

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

CONTENTS

ECCLESIAL DIRECTORY	Inside Front Cover
EDITORIAL: "Some Fell Among Thorns"	161
"HIS ASPECT AS THE SUN" (Bro. Thomas)	163
TEXAS ANNUAL FRATERNAL GATHERING.....	165
THE BLOOD OF CHRIST (Bro. Roberts) Part 3	166
"SEAL THE LAW AMONG MY DISCIPLES"	170
"WHAT SHALL WE HAVE, THEREFORE?"	176
THE TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS (Part 4).....	183
BUFFALO GATHERING.....	188
"NO MAN TOOK THEM INTO HIS HOUSE"	188
CONFERRING WITH FLESH AND BLOOD	189
"OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES"	191
DEATH BY SIN	192
CALEB THE KENEZITE	Inside Back Cover
<u>ECCLESIAL NEWS: Detroit, Toronto</u>	<u>Back Cover</u>

CHRIST IS COMING AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

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EDITORIAL

“Some Fell Among Thorns”

In the parable of the sower, Jesus uses the word-picture of a man sowing seed on various kinds of soil. In one case he says—

"Some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it"—Luke 8:7.

Many of us when reading of thorns, might think of certain large bushes, or small trees, that are common in the United States and Canada. But the word rendered "thorns" refers to briars, brambles or thistles that are common in the east. This idea fits in better with the words of Jesus, for he says, "The thorns sprang up with it, and choked it."

Among the familiar species is a large thistle with long yellow spines, and another tall one with spines that are described as powerful. These grow in abundance and, unless the farmer takes action, they grow rapidly and choke, or smother, the grain. The application that Jesus made in this illustration is well suited to the purpose of the parable, and carries with it a depth of wisdom that challenges serious consideration—

"He that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the Word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the pleasures of this life, choke the Word, and **he becomes unfruitful**"—Matt. 13:22, Luke 8:14.

Do these words of Jesus impress us? Do they cause us to think seriously about our own standing in relation to him? But, above all, *do we believe them?* The "care of this world" is one of the thorns that choke the Word. Cares, or anxieties, that encompass us on every hand. We become anxious about our employment, our homes and their contents, and all other worldly possessions. From this we develop a worldly fever that burns into our inmost being and, if it remains unchecked, will scorch the tissues of the inner man, and he will become hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. He may still hold the *form* of godliness, but by his worldly walk he will deny the power of God unto salvation.

On another occasion, Jesus used this term in relation to the day of his coming, and it is worthy of serious thought to note how he groups it with other dangerous things—

"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares"—Luke 21:34.

We are to *take heed*, or be alert, because of three things— surfeiting, or dissipation, drunkenness and the *cares of this life*. Why? Because they weigh down the heart and cause us to be unprepared for the coming of the Lord. Therefore, said Jesus, watch and pray always that we may have strength to escape all the things that will take place.

The second thorn is "the deceitfulness of riches." One does not need to have many thousands in order to possess riches in the New Testament sense, for the word signifies bountifulness, or plentifulness. Riches are deceitful in many ways because the owners thereof are inclined to trust in them, and Solomon says—

"He that trusteth in his riches shall fall"—Prov. 11:28.

Paul puts his finger right on the danger spot, when he says—

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have been seduced from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim. 6).

When Jesus says that "riches are *deceitful*," and "how *hard* it will be for those who have riches to enter the Kingdom of God" it is high time to give careful attention to what he says. The main point is, do we believe him?

The third thorn is "the pleasures of this life." This is one of the most deadly and fatal enemies of all who aspire to a place in the Kingdom of God. They are deadly because they are designed and invented to attract the attention—to give something to satisfy the cravings of the flesh and gratify the natural mind.

We recognize that to separate ourselves from the world and its pleasures, and endeavor to walk with Christ, creates an endurance and self-denial that brings loneliness into our lives. Therein lies the danger, for *that very loneliness becomes an easy prey to the pleasures provided for the people of the world*.

This is not the only age where these problems have been encountered. Even in the days of the apostles, we learn of one of Paul's companions who succumbed to the allurements of his time. When writing to Philemon, Paul spoke of Demas as his fellow-laborer. A few years later, when writing to Timothy, Paul said,

"Demas hath forsaken me, having loved the present world."

