately encountered famine, and faced the prospect of starvation (Gen. 12:10). In search of food, he left the land and went to Egypt. Should he have gone to Egypt or not? It is hard to say. Perhaps it was an error of judgment, like the later attempt to provide a seed through Hagar. Perhaps, having been instructed by God to go to Canaan he should have stayed there until further directed, relying on God to provide. Later, in identical circumstances (Gen. 26:2), *Isaac* is specifically warned *not* to leave the land and go to Egypt.

Looking back, we can see the spiritual significance in these incidents, and it appears that Abraham's lessons and experiences are intended as a guide and warning to us. At any rate, he soon found that Egypt held greater perils than famine, and only the intervention of God averted a catastrophe (Gen. 12:15-20).

Being released and sent forth again by the king of Egypt, he returned to Canaan (Gen. 13). There the heavy burden of his useless possessions imposed another trial upon him. He was separated from Lot, his only kinsman in the land, because their wealth prevented them from living together in peace; and with a heavy heart he sees Lot go off to settle amid the allurements of corruption. Lot goes back to the comforts of a settled existence and city ways, little suspecting what lies in store.

Abraham is next confronted (Gen. 14) with the capture of Lot by Chedorlaomer. In faith he goes forth against great odds, and God enables him to rescue Lot and all who had been taken away.

Then (Gen. 16) came the unhappy case of Hagar—*human device and reasoning trying in its anxious weakness to augment and hasten the eternal workings of God.* Was it wrong? It was limited judgment, and a deeper insight could have shown Abraham that it was out of harmony with the principles of God's purpose. Here again Abraham, with sincere zeal and good intentions, *went beyond his instructions*, and the results added to his trials.

It was not Abraham's idea, but Sarah's. Abraham hearkened to her, but soon Sarah saw that in her short-sighted anxiety, she had played into the hands of her maidservant, who was quick to seize the advantage and who now despised her. And Sarah in her bitterness reproached Abraham for having done what she herself urged.

And there is a measure of justice in Sarah's reproach, for Abraham's responsibility was greater, and *he* should have guided her, rather than allow himself to be *misguided* by her. Henceforth there is constant friction. Hagar is finally removed, but first for nearly 20 years Abraham and Sarah must suffer this added burden.

Abraham's next trial is the misfortune that falls upon Lot in the destruction of Sodom (Gen. 18 & 19). We are told that Lot was righteous, and that his soul was vexed at the corrupt practices that surrounded him in Sodom (2 Pet. 2:8).

*But he stayed there.* Even when the angels urged him, with warning of imminent destruction, it is said "he lingered," until the angels seized him by the hand and brought him out forcibly. Why did he linger, though the whole community vexed him daily with its godlessness?

*Because he had given his daughters unto the sons of the heathen.* He was bound to Sodom by the sense of a dreadful responsibility. The angels had said,

"Hast thou here any besides? son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters—**bring them out of this place!**"

Lot did his best to warn them, but it was too late. He could make no impression. The damage had been done. We are told when he *first went there* that the place was notorious for wickedness against God, but Lot saw that the land was fertile and prosperous, and he was carried away to his own loss and sorrow.

Outside the city a little further light is thrown on Lot's circumstances. His wife's character and leanings are revealed, and we understand better what happened to his family. We are not told where Lot's wife came from. It seems almost certain that she was a Canaanite, as she is not mentioned in the specific list that left Ur of the Chaldees, nor those that later left Haran. Nor is she ever mentioned previous to Lot's going to Sodom. It would seem most likely then, both from this and from her conduct, that she was a native of Sodom. Jesus said, "*Remember Lot's wife;*" and surely there is much we can profitably remember about her.

The angel said, "Escape to the mountain." Lot replied, "Not so, my lord, let me flee to this little city that is near." Again we wonder, "Why?" Why presume to know better than God? Why did he ask, and why was he permitted, later to find his own mistake and belatedly follow the original instruction?

This city was slated for destruction with the rest, but Lot's request interfered with the full carrying out of the purpose. The reason Lot gives is fear of the mountains. And yet he was right in the midst of such a signal demonstration of God's power and care for him! Soon after, he comes to fear the inhabitants of Zoar more than the mountains, and goes on to the latter.

*And so ends the story of Lot—in distress and humiliation.*

\* \* \*

Abraham's next trial (Gen. 20) is a repetition in the land of the Philistines of the circumstances that happened in Egypt. Once again he attempts to ensure his own safety by deception regarding his relation to Sarah; once again he creates for himself and others much greater danger than that he sought to avoid; and once again he is humiliatingly rebuked by the foreigner he has deceived.

It is not our position to judge Abraham. His place in God's purpose is a fixed and glorious one. He is one of the few great men of the race, towering far above us. *But it is our duty to be guided and warned by his mistakes and their consequences.* Abraham's conduct did not reflect glory to God in this matter.

With the best of intentions, in the exercise of his own judgment, Abraham followed a course of apparently harmless deception which instead of helping him, brought him and Sarah into very serious complications.

The Scriptures exalt Truth very highly. Like purity and holiness, it is a fundamental characteristic of eternity and incorruptibility. Truth, and Truth alone, is enduring and substantial. All deception contains the seeds of corruption and decay, however well-meaning its purpose and harmless its intentions.

It was not necessary for Abraham to descend to deception. God had proclaimed himself Abraham's "Shield and exceeding great Reward" (Gen. 15). Why need he cheapen himself with subterfuge?

But is it possible that the course Abraham followed was perfectly acceptable with God and in harmony with God's eternal standards? We cannot think so. We just cannot think so. It would set too low a value on dignity and integrity. It does not—cannot—harmonize with utter and complete "*Truth in the inward parts*" which is the only satisfactory ideal (Psa. 51:6).

Truth must be absolute to have any value. Permit the smallest amount of falsehood to mingle with Truth, and Truth begins immediately to take the shape of mere expediency, and the color of hypocrisy. What would be the purpose of the long climb upward if, when we reached the summit, we were to find the same shifty, misleading standards of conduct as those we had so laboriously climbed away from? *We cannot believe that Abraham's conduct in these instances represents the ideal we are striving toward.*

But it will be said that God Himself makes use of deception. Many instances will come to mind, such as when He causes armies to flee at the noise of an imaginary enemy (2 Kgs. 7:6). Even further, God has instructed man in the use of deception. The stratagem whereby the city of Ai was taken by ambush was at the direct command of God (Josh. 8:2). Abraham very likely used a similar device in defeating Chedorlaomer and rescuing Lot. Deception is one of the basic, universally recognized first principles of warfare, and God has in the past legitimized war.

Does this destroy our viewpoint? Must we then be content with something less than pure truth and perfection in our ideals? It might appear so, but still we hear the voice of the Psalmist, "*Thou desirest Truth in the inward parts*" . . . "*Blessed is he that speaketh the Truth in his heart.*"

Of course, God can with complete propriety use deception if it suits His all wise purpose. He is over and above all. He knows and controls all. Therefore there is no injustice or incongruity in His using deception *as a judicial measure.*

He creates evil, and uses it, yet evil is not holy, or pure, or eternal, and it is *forbidden to His children*, except at His direct instruction. We are told (2 Thes. 2:10-12) that because men "*receive not the love of Truth*" God sends them "*strong delusion*" and causes them to "*believe a lie.*" That is deception—judicial deception, and a fitting retribution for rejecting the love of Truth.

Deception is part of the same fabric as evil and war, and is legitimate only in circumstances where they are legitimate. It has no place in the daily lives and contacts of those who are striving to conform themselves to eternal things. It has no place here—in the relationship between Abraham and Abimelech.

It may be said that as it was not wrong for Abraham to use war, it was also not wrong for him to use deception. But this does not follow. David's charge against Joab was that he deceitfully shed the blood of war in peace (1 Kgs. 2:5). Abraham, using deception, set in motion forces that well nigh brought about the death of many (naturally speaking) innocent people.

And more important than his relations with Abimelech were his relations with Sarah. All the dignity and beauty of marriage depends upon its conformity with the great antitype of Christ and the Church. Could Christ, to avoid persecution, conceal his relationship to the Church, or she hers to him? Many Christians lost their lives because they would not permit the slightest obscuring of this relationship. Remember Daniel and his fearlessly-opened window that brought him to the lions' den (Dan. 6:10).

The false church, on the other hand, not perceiving the deep significance of its bonds and communion with Christ, or treating them lightly, said, "He is only my brother, I am still free to marry the king of Egypt for present advantage," so they sought the world's companionship and citizenship, and persecution ceased.

Abraham's next recorded trial (Gen. 21) arose from an old, unhealed source. The long-standing friction over Hagar—bitter fruit of misguided zeal—came to a crisis. Sarah said,

"Cast out this bondswoman and her son: for the son of the bondswoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac."

"And the thing was grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son Ishmael." Why could they not live together in peace? Because peace can only be built on one foundation—*Divine truth*.

Was Sarah right or wrong in her demand? We know that Hagar had no proper place in the inner circle of that household. She was an Egyptian and a bondswoman. This was a chosen family, through whom God was not only commencing to work out a great plan, but was portraying in allegory the whole cycle of that plan—the *bond and the free—the Flesh and the Spirit*.

And Hagar and Ishmael showed cruel enmity against Sarah and her son, the true seed. Paul says Ishmael persecuted Isaac.

It was necessary that Hagar and Ishmael should go. The whole affair had been a sad error. God instructs Abraham to do as Sarah desires. We must conclude that in principle Sarah was correct, and this was the only possible solution. Sarah had suffered much from the matter, although it is true the original error was hers.

It is the handling of the case that may seem unnecessarily hard. It appears that Hagar is thrust out to wander in the wilderness with a small child, and with scanty provisions.

But is this the correct picture? In the first place, God Himself expressly took over the care of Ishmael. He told Abraham to send him away, and promised that He would make a great nation of him. And Ishmael was not, as it might appear, a small helpless child, but was about 17 years old.

And there is no reason to suppose that Hagar did not have a definite destination and was not properly supplied to reach there. We can take it as a practical certainty that Abraham would make such provision, not only from his own general nature, but from his particular feeling for his son. Every impulse of Abraham under the circumstances would be to reduce the hardship attendant upon this final parting. But in God's purpose, Hagar lost her way, that certain things might be revealed to her.

And so finally, after many trials, the long-promised seed has come, the unfortunate and long-suffered barrier of Hagar between Abraham and Sarah has been removed, and it begins to appear that the long testing and development of Abraham's faith and character is coming to an end.

And then once more (Gen. 22) God appears to Abraham, and without any explanation commands him to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. Abraham's reaction, as far as it is given, is perfect—and the record has certainly not spared him previously. There is not the slightest hint of reluctance, doubt or hesitation, and his words as he goes forward to the offering are full of assurance and faith—*"God will provide."*

Perhaps Abraham had prayed for one final opportunity to show that now at last his faith was full and complete. There is no evidence of any conflict of desires—just supreme understanding and trust. Nothing in Abraham's demeanor betrayed to Isaac that ought was amiss, and Abraham's evident peace and confidence was so great that Isaac willingly submitted to his own part.

Paul says that Abraham knew that God had promised that the seed should come through Isaac and he accounted that God was able to raise Isaac up, even from the dead (Heb. 11:19). To Abraham the command held no repulsiveness or terror—his confidence in God's love and power blotted all that out.

What a victory for Abraham! All his past struggles are overshadowed by this final triumph for which the long development had prepared him. All his waiting and steadfastness is justified. Now he was at peace with God and with himself. The promise was once more renewed (Gen. 22:16), and God tried him no more.

This is the end of Abraham's pilgrimage. From this point the story is concerned with Isaac. Abraham lives nearly another 40 years but very little more is recorded concerning him. He has played his part through to ultimate success and peace. In this last chapter of his allegorical life, he typically enacts the salvation of the world—the loving Father and the obedient sacrificed Son. How much of its significance he was privileged to discern we know not, but we feel that, like Moses, he was in this scene on Moriah taken up and given a broad, distant view of the promised land in its final glory. *He saw Christ's day, and was glad.*—G.V.G.

---

## "Wisdom"

*“Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise . . . Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes.”*

The wise and the prudent referred to are those that are so in their own eyes, possessing a vast amount of knowledge in temporal affairs, but lacking the *one thing needful*. From this it will at once be seen that it is of no use to go to the great men of the earth for any information on this subject, for as it was in the days of Jesus, so it is now, they know not the wisdom of God. For had the rulers of the world in this day known it, Paul says they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory (1 Cor. 2:8).

So true is it that great men are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgments, yet days *should* speak, and multitude of years *should* teach wisdom; but in the majority of cases they do not do so. But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. We come with an enquiring mind, desiring something more definite concerning "wisdom."

What is it? Is it worth seeking after and striving for? It is apparent to any thinking mind that we do not possess it naturally.