If companions of the apostles could be influenced by the things of the world to such an extent; is it not reasonable to beware of the dangers by which we are surrounded, which are far greater than they were in apostolic times?

There are many reasons why Christadelphians cannot indulge in the pleasures of this life, or fraternize with those who have no use for God or His Word. One of the foremost is that stated by Jesus. They "*choke the Word*," and the victim becomes unfruitful. How significant are the words used by Jesus! Choke means to stifle, strangle or suffocate, and to check growth or progress. And that is

exactly what happens to our first love if we become lovers of pleasure, for the natural mind looks there for gratification.

When we believe the Gospel, and are baptized into Christ, our minds should be occupied with the things of the Kingdom, by which we will grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Human joys, and earthly pleasures, are fleeting and shallow, and are not to be compared with the joy that will thrill the hearts of those who shall—

"Come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away"—Isa. 51:11.

Lovers of this world's pleasures would find themselves entirely out of place in such an environment, and would seek to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord. What then shall we do? It is ours to make the choice. We can walk with the lukewarm whom Jesus will spew out of his mouth, when he comes to set up the Kingdom, or we can "*walk worthy of God*," so that if we overcome, he will give us to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God. —Editor.

"His Aspect as the Sun"

"His aspect as the sun shines in his power"—Rev. 1:16.

The word *opsis*, which I have rendered "aspect," is expressed in the English version by "countenance." In modern style, this is generally understood of the face. But John certainly did not mean this. He began his description at the hair of the head; and if he had meant the face he would doubtless have referred to it before he passed down to the breasts. What he had reference to, after finishing in detail, was the *general aspect* of the whole figure.

This was typified in the general appearance of the Alpha on the mount of Transfiguration. Peter, James, and John, were witnesses of this. It was a representation of the power and coming, or Majesty, of the Lord Jesus Anointed. Peter, alluding to it, says,

"We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the glory and coming of our Lord Jesus Anointed, but were eye witnesses of his majesty.

"For he received from Deity, the Father, honor and power, when a voice came to him from the excellent glory, saying, This is My Son the Beloved in whom I am well pleased" (2 Pet. 1:16).

On that occasion—

". . . his face (**prosopon**) shone as the sun, and his raiment became white as the light" (Matt. 17:2).

This transfiguration scene exhibited the Son of Man *personal and corporate* in the glory of the Father as he will be in the Kingdom of Deity. His general aspect will be glorious; for (Isa. 24:23):

"The moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed when YAHWEH TZ'VAHOT shall reign the glory on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and in the presence of his Ancients."

"Our life is hid with Christ in the Deity, and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we (the Saints) appear with him **in glory**" (Col. 3:4).

—and, says John—

"We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2).

When, therefore, the apocalypse of the multitude of the Sons of God, represented by John's similitude of the Son of Man, shall be manifested, being all like to Jesus in transfiguration, the aspect of the Body will be "as the sun when he shines in his power."

Jesus being the Sun of Righteousness, and they like him, they will be all "as the sun;" and (Matt. 25:31)—

"When he shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."

He will then "shine forth in his power"—the Sun of an unclouded day; and as he shines, so will they; for he has said,

"To him that overcomes I will give to sit down with me upon my throne, as I overcome and sit down with my Father upon His throne" (Rev. 3:21).

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (.Matt. 13:43).

—and there will be no place found for the earth and the heaven, in which the Beast and the False Prophet and their kings now shine in all the glory of Satan; for then they will have fled away from before the face and sun-like aspect of the Son of Man, seated upon "the Great White Throne" established by his prowess for the Thousand Years (Rev. 20:11).

From the illustration of the transfiguration, the personal appearance of the Saints will be splendid with brightness. But there is reason to believe that they will not be distinguishable from ordinary men in appearance *until their labors are accomplished*. When the angels visited Sodom, the citizens did not discern any difference between them and Lot. And so will it be with the Saints who arise to execute the judgment written upon—

". . . the Great City, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified" (Rev. 11:8).