"Vain man would be wise, though he be born like a wild ass's colt."

—and, therefore, it must, if possessed, be *acquired* in some way. This being the case, the first question of importance to everyone desiring to obtain it is, *where* are we to find it? And in seeking a reply to this, we cannot do better than follow the guidance of Elihu, who attributes it to the *inspiration of the Almighty*.

God has used this medium in His holy men of old, and the result has been that they have used His words and expressed His mind, so that it can be said, *God has spoken*, and His oracle is with us to this day under the name of the Holy Bible. Therefore we cannot do better than ask Him, through that channel, where wisdom dwells. The answer is to be found in Job 12:12—

"With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of days is understanding. With God is wisdom and strength. He hath wisdom and understanding."

We cannot help but feel the bold, clear truth of this decided statement, especially when we look around us on the manifold, mighty, and wonderful works of God displayed in all the universe, and come to the conclusion that the Creator and Sustainer of it all must be in possession of underived wisdom, knowledge, and discretion. God is wisdom. But what we want to arrive at is: What is the *value* of this attribute of the Deity when in the possession of man? This is a very interesting part of this subject, and in ascertaining its worth to us, it will be the best to go to Solomon's account of it, as he can speak from experience—



"Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised and his words are not heard" (Eccl. 9:16).

"Wisdom is the **principal thing**; therefore get wisdom, and with thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee; she shall bring thee to honor when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. Take hold of instruction, let her not go; keep her; for she is **thy life**" (Prov. 4).

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament" (Dan. 12:3).

"Happy is the man that getteth understanding, she is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is everyone that retaineth her" (Prov. 3:13).

And Jehovah, addressing the man who is led by His Spirit, says,

"My son, let not them depart from thine eyes; keep sound wisdom and discretion, so shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck ... The wise shall inherit glory" (Prov. 3:21-35).

These are a few of the testimonies of Him Who cannot lie, of the value of wisdom to him that findeth, layeth hold of, keepeth and retaineth it. But these are only a small sample, and it will be profitable before taking up the next thread of the skein, to examine a few more of a similar import—

"He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul; he that keepeth understanding shall find good" (Prov. 19:8).

"Wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence, but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it" (Eccl. 7:12).

Can anything that we know of, then, exceed the value of this precious commodity, which is a well-spring of life to him that hath it? And can anyone who fully recognizes its worth neglect to possess himself of it? We must not. And with this in view, we enter upon the next phase of this very interesting subject. How is this pearl beyond price to be obtained? It can be *purchased*, but not with filthy lucre.

"**Buy** the Truth and sell it not: also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding."

But the price, well, it is to be had for the seeking, without money, and without price in cash. Seek as for hid treasure, ask and ye shall receive. Says James (1:5)—

"If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and **it shall be given him.**"

Can anything be more definite than this? Then let us come to God, and make the first step towards the possession of wisdom by *casting away our own vain ideas, and being willing to receive instruction from His precious Word*. Job, in the days of old, made the same inquiry that we are now doing (Job. 28:20)—

"Whence cometh wisdom? Where is the place of understanding?"

The answer he received from the Spirit will exactly meet our case,

"God understandeth the way thereof, and He knoweth the place thereof, and unto man He said: Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

—and Solomon reiterates the statement in Prov. 9:10:

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding" (Prov. 9:10)

Moses exhorted the children of Israel for this reason to fear the Lord, in warning them to keep His statutes and commandments faithfully. He said this will be your *wisdom*, and your *understanding* in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes, and shall say (Deut. 4:6)—

"Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."

But unfortunately for them they did not follow his wise counsel, but proved themselves—as the Lord predicted they would—a nation *void of understanding*; and foreseeing this, He said—

"O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end" (Deut. 32:29).

We may learn a lesson from this, for these things are written for our benefit, that *it is a part of wisdom to consider our latter end*, or in other words, to be ready, by settling accounts with the adversary "whilst we are in the way with him." The children of Israel were however to the natural observer very wise and prudent; they had a very great zeal for God, but it was *not according to knowledge*. They were very particular in the observance of feasts and ceremonies, and the outward observance of the Sabbath. They tithed mint and cummin, and appeared to be righteous, but all this was *abomination* in the eyes of God, because they neglected the law, judgment, mercy, and truth, and therefore the Lord speaks of them through Jeremiah (4:22) as follows—

"My people are foolish, they have not known Me, they are sottish children, and they have none understanding. They are wise to do **evil**, but to do **good**, they have no knowledge."

This was God's estimation of them. He looked on their *hearts*, and observed the mainspring of all their actions. And therefore, as they loved the praise of their fellow man, and what they did was to be seen of them, they were—when weighed in His balances—found wanting. In their *own* eyes they were the sons of God, and children of Abraham, Moses' disciples, and very learned in the Law, and more righteous than the "dogs" of the Gentiles around them, but in all this (though, thank God, there were exceptions) they only displayed their own conceit, and made themselves more obnoxious to the Lord, for the proud He knoweth afar off, and saith, "Woe unto them that are wise in their *own* eyes, and prudent in their *own* sight." Therefore the wrath He foretold came upon them to the uttermost.

Let us take timely warning from these examples, and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, be willing and obedient, that we may be exalted by Him, and not abased, and eat the good of the Land of Promise, and delight ourselves in the abundance of peace in the Future Age.

Had the Jews done this it had been well with them and their children for ever, and the blessing of Abraham would have descended upon them. But unfortunately for them they leaned to their own understanding, and the flesh deceived them, and instead of being the children of Abraham, they proved themselves as a nation—in all but the accident of birth—children of the devil, a seed of evildoers. They were *wise in their own conceit*, and according to God's testimony there is more hope of fools than such.

The sons and daughters of the Almighty have each a profitable lesson from the fall of the Jews. Let us remember and take heed to our ways. We are not to elevate our heads, and boast against the Jews, lest we also become wise in our own conceit, and meet with God's just reprobation, but ever remember that it is by the grace of God we are what we are.

We were once (and I am now speaking of those who have received the Truth as it is in Jesus, and have passed through the Door) blind, and alienated from the life of God through ignorance, and if now we see and know, it is because He has enlightened the eyes of our understanding. We possess no good thing that we have not received from Him. *Let us ever keep this in view that we may remain little in our own eyes.*

The apostle James (3:13) gives us one of the best examples of showing us the way to manifest superior wisdom:

"Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works, with meekness of wisdom."

This is a personal question, and it rests with each one of us to prove, by our own conscience in the sight of God, that the test can be applied to us satisfactorily. If we know that it is otherwise, and there is bitter envying and strife in our hearts, glory not, and lie not against the Truth, for James says (3:15-17)—

"This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy."

The "wisdom from beneath" we all possess by nature, more or less. We inherit it from our mother's womb. It is part of the carnal mind. But the pure heavenly wisdom which is so valuable, and such a beautiful adornment, we have to acquire by *steady perseverance*, and it is desirable that we should know the best way of obtaining it, so that we may not unnecessarily waste our frail strength. The advice of Solomon will materially assist us in this, if we allow ourselves to be guided by it—

"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Prov. 13:20).

*The only wise men that we know of in this our day are Jesus Christ, the prophets and apostles, and those who walk with them.* Though the former are not personally with us, yet the testimony of their minds remain in the Word, and we can, in this way, at any time, *walk with them*, and open a conversation on those things that it is of the utmost importance we should enquire about, if we desire to be perfect.

The beauty of these holy men of old is that we can join their company at any time, by looking at the Bible, and opening its pages to any one of their writings, and we can leave them as quickly, without fear of giving offence, by laying it down. But depend upon it, those who are the oftenest in their company will prove wisest in the end.

Jesus was, and is, the wisdom of God, being His Word—which He has magnified above all His Name—manifested in flesh for the salvation of men believing in him. He said, *Search the Scriptures*. He also said that the message he delivered, he received from his Father, that it was spirit and life, and would judge men in the last day. It was the word of the kingdom, the substance of Moses and the prophets centered in him, for "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," and observing this, we can understand that the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple, and that whoso is wise, and (in what way do they display it) will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord, for *His secret is with them that fear Him*.

The wise, who hearken to the voice of God's Word, shall understand, but the wicked, who reject it, shall not. The Word—the Word of the living God, the faithful Creator of all—believed and obeyed, is the key that unlocks the door of wisdom's house.

The Holy Scriptures, Paul told Timothy, are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus—

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16).

If we know these things, happy are we if we do them, that we may receive crowns of glory, and see the King, the Wisdom of God, in his beauty. —T. R.

---

## Texas Annual Fraternal Gathering

To be held, God willing, at Hye, Texas  
From 11 a.m. on Sunday, July 31 to noon on Sunday, August 7

Eight days, Sunday to Sunday, with three services each day, except the last, is the schedule for this meeting of brothers and sisters from far and near.

In these closing days of Gentile times, as we strive to the utmost to stand ready for the great day of the Lord, it seems fitting that we lay aside for the time our several occupations and temporal cares and come together for a week of communion and association with each other in the bonds of Truth and love.

To be away from home a week may in some cases require a lot of burdensome preparation and lead to unusual inconveniences and expense, but it is felt that those who find it possible to make the arrangements, will come away at the end of the Gathering much enriched in those eternal things that come from above.

If you plan to come, please write to bro. E. W. Banta, 7012 Sherman, Houston 11, Texas, for information about accommodations, etc. Your presence on this occasion is much desired.

---

### "Loose Thy Shoe"

*"Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so"—*  
Joshua 5:15.

This was a re-enactment of the incident of Moses at the burning bush of Horeb. Moses also was instructed to remove his shoes for the place he stood upon was holy ground. Both Moses and Joshua were heads of distinct dispensations. Moses stood for the Law and national Israel. Joshua (a type of Christ) stands for the law of grace and the spiritual Israel.

The Hebrew word for "shoe" is *na'al*, and implies "that which is bound with a bar or cord; to be enclosed, locked or shut up." The word is used twice in the original of Song of Solomon 4:12—

"A garden inclosed (**na'al**) is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut-up (**na'al**), a fountain sealed."

The unloosing of the shoe, that which is bound or tied, clearly teaches the lesson of *freedom from some bondage or previous confinement*. Our minds are carried to the Law of Moses concerning the raising up of a seed or descendant to a dead brother. In the case of refusal to perform this part of the Law the man was to have his shoe loosed by his brother's wife—

"And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed" (Deut. 25:10).

This was an open disassociation of the man from relationship with the family of his brother. We have an illustration of this law in operation in the case of Ruth the Moabitess (Ruth 4). Here was a

severance of one relationship or affinity—that which came by nature, the natural man; and a taking on of a new relationship—a bondage of love and affection. Boaz said (Ruth 4:10)—

"Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance."

What beautiful thoughts are wrapped up in the simple and appealing narratives of God's well-spring of life!

The cases of Moses and Joshua at the beginning of new dispensations are more than coincidental. Unto the leader of *national* Israel, God declared His relationship, based on certain conditions:

"If ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people, for all the earth is Mine; and ye shall be unto Me a **kingdom of priests, and an holy nation**" (Exo. 19:5-6).

Nationally they were separated from Egyptian darkness; they were *loosed* from bond service to the power of sin which had oppressed them. Wherein they had been made to serve with rigor and hard bondage, they now emerged into liberty and a separated existence, isolated from all nations of the earth. They were called to put off their former ways of darkness, to dedicate their lives in distinct service to God and faith in Him. To this they agreed as Moses conveyed the words of God to them—

"All the people answered together and said, all that the Lord hath spoken we will do" (Exo. 19:8).

*Unbound* from a relationship to the darkness of Egypt's ways they took on a new service, a holy service to God, and became a nation of priests unto Him. Moses in anticipation of this moment at Sinai with Israel, enacted in symbol the same events at the burning bush. His act portrayed the high and lofty calling which he was about to set before his people and nation.

*But this preaching of the Gospel message did not profit them because they did not have faith in God.*

Now when Joshua bows before the angel at Jericho, he is commanded to do exactly as did Moses, "*Loose thy shoe*" (Josh. 5:15). In the primary sense this was a reminder to Israel of the covenant which had been agreed to at Sinai, and of their national relationship to God. But it has a fuller meaning to spiritual Israel, for whom the record has been preserved from generation to generation. Paul tells us baptism is a *loosing from a former bond service*:

"He that hath died is freed from sin" (Rom. 6:7).

"Being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness."

And he impresses the aspect of holiness in this loosing from sin:

"Now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end, everlasting life."

The teaching of Christ and the apostles was all to the same effect. Our relationship to God is a very holy thing. Being called to association with God as His children—His sons and daughters—infers a holiness which is associated with things pertaining to God. Compassed with mortality, we shall never completely be worthy of close association with God. It can only be on the basis of *unceasing effort* on our part, finally crowned with the extension unlimited of the Creator's loving mercy.