The nature of their work requires that they should have the aspect common to humanity, which is not at all compatible with the symbolical glory of their Body Corporate. If they flashed light from their persons as the sun shoots forth his rays, their enemies would be so panic-stricken, that they would not stand in fight, by which their punishment would be greatly impeded. The resurrected saints will therefore appear upon the theatre of war, as Jesus when he first emerged from earth. Jesus was mistaken for the gardener. The Angel of the Lord who descended from heaven to open his grave was of lightning-like countenance, and raiment white as snow; and the guards did shake, and became as dead men; but when Mary saw Jesus, she conversed with him without trepidation. There was an interval between the restoration of the body to life and the glorification of Jesus seven days before Pentecost. During this typical interval of *forty days*, he associated with the disciples, ate, drank, and conversed with them as usual. The body raised not having been "received up in glory," or displayed in the brightness of spirit-body, was in a condition to shine forth in incorruptibility and immortality *when the fitness of things required*.

Now Jesus was the great example of all things pertaining to his brethren, the Saints. When their bodies come out of their graves, they come forth as Jesus.

It was so with Jesus; and will be so with the Saints. Between their resurrection and glorification is the *resurrection state*, styled "in the resurrection," a period of forty years preceding the Millennium, in which some of the most important events of the Apocalypse are to be transacted. The end of this judicial period, during which the Kingdom is being established, or "set up," is the "*Evening Time*"—the time preceding the Millennial Day.

When the night has passed, the Day of Rest arrives, in which the Saints, who have been "scourging throughout the earth," cease from their labors, and their works do follow them. They enter

the Kingdom, covered with glory, which the nations will bear in lively remembrance for a thousand years.

Now, according to this arrangement, Zechariah testifies that when the Mount of Olives shall be rent asunder by an earthquake:

"YAHWEH, my **Elohim**, shall come in, all the Saints with thee. And it shall be in that day there shall be **no brightness**— the Splendid Ones shall draw in; and it shall be one day that shall be known to YAHWEH, not day nor night; and it shall be at the time of evening there shall be brightness. . .

"And Yahweh shall be for King over all the earth. In that day there shall be ONE YAHWEH, and his Name One."

The "Splendid Ones" of this passage are the Elohim, or Saints, who will not shine forth in the brightness of their glory, until the time of evening; then, when the Kingdom is restored to Israel, they will shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father, as Daniel, Zechariah, and Jesus have foretold.

Texas Annual Fraternal Gathering

(God willing)

Hye, Texas: Beginning Sunday, July 31, 11:00 A.M., and continuing eight days to Sunday, August 7, 11:00 A.M. Three services are planned for each day at 11:00 A.M., 3:00 P.M. and 8:00 P.M.

Exhortations and lectures covering a wide variety of Bible subjects given by speakers from many states and Canada will present valuable material for the encouragement, comfort and upbuilding of the brotherhood.

A period each day for daily Bible reading and discussion for children's study classes will have a place on the program.

All brothers and sisters who possibly can are urged to be there for this week of association and refreshing that we might be drawn closer together in unity and love in the interest of our hope and calling.

For further, information about accommodations, etc., please write to E. W. Banta, 7012 Sherman Street, Houston 11, Texas.

"THE LORD IS THE PORTION OF MINE INHERITANCE"—Psalm 16:5.

The mind that has fully grasped this exalted conception, and gives it practical application, has solved all problems and achieved perfect peace. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"; and if your treasure has 2 qualifications you have peace: they are—perfect safety, and highest quality. All fear is removed and all desire is satisfied. It is the ultimate. All searching and striving is ended. "The **Lord** is the portion of **mine** inheritance." Verse 11: "In Thy presence is **fulness** of joy." How remote, and small, and ineffectual, are the vain chatterings and clamorings of men! "The LORD is the portion of MINE inheritance . . . I shall not be moved."

The Blood of Christ

By brother Robert Roberts

PART THREE

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

Now, how was this state of things to be remedied? There were three ways of mending it. One way was to exterminate the whole human species. But this would have been a poor remedy. It would have been to confess failure—that God had set going an arrangement on this planet for His glory and could not make it work. This was impossible. God has said that He has not made the earth in vain; that He formed it to be inhabited by the righteous; and that as truly as He lives, it WILL be wholly filled with His glory.

The second way would have been what might be called the "toleration-of-sin" method—the universal and indiscriminating pity method, by which the wickedness of disobedience should have been ignored, and mankind allowed to occupy the earth immortally for their own pleasure. This also was impossible. It would mean God's abdication, and handing man over to eternal misery.

There was a third way—a middle way, and that is the way which has been adopted—namely, to enforce the law against sin, and at the same time leave the door open for mercy to *repentant and obedient sinners*. How such a method could be made consistent with itself has been exhibited to us in the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ.