This seems to be the underlying thought in the remarks of John the Baptist when announcing the coming of Christ—

"There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose."

The primary thought is of humble service in washing the Master's feet, and of John's comparative unacceptability for even this task. And if John was unacceptable, *how much more so are we!* But why such a form of words? Is it not to teach us that God was the only one who could provide salvation? Of John, Jesus said—

"Among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist" (Luke 7:28).

And yet with such a high position John declared of himself,

"I am not worthy to unloose the Master's shoes."

*Why should the Master want his shoes unloosed?* Certainly it did not refer to the humble service of feet washing Jesus enjoined upon all true brethren and sisters in their care for one another and all men. This literal act was performed in a most loving and considerate manner by a woman, a sinner, in the house of Simon.

*There had to be a loosing of Jesus from the dominion of the sin nature*—from the former, natural relationship—in order to effect the deliverance which the Creator planned as the salvation of the righteous. Though John the Baptist was the greatest of the prophets, the messenger to announce the Savior, yet it had to be someone "mightier" who could loose the power of sin and death:

"His name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, 'the Mighty God', the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6).

The presence of God's Spirit in the Tabernacle and in Solomon's Temple sanctified these places of worship, and all persons and objects related to the enactments of the Law were thereby sanctified or "made holy." Yet these injunctions were designed to teach the higher value of *personal holiness* to God. It is the *individual* the Father is seeking. He is desirous of a people through whom His holiness may be manifest. The Psalmist says—

"Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord, for ever" (Psa. 93:5).

While Paul brings home the lesson in a more direct manner, interpreting thereby the Psalmist's words—

"Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are" (1 Cor. 3:16-17).

The Apostle Peter also urges the development of character like unto Jesus, based on the glorious hope of the promises, that thereby we also might partake of the Divine nature. He states the high relationship to God we now possess, the antitype of Israel—

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

This unloosing of Joshua's shoes in the secondary sense illustrates the loosing from the bondage of sin, that we might become servants to God. But Peter warns us not to use our freedom unwisely. For he states that being made free we are God's servants—

"As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God" (1 Pet. 2:16).

So that though *loosed* in one respect we are *bound* in another sense. Our former master had bonds and chains of lust and the deeds of the flesh. We are bound to our new Master on a voluntary, free-will basis, with cords of love and devotion, of service to our fellowmen and thus fulfil the royal law of liberty.

Turning then to an earlier quotation illustrating the use of the Hebrew for "*shoe*," we see the beauty of the Spirit's expression:

"A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut-up, a fountain sealed" (Song 4:12).

The bride of Christ, the faithful virgin, is here pictured as enclosed or separated from the world by the protective power of God, Who is ever watchful over His elect. While they remain bond-servants to God His everlasting arms are around them and He will not suffer their feet to be moved.

In their present state of separation from the world the righteous are counselled to have their feet "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Eph. 6:15). Here the Greek word for "shod" has the same meaning as the Hebrew for shoe, that is, "to bind."

The instructions to the disciples whom Jesus sent out included being "*shod with sandals*." Again the feet are to be prepared for the journey and for work. By contrast we notice also that the disciples were not to put on two coats; teaching us that there is only one Divinely provided form of protection. The protective influence which the Word of God provides for our paths, is typically illustrated when we read of Israel coming through the wilderness. Beginning their journeyings, they ate of the Passover with—

"Loins girded, their shoes on their feet, their staff in their hand."

At the end of the sojourn, God spake to them by Moses—

"I have led you 40 years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot."

*The antitypical shoe of the Gospel is all-sufficient in whatever age.* It will meet the demands of the most rugged terrain. Yet it must be bound securely to the feet. The breaking of the latchet of the shoe is referred to as an unprepared state. Isaiah speaks of God bringing a nation against His people for their wickedness, a nation prepared to execute His judgments against them, and says,

"Neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken" (Isa. 5:27).

But by contrast the same prophet enacts Egypt's *unprepared* state and the humility that would come upon them. He was told:

"Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and **put off thy shoe** from thy foot . . . So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, to the shame of Egypt" (Isa. 20:2-4).

But the servant of God will not be found in such a case. The Word of God will be bound to his heart, and will protect him from the trials of affliction, and he shall not be ashamed in the day of inspection. Thus the Wisdom of God declares (Song 7:1)—

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

Here again the elect are shown as highly esteemed when found in the service of God, laboring in the vineyard of their Lord, *clothed in a proper manner*. And Isaiah continues—

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation" (Isa. 5:27).

But the picture of Joshua unshod in the presence of the Angel of the Covenant, still carries us to a higher plane. Having entered the Promised Land, Joshua stands as a type of the multitudinous Christ, clothed upon with immortality. They are holy in the fullest sense, having been arrayed with the garment pure and white, the clean linen garment, not of their own righteousness, but of him who was obedient in all things. Their relationship to sin and death has been removed. They now are upon holy ground, standing in service to God for the ages to come. Being of the nature of the angels they are equal unto the angels, no longer bound by the weakness of human nature, but as Christ and the Elohim, are unrestricted by mortal weakness.

In the highest sense they have attained to a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, a holy nation, showing forth the praises of Him Who hath called them to His Kingdom and glory.

---

## **The Tabernacle in the Wilderness**

*"The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints."*

### **PART TWO**

But the harmony does not cease here. The *locality* of the scene of the Sinaitic Pentecost is destined to become the scene of the "raising up" of the antitypical Tabernacle. At Sinai the first Tabernacle was "reared up"; and upon the same spot the "MORE PERFECT TABERNACLE" will be fitted up; and "the two (pentecostal) wave loaves," consisting of Jews and Gentiles in Christ, will be waved before the Lord "for acceptance" through Christ.

In view of these things can there be any wonder if we discover that the things transacted during the Sinaitic typical fifty-day period find their antitypical counterpart in the transactions of a similar period after the "raising up" of the perfect tabernacle.

Thus, after the "rearing up" of the typical tabernacle on the first day of the first month,

"They kept the PASSOVER on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai" (Num. 9:5).

How beautifully does the type and antitype agree in this in view of the statement of Christ,

"I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the Kingdom of God shall come" (Luke 22:18).

This Mosaic type is a fingerpost pointing forward to the—

"Feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined."