He was born that he might die, as the first necessity in the case; for thus was the righteousness of God to be declared, and sin condemned *in its own flesh* as the foundation of all the goodness to come afterwards.

It may be asked, could not such a result have been achieved by the sacrificial immolation of *any sinner*? So far as the mere *condemnation of sin* was concerned, no doubt the lesson could have been thus enforced; but as in all the works of God, there were more objects than one.

Not only had sin to be condemned, but *resurrection had to come in harmony with the law that made death the wages of sin*; and this resurrection was not merely to be a restoration of life, but the providing of an Administrator of the glorious results to be achieved—the raising up of one who should be a Mediator between God and man, the Dispenser of the forgiveness and the salvation of God through him, and the Judge also of who should be fit to receive these great gifts.

All these aims required that the sacrificial victim should be a *perfectly righteous man*, as well as the possessor of the nature to be sacrificially condemned; who should do no sin himself, while "made sin" and treated as sin for us; who should be just and holy, obedient in all things, while yet "numbered with the transgressors, and making his grave with the wicked." Consequently, it required God's interposition in the way recorded by the apostles—

"The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee (Mary); the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. Therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."
Thus God—

" . . . sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

Being made of a woman, he was of our nature—our condemned and weak and mortal nature: but, being begotten of God, and not of man, he was in character spotless—"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." *Sin had hold of him in his nature*, which inherited the sentence of death from

Adam: but it had no hold of him in his character: for he always did those things that were pleasing to his Father. When he died, "he died unto sin once." But God raised him because of his obedience and—

"Being raised from the dead, he dieth no more: Death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom. 6:9).

"Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25).

So we may triumphantly enquire with Paul in Rom. 8:33—

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is ever at the right hand of God, who maketh intercession for us."

It was a spiritual necessity that he should partake of our nature. It is expressly said that he did, and *John says that any man who denies it, as many did in his day, and many have done since, denies the truth, and is indeed anti-Christ.* He is strong in maintaining that Jesus came in the flesh, that is, the flesh of the children, the flesh of David—flesh mortal because of sin. Why does he take this strong ground?

Because the denial of it cuts at the root of God's arrangement of wisdom and righteousness. It destroys the very principle that made it impossible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin. The object was that God's righteousness might have full play in advancing to our salvation. Christ could not righteously die if death had no dominion over him, and it could not have this dominion except through Adam, through Abraham, David, and his mother, for he had no sin of his own: it was the sin of others that was on him. It was his mission to take this away: *how could he do this if it were not on him?*

"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," a figure of speech, because God proposed to forgive us all for Christ's sake. Still, in this very real sense, our sins are considered as being laid on him, and the beginning was made by *making him of the same death-inheriting nature from Eden.*

The whole process was conducted in harmony with God's plan of righteousness in every item. The plan required that the sufferer, while himself in the channel of death so far as nature was concerned, should himself not be a sinner, that he should be the Lamb of God, without spot, undefiled. Such an one could only be provided by what God did. God went out of His way to provide such a man.

The man produced through Mary, by the Spirit of God, combined the two essential qualifications for a sacrifice; *he was the very nature condemned in Eden, and therefore wrong was not done when he was impaled upon the cross.* "It pleased the Lord to bruise him." Would it please the Lord to do iniquity? Nay. Therefore it was right. But how could it be right unless he were the very condemned stock?

Some say, "We are shocked at the idea of Christ being under the dominion of death in any sense or way." Well, then, you must be shocked at what Paul says—

"Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath **no more** dominion over him. For in that he died, he **died unto sin** once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."

Thus it is the apostolic definition and declaration that *death once HAD dominion over him.* Surely, there is no need for being shocked, when the meaning of the matter is perceived. On the contrary, the spiritual understanding can see and admire, and bow down, and worship through Christ, at the spectacle of God's love advancing without the compromise of God's dignity. Some people may say, "God is love, and does not stand upon His dignity." What do such people think of this then?—

"If ye offer the lame and the sick is it not evil? Offer it now unto thy governor: will he be pleased with thee or accept thy person? saith the Lord of Hosts."

"Cursed be the deceiver that hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and offereth unto the Lord a corrupt thing; for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and My Name is dreadful among the heathen" (Mal. 1:8, 14).