—in the swallowing up of death in victory, and the wiping away tears from off all faces of those who shall be deemed worthy. The very contemplation of this brings light, joy, and gladness, into the souls of all who, in faith and obedience, are patiently waiting for "Christ our Passover," for what is the antitypical Passover but the realization of its significance in the *final blotting out of sin*, and the possession of eternal life with honor and glory in the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

In the type we next notice the *mention by name* of the men who should stand with Moses in the work appointed him as the leader and commander of Israel. May we not discern in this also the realization of the promise of Christ (Matt. 10:32)—

"Whosoever therefore shall confess (in) me before men, (in) him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."

Thus will "the renowned of the congregation (ecclesia), princes (apostles) of the tribes" of Israel, and every constituent of the Yahweh Name be made manifest in their recognition and honorable mention by the Supreme Judge before whom we must all stand in that day. Oh, what joy and blessedness will the "*Well done*" expression of approval from the lips of the august representative of the Great Eternal before the angels of His might bring into the souls of all unto whom this pronouncement of blessing and approval shall be extended!

In the meantime, let us remember that the "Well done" will be confined to those who shall have satisfactorily made use of the capital and talents committed into their hands, and from whom he will expect his own with usury. What are we doing with the imperishable "Truth of the Gospel," which is designed—not only for the *personal* adornment with the meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price, in those who have received it—but, as "the good seed of the Kingdom," it is our duty to *spread broadcast* upon the waters, that it may be found after many days—

"In the morning sow thy seed; in the evening withhold not thy hand."

This precious seed is the Pearl of great price—the instrumentality Divinely used for the development of those "first fruits unto God and the Lamb" during this *extended pentecostal period* inaugurated by Peter on the occasion to which we have referred. What a beautiful analogy exists in the typical fact that the Feast of Pentecost was the celebration of thanksgiving to Him who had blessed the sowing of the seed which had yielded the bountiful and beautiful FIRSTFRUITS of the land; and the antitypical celebration of the same Feast by the 144,000 of the redeemed as the result of the individual faithful discharge of the duties of the sower in this time of sowing! In the type the result of the harvest of first fruits depended upon the *individual efforts* of the tillers of the soil. And shall we dare to assume that in the antitype there is no responsibility for the same results in relation to the harvest ahead?

Then there is *non-numbering* of the Levites among the children of Israel, the reason for which is given in the type thus—

"I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel, instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be Mine; because all the firstborn are Mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I hallowed unto Me all the firstborn in Israel, man and beast: Mine shall they be: I am the Lord. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Bring the tribe of Levi near, and **present them before Aaron the priest**, that they may minister unto him. And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons; they are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel" (Num. 3:12, 13, 6, 9).

We cannot fail to see the antitype of this in Christ and his brethren as the priesthood of the Kingdom under the New Covenant. It will find its counterpart in the separation from Israel and the Gentiles of those for whom Christ prayed saying,

"Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am: that they may behold my glory" (John 17:24).

This will be the priestly community who will sing the new song—

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

The object of this separation is thrillingly set forth by Paul—

"That he (Christ) might present to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27).

What a glorious contrast is here presented between type and antitype, the priesthood under the Law, and that of the New Covenant—the faithless and the faithful! What a beneficent fatherhood for the nations blessed in Abraham and his seed is being provided!

And what are the Nazarites under the law, brought under our notice in chap. 6 of the book of Numbers, but the *typical representatives of the class acceptable unto God*, of whom Christ is the head and pattern; the class now in process of development, who in the obedience of faith have separated themselves from the rest of the world, having come out from among them that they might be the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

The law of the Nazarite in its typical relations is but an allegorical figuration of the character of the true friends of Christ who follow him in his *isolation from all that is evil*, surrendering their mortal life in the hope of that transformation of the Spirit which "shall change their vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body," as represented in the taking the hair of the head of the Nazarite's separation, and putting it in the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings to be consumed.

Finally we consider the shadow of the *12 princes of Israel*, of whom honorable mention of God is made in their appointment to co-operate with their chief; and their voluntary offerings in connection with that appointment to facilitate the great work which God had laid upon him in leading Israel unto the rest and inheritance proclaimed in the Gospel of their salvation. The resemblance between type and antitype in this will find full expression in the arrangements of the executive in the carrying out of the greater work which they—as the Divinely appointed and honorably mentioned princes of the House of Israel—will infallibly and perfectly perform in the restoration of the Kingdom again to Israel, and the ultimate blessing of all nations with them, and so filling the earth with the knowledge of the glory of God.

We see in this Mosaic shadow *the antitypical Moses surrounded by his twelve elect princes of the House of Israel* and those Pentecostal first fruits in their twelve-square totality, each of whom will have received honorable mention by their head, and a suitable status, in joyful co-operation with, and in complete subordination to, their great chief—filled with the spirit of wisdom, and invested with almighty power.

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

---

## HE THAT HATETH SURETISHIP IS SURE"—Prov. 11:15.

Several times the Proverbs strongly warn against and forbid suretiship—not only for strangers but for friends. What is the sin involved in suretiship? It is out of harmony with the scriptural way of life because it speaks for the future—something no man dare do. The "future is in the hand of God. He alone can give guarantees. For us to do so is presumption. And suretiship implies either excessive treasure on earth, or a foolish commitment of that which is not possessed or cannot be spared. All this is contrary to the Christlike way of life.

---

### "Lovers of Pleasure"

*"In the last days, perilous times shall come."*

In listing the causes which were to bring about the great departure from the Faith, the Apostle Paul (2 Tim. 3:4) foretold that these corrupters of the Truth would be "*lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God.*"

It is significant that the era of the Roman world which was to witness the great apostasy was an era in which sports, games, theatricals and all forms of public entertainment probably reached their peak in ancient times, and have never been exceeded *until modern times*. Many of the sports engaged in today are patterned after and receive their names from sports engaged in by the Greeks and Romans. It is also significant that that era is outstanding as being one of the most immoral and corrupt epochs in human history. And without a doubt, the love of ease and pleasure was one of the chief contributing factors in the fall of Grecian and Roman civilization.

The Apostle Paul contrasts the contest waged by the disciple of Christ with the contenders in the games by saying (1 Cor. 8:25):

"Now they do it to obtain a **corruptible** crown; but we an **incorruptible**."

Which illustrated the *folly and waste of time and energy* spent in obtaining something of little or no value, when there is an eternal crown of life to be won by "running" for Him who can, and will, give one this incorruptible reward.

Unquestionably Paul's prophecy of the great apostasy from the faith during the first centuries after Christ also indicates that similar conditions were to exist in the "last days" of the present era, when once again "perilous times" for the few lovers of the Truth would prevail, and that *love of godless pleasures would be one of the causes of the final apostasy*.