By which illustration—and it is God's own illustration—we are let into the idea that God expects to be honored as the first condition of acceptable approach, as He says—

"A son honoreth his father and a servant his master. If then I be a father, where is Mine honor? If I be a master, where is My fear?" (Mal. 1:6).

There are ways of acting that are inconsistent with authority. Here then, is God—the great, the holy, the wise, the omnipotent; and here are we—the small, sinful, foolish, and the weak creatures of His hand, who have set Him at naught, and whom, if He were to stand upon His rights, He would destroy in a moment, and have nothing more to do with us.

How can He be so kind and gracious and long-suffering, and permit us to approach Him, without vindicating His righteousness, and asserting His greatness? He cannot; He does not. It is in Christ crucified that we are invited—

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself."

—but not without condemning sin in a federal representative. *The human race is, as it were, crucified in His son. In Christ crucified, man is put down, man is killed; God is exalted and glorified.*

This is Heaven's etiquette, and the appointed manner of approach for sinners, combining supremacy and love. "*I am a great King.*" He will forgive and be forbearing if we bow down in the presence of His vindicated righteousness—a righteousness in which kindness and justice converge, which cannot be said of substitution.

It would not be righteous to put to death one on whom death had no claims. It would not be kindness to say to us, "I will let you go free if that man will die." The kindness, wisdom, and righteousness of God are all obscured by any idea of that sort; but the scriptural idea is a masterpiece, a triumph of Divine wisdom. God says now,

"If you will recognize your position, repent, and come under that man's wing, I will receive you back to favor and forgive you. My righteousness has been declared in him; I have crowned him with everlasting days; because he loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and was obedient unto death, I have crowned him with life eternal. It is in him for you if you will submit, and believe in him, and put on his Name, which is a confession that you have no name of your own that will stand. Obey his commandments, and I will receive you and forgive you for his sake, and ye shall be My sons and daughters."

This is a splendid issue of kindness and wisdom. It is a different thing from the dry legality that would give us the blood of Christ as a sort of precious stuff, with which to touch ourselves and be pure. God operates in the whole transaction. We are cleansed from sin by this *beautiful means*, that God forgives us because of what Christ did, if we accept him and are baptized.

In baptism we are provided with a ceremony in which we are baptized into his death, and in which, by a figure, we are washed from our sins in his blood. There is a connection in this view of the case, between what God offers us in Christ, and our own acts. That is, the cleansing result of the atonement is dependent upon our compliances. You remember the expression—

"IF we walk in light, the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin."

If we do *not* walk in the light, it has no power—which shows that the blood of Christ is not the magical thing represented by orthodox religion; nor the automatic, legally-operative thing to which it is degraded by some theories; nor the powerless thing thought by some moralists, who put it entirely on one side.

It is the ritual element in the act or ceremony which the living, loving, wise Author of the universe has established as the basis of reconciliation between Himself and those who have wandered far from Him into the ways of death.

It is He Who applies the results, on faith being exercised in His appointment. It is the *expression of His justice* in the process of justifying those who believe.

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

"Seal the Law among My Disciples"

Thoughts on Isaiah 8:11-20

This is one of those things that were "written aforetime *for our learning*, that we through the patience and consolation of the Scriptures might possess the hope." There is therefore no reason why its meaning should remain sealed to us, especially if—following the apostolic precept—we *compare Scripture with Scripture*, a process which, like the path of the just, "shines more and more unto the perfect day."

One noticeable feature of Isaiah's style is the rapid and graphic transition he so frequently makes from one portion of his subject to another, from the time and circumstance attendant upon the matter in its introduction and development, to periods future and far remote, in which it finds its counterpart and fulfilment.

In the course of his prophecies he frequently carries the thread of his discourse rapidly through many ages, bringing out here and there its grand features, until its full and perfect consummation is reached. This characteristic is especially observable in the passage before us, and is probably displayed here in a more magnificent manner than in any other portion of his prophecies.

Grand visions of the sufferings of the Christ and also of the glory which should follow, dawned upon the awakened perceptions of the prophets in such a manner that they were unable to understand the "manner of the time" — the *order and course* of their development. They enquired and searched diligently into the matter, and were informed that their visions were for "many days," for "an appointed time," for "the time of the end," and for others and not for themselves; hence their meaning often lies shrouded in a mystery which is the honor of "kings" to search out.