Not a converted world, but a world revelling in its own fleshly desires and pleasures, oblivious of coming doom, is the word-picture drawn by Christ and his apostles. In Matt. 24:38-39, the Savior describes a generation absorbed in its pleasures and selfish desires, "eating and drinking," scorning impending judgment as in the days of Noah.

In Luke 21:34, the Lord left a warning to his disciples lest they be led away by these fleshly pleasures:

"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, so that day come upon you unawares."

What words could better describe the world today? A world so completely absorbed in the quest for wealth and pleasure and the cares of life—a world so involved in gratifying the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life," as to have little or no time for spiritual things.

*Our Lord knew that his followers in this time of the end would not be immune to the allurements of worldly pleasure which he foresaw would engulf the world of the ungodly, and that it would take earnest prayer, faith and endurance to lead a life of holiness in the midst of a generation drunk with godless pleasures and unbridled indulgence in the works of the flesh.*

The lovers of pleasure not only scoff at the idea that popular sports and entertainment is harmful, but boast of its "great benefits" in the way of "healthful exercise, diversion and recreation," which doubtless sounds convincing to those who have little or no interest in its effect upon the moral and spiritual life of the people. The apostle Paul doubtless anticipated such thoughts even among the disciples when he said (1 Tim. 4:7-8)—

"Have nothing to do with godless and silly myths. Train yourself in godliness; for, while bodily exercise is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise of the present life, and also of the life to come" (RVS).

The most miserable and discontented people are those who seek happiness and contentment in gratifying the lusts of the flesh, and imagine that they can find happiness in pleasure which cannot satisfy, but only calls for more.

All thinking people are alarmed at the increase of godlessness, crime and immorality, but the most alarming aspect of all is the utter misguidedness of those who seek a remedy. True, there are many who say that a "return to Divine principles" is the remedy, which is true; but at the same time they are blind to the fact that a people satiated with pleasure, their minds stupefied with worldly entertainment and their affections set upon these things, are almost, if not totally, impervious to Divine teaching.

We are told that the best way to keep the youth of the country from turning to crime and immorality is to give them more and more pleasure. While it might be somewhat difficult to diagnose the psychological effect of these things upon youthful minds, yet the results speak for themselves. Never in history has youth been pampered, coddled and given so much pleasure and entertainment as during the present era, yet juvenile delinquency has reached such alarming stages as to frighten even the most optimistic. But the alarming increase in crime and immorality throughout the world is by no means confined to youth.

It is general, and as more and more lustful pleasures are made available, crime and immorality increase accordingly. The crime picture for 1954 should cause lovers of pleasure to stop and think, but, like all wishful thinkers, they are blind to the real cause.

During the past year more than 1½ million major crimes were committed. Social diseases have become a major problem of the medical profession. Illegitimate births have increased 15% during the past year, and the greatest increase is among teen-agers.

This is the U.S.A., which has the greatest opportunity for moral and spiritual advancement of any people on earth. At least one of the chief causes should not be hard to detect. Thirty billion dollars a year are spent on godless sports and entertainment. The sports celebrity, the movie star, the comedian, and all types of entertainers are the chief objects of adoration and esteem, though morally they may be little better than degenerates. It makes no difference as to their character, just so they can *satisfy for a little while the craving for entertainment.*

Except to those who want to revel in these godless pleasures, and those who lack the courage to speak out against it, the baneful effects of the modern craze for pleasure is readily apparent. It creates a spirit of restlessness, for it never satisfies; it leads to covetousness and craving of wealth, which they feel that they must obtain by any means, thus often leading to crime; it creates flippancy and shallow-mindedness, a taste for nonsense and everything contrary to Divine teaching and common sense.

The churches, having given up trying to reform the world and mold them to the pattern of former religious teaching, are now busily engaged in conforming the church to the ways of the world, and introducing entertainment of purely worldly type in order to entice them to join the church.

A generation has grown up schooled in the modern idea that it is their privilege and their right to indulge the desires and passions to the fullest extent, so long as they can escape penalties. Moral principles, if any, are based upon human ideas and according to human desires, easily adjusted to suit every wish and whim of a pleasure-mad crowd.

True there is much *lip service* to God, and it is even becoming fashionable now. But lip service it is, while His holy law they scorn in every way that it conflicts with their pleasures. It is a—

". . . **form** of godliness, but denying the power thereof."  
—a religion fashioned, not according to Divine teaching, but after the fashion of paganism.

In every age and generation, among every people, when they become absorbed in pleasure, they forget God; when they forget God, they rapidly degenerate into crime and immorality and every lust of the flesh.

Such as these scorn Divine teaching; for it is contrary to their heart's desire, and they despise those who would teach them to forsake their pleasure and turn to Divine teaching. If they take any interest in religion, it must not interfere with their pleasure. Human nature has not changed. Human beings do the same things under the same circumstances and obtain the same results. In Job 21:12-14, "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God" are described in this way:

"They take the timbrel and the harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in mirth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God,  
"Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways."

Scoffers deride those of today who point out the common trend toward utter godlessness, and try to make it appear that such protests come only from those who are old-fashioned and foggy. Such ideas are but "willing ignorance" and wishful thinking. The facts speak for themselves.

*It is utterly incompatible with the spirit of Christ for brethren and sisters to meet together and spend the time in sports, nonsensical games and various amusements, so that their gatherings could not be distinguished from worldly gatherings. Yet, sad to say, this very thing happens regularly in certain groups of professed brethren; and woe to him who dares raise his voice against it.*

*The chief pleasure of the disciple of Christ is to drink deep of his Word; to meet with those who love the Word and "speak often one to another" upon it; to worship together with those of like precious faith, rejoicing in the hope of eternal life. Let us note some examples—*

"Thy Words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart" (Jer. 15:16).

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psa. 122:1).

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord"

*Godliness, holiness and righteousness are not developed in an atmosphere of levity, pleasure and revelry.*  
—O.B.

---

## "Pray Always and Faint Not"

No prayerless person will attain to salvation. In the Age to Come even the Lord Jesus will have reached his peerless position as a result of prayer—

"When he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared" (Heb. 5:7).

Again, we read:

"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

Jesus did ask—humbly, fervently, frequently—and he will receive.

Some have stumbled at the idea that God should require prayer. These objectors have said: "If God knows what we want, and what is good for us, why should He require to be asked for it?"

When we open our Bibles, and ponder the subject, we can see *many reasons* why God should require us to pray. Prayer, scripturally offered, accords God His proper position as supreme Giver or Withholder, and places man in his proper position as suppliant and dependent. The result is that God is glorified, and the *mind is exercised in that spirit of humility* which is so well-pleasing to God. We shall realize this, if we consider the prayers of such approved ones as Abraham, David, Daniel.