The passage which we are considering (8:11-20) is complete in itself, and does not depend upon either what precedes or what follows it, for the accident of chapter and verse is the work of other and ignorant hands. It is one of a series of such, commencing in chapter 7 and ending in chapter 12.

The series principally concerns Israel in its two grand divisions of Judah and Israel, though more particular reference is made to individual tribes, as in the case of Naphtali and Zebulun (9:1), and Manasseh and Ephraim (9:21), and also allusion is made to those nations immediately concerned with Judah and Israel, such as Syria, Philistia, Assyria, etc.

They are oracles delivered to both houses of Israel specially and particularly, beginning with an historical sketch dated in—

"The days of Ahaz, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah" (7:1).

and they reveal a state of perplexity, trouble and woe in the land, which had theretofore been unparalleled. In Isaiah's words—

"Wickedness burned as the fire" (9:18).

The people as briars and thorns were consumed by it; the Syrians from the East, and the Philistines from the West, devoured Israel with open mouth (9:12); Manasseh devoured Ephraim and Ephraim Manasseh, and both of them together were against Judah; no man spared his brother (9:19-21). A terrible picture of the time is given in the first chapter of Isaiah; a picture of distress, affliction, desolation and moral corruption.

Ahaz closed the doors of the house of the Lord and made altars in every corner in Jerusalem (2 Chr. 28:24). Diviners from the East and soothsayers like Philistines filled the land (2:6), and the Glorious One of Israel was despised and neglected (5:24). This was the "situation" in the day when Isaiah penned these lines.

"For thus said Jehovah unto me, as taking me by the hand He instructed me, that I should not walk in the way of this people saying, Say ye not, It is holy, of everything of which this people shall say, It is holy, and fear ye not the object of their fear, neither be ye terrified" (8:11-12).

Isaiah was a representative man; representative of that class who are "all taught of God;" the people whom Jehovah *takes by the hand and leads out from their surroundings*, and instructs.

This is God's invariable mode of procedure, whether it be Abraham, whom He takes from his kindred and from his father's house, and leads afar into a land which He promised He would give him for an everlasting possession; or whether it be one of those poor (which, however, are rich in faith) whom God, in these times of the Gentiles, takes out for His most glorious Name.

This people have, in all their ages and generations, been of "the like precious faith" with Abraham. There is such a strong family likeness about them, that they are known and identified wherever they may be; an identification which always brings down upon them the scorn, and contempt, and persecution of those sons of pride whose names are "written in the earth."

This principle of "like" runs through the whole Bible; but finds its fullest expression in that wonderful man—Jesus of Nazareth—who is indeed the perfect representative of his brethren, for in the days of his flesh, he was made *in all things like unto them* being a partaker of their nature, and tempted in all things like as they are, yet without sin; and they know that when he shall appear, they shall be *like him* as he now is, glorious and deathless, for he shall change their vile bodies to be fashioned like unto his glorious body.

The experience of Isaiah being like his brethren's of every age and time, he is fitly their representative, and although he is addressed in the passage before us, in the first place, yet they also are addressed through him. When he is commanded to—

"Walk not in the way of this people,"

—they are told to "come out from among the unbelievers and be separate from them and to touch not the unclean thing" which they worship (2 Cor. 6:17). When Isaiah is told to—

". . . call not holy the things which they (his contemporaries) called holy, and to fear or reverence not the object of their fear,"

—they also are instructed to—

". . . keep themselves from idols" (1 John 5:21),

—and from those venerable religious institutions which exist in the land and which—though so "highly esteemed among men"—are nevertheless "abominations in the sight of God" (Luke 16; Rev. 17).

In the days of Ahaz the land was full of idols, those "new gods which come newly up, whom their fathers (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) feared not" (Deut. 32:17). Isaac's fear was Jehovah, by Whom Jacob swore in his covenant with Laban (Gen. 31:53); but the fear of Isaiah's contemporaries was a vastly different thing. One was the Former of all things, the other was—

"Vanity, the work of errors, and in the time of their visitation they perished" (Jer. 10:15-16).

The fear of the numerous sects contemporary with Isaiah's brethren of today is the same, and is described by Jeremiah (16:19) as—

"Lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit."