Another effect of prayer is that it *keeps God in our remembrance*. God soon fades from the minds of those who never pray. We do not want God to fade from our minds. We, like the Psalmist, want to remember both Him and His benefits. One of the greatest helps towards this will be the apostolic injunction—

"In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6).

A further outcome of prayer is that it *brings God near to us*. We all know that God is afar off, but it is not so easy to realize that He is also near. Prayer will help us to appropriate and appreciate this great fact, even as did the Psalmist when he said:

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth."

A realization of this led on the worthies of old to victory, and evoked also from the Lord Jesus the exclamation:

"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:53).

Then the conditions which are attached to acceptable prayer are such as to lead to *self-examination and circumspection*. It is a common idea with the world that man has only to pray, and God will smile. Those who are taught in the Word know that this is mere unwarrantable presumption. They recognize that—

". . . the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord."

—and more so when brought with a double mind. The only prayer in which God delights is that of "the upright." What an incentive, then are God's requirements in this matter of acceptable approach to Him, for us to put away all hypocrisy! What greater lever could we have, for instance, to be forgiving to those who injure us than the knowledge that unless we are so, it is vain to supplicate God's forgiveness for our own shortcomings?

Again, *our prayers reflect our minds* in relation to the Truth—

"Where your **treasure** is, there will your **heart** be also."

If the Truth's affairs occupy a large and proper place in our affections, we, like Epaphras, shall be found laboring fervently in our prayers for the Truth's well-being. If, however, self and flesh-gratification are the aims of our supplications, we may be sure that something is amiss. Let us see to it that our petitions run in lawful channels—channels that will tend to the glory of God and the salvation of man.

How the strong, faithful Paul entreated for help in the form of prayers on his behalf! Do brethren and sisters in these dry, parched times stand in less need of such help? And ought not the same means to be adopted in order that it may be obtained?

*"Pray always and not faint."*

—C. J.

---

**"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple"—  
Psalm 27:4.**

One thing. One thing is needful. Complication is unrest, but simplification is peace. One thing in life must stand in majestic isolation like the mountain of the Lord, and all other things must be grouped in complete subjection at its base.

---

## **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.**

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

**HAWLEY, Pennsylvania—Memorial Service 10:30 a.m., house-to-house. Bible Class, Thursday, 8 p.m., house-to-house.**

\* \* \*

**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.**

Visitors around the table of the Lord this month have been: bro. & sis. H. A. Sommerville (Lake Ariel, Pa); bro. & sis. Wayne Wolfe, and sis. Ann Hill (Lampasas); and sisters Margaret and Frank Martin (Johnson City).

Bro. Sommerville has ministered the word of exhortation on several occasions. On Sunday evening, Feb. 6th, his labors were directed to the public proclamation of the saving Truth of the Gospel. Several friends were present to hear the discourse on the subject, "The Living Temple."

—bro. Charles Banta

\* \* \*

**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.**

On Jan. 30 we were happy to have with us around the Table of the Lord several brethren and sisters of our Faith as visitors. They were: bre. & sisters S. S. Wolfe, Wayne Wolfe, Erby Wolfe, Harry Denbow, bro. Chas. Rodgers and sis. Seba Faye Wolfe (Lampasas); sisters Frank Martin and Margaret Martin (Johnson City); bro. & sis. John Haley (Cain City); and bro. & sis. Harry Sommerville (Lake Ariel, Pa.).

Bro. Sommerville gave the exhortation in the morning, and bro. S. S. Wolfe spoke in the afternoon.

On Mar. 6, at our regular meeting, we had the pleasure of visits again from sisters Frank & Margaret Martin and bro. & sis. Sommerville. On this day the exhortation was given by our bro. Bill Edwards and bro. Sommerville spoke in the afternoon.

We are very grateful for the comfort and encouragement these visiting brethren and sisters give us. Our ecclesia is few in number and we need the strength that others can provide.

—bro. Alva C. Stewart.

\* \* \*

**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 am.**

**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.**

---



Some make sacrifice of what they HAVE in possession, and others of what they MIGHT have had; the latter is less visible to the human eye, but not less real than the other.—Christadelphian, 1884.

---

## The Psalms

The Psalms form a large and prominent part of the Scriptures. They are not attractive to the popular mind, religious or profane. There is a clear reason for this. The Psalms turn on the existence and activity of the personal God of the Bible, to Whom the natural mind has a *philosophical* aversion where it is scholastically trained, and an instinctive aversion where it has not risen above native animalism.

As for the religious taste that has been developed by immortal soulism, blown or spun into all sorts of artificial attenuations by the elegant speculators or exciting declaimers of a false theological age, the Psalms are not twaddling enough or human-sentimental enough for the sickly modern school of "piety."

Are the Psalms useless then? Far from it. *They are delightful nutriment to the new man that has been truly begotten by the Word of Truth.* There is no part of the Scriptures to which a scripturally-formed taste can more ardently apply the Scripture encomium:

"I esteemed the words of Thy mouth to be **more than my necessary food**: more to be desired are they than gold, yea, much fine gold: **THEY ARE TO ME THE JOY AND REJOICING OF MY HEART.**"

The Psalms are a school in which truly Divine thoughts and expressions are to be learned. We need to keep at this school to keep in the right study. Another school is around us on every hand, from which we much more easily learn aversion to the thoughts and ways of the Spirit, especially in a day like ours, when *the educational tendency is more and more to banish God from heart and lip.*

Scriptural speech is obsolete with those of a weak or a dead faith in the Age to Come, and the age that has gone. It will return in full vigor with the Kingdom of God, which will establish a pure language in all the earth. An obedient believer of the Gospel belongs to *that* age though living in *this*. That which makes him belong to it is the reception in advance, of its *spirit*.

This spirit finds expression in its language, and its language is nowhere more wealthily displayed than in the Book of Psalms, in which the Spirit by David has formulated *the thoughts that are acceptable in man towards God in all relations.*

We may be considered guilty of "cant" in the estimation of merely secular thinkers, in conforming to the Divine standard in the matter; but a wise man will keep his eye on the fact that the *secular thinkers are on the road to oblivion* with the age that has given them birth, and that the Divine standard alone will govern the ages of futurity. The future belongs alone to Christ; and his spirit is in all the Psalms, to which we do well to conform as entirely as we can. —R. R.

---

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

---