These things the brethren of Isaiah are not to either reverence or be afraid of. They are to put *their* trust in Jehovah, and to sanctify Him in their hearts or affections by *keeping His commandments* (8:13). These things Isaiah did, and he found that Jehovah was a Sanctuary unto him (8:14)—the Strong Tower into which he could run and be safe, fearing not what men could do unto him.

But these things his nation did not. When Jehovah called they refused, when He stretched out His hand no man regarded, they set at naught all His counsel, and would have none of His reproof; therefore wrath came on them to the uttermost, slowly but surely.

* * *

"But for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both houses of Israel; a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

Here (v.14) is one of those sudden transitions of which we speak. It is a transition, as far as time is concerned, from the days of Ahaz to that time when God, manifested in Jesus of Nazareth, made His appearance among the Jewish people in the last days of the Mosaic dispensation, and also *far beyond that time*, when he shall come again in the latter days, in the end of the times of the Gentiles. Between the days of Ahaz and the first appearing of him—

"Whose going forth have been from old, from everlasting."

—more than seven hundred years had elapsed, and many and great changes had taken place in the nation and world at large. The constitution of things known as the "Kingdom of Israel" had long ceased to exist, its people having gone forth into a captivity which was to be measured by thousands of years (Hos. 6:2).

Judah had also been carried away captive out of their own land, but had returned much distressed and changed. David's throne no longer existed. Solomon's temple had been burned with fire, and although another fair and comely edifice stood upon its site, yet it was but a shadow of the glory of the former one.

These and many more important changes lay between *Isaiah's day*, when Jehovah took him by the hand and—leading him aside— instructed him not to walk in the way of his idolatrous countrymen, and *the time when the Shepherd and Stone of Israel came unto his own* and they received him not.

During the interval, the darkness in which the people and their leaders groped even in Isaiah's day grew more and more intense. The Lord poured out upon them the spirit of deep sleep, and

blindfolded their prophets, and rulers, and seers, because they drew nigh unto Him with their mouth only, and honored Him with their lips only, while they had removed their hearts far from Him, and despising His law, they taught for doctrines the commandments of men.

The result was that they "stumbled even at noonday"—in the midst of the brightness of that True Light which shined among them. Pagan doctrines had been substituted by the leaders of the people for the "wondrous things out of Jehovah's law." Therefore they could not receive the words of eternal life which fell from the lips of him who spake as never man spake, convinced though they were of their truth and of the character of him who spake.

They could not reconcile their doctrines—which they would not abandon—with those of the poor and sorrowful man who continually confronted and denounced them. He became an offence unto them, especially unto the inhabitants of Jerusalem—the Scribes and the Pharisees, who stumbled at him and his doctrine, and who conspired to put him out of the way, thereby bringing upon them the snare in which they were taken (Isa. 8:15), for by so doing they filled up the measure of the iniquities of their fathers—and down upon them came the wrath of Deity in most destructive measure.

Thus Jehovah became a stumbling stone and a rock of offence unto the house of *Judah*, and severally were they broken upon it, and scattered afar. He has yet to become one to the house of *Israel*. They went into captivity about twenty years after Isaiah delivered this prophecy, and have remained in it ever since. During its currency Jehovah was to have no dealings with them; they were removed out of His sight, and when in their enemies' land He was to withdraw Himself from them, as the prophets testify.

It remains therefore for the prophecy in relation to them to be yet fulfilled, and it will doubtless be so, when they will be brought into the wilderness of the people, of which Ezekiel speaks (20:33-38), and where they will be pleaded with face to face by Jehovah, Who will make them pass under the rod and enter into the bonds of the covenant, and Who will purge out from among them the rebels and transgressors.

* * *

"Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples" (v. 16).

This introduces us to another and entirely different class from those who killed the Prince of Life, when he appeared amongst them. They are by Zechariah (11:11) termed the "poor of the flock who waited upon Jehovah, and who knew it was His Word."

They believed and were sure that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the son of the living God. This knowledge they received through the Law and the Prophets (John 1:45), and were thus "taught of God," and drawn unto His wonderful Son; they were the weak who trembled at Jehovah's Word; the poor who rejoiced in the Holy One of Israel, and they received the testimony which Christ delivered and became his disciples.

When he arose from the dead he confirmed them in their faith and sent them forth to preach, not to Jews only as they formerly had done, but *to Gentiles also*. His command was (Matt. 28:19)—

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

This teaching was to begin at Jerusalem and be extended to all nations. This was a visitation of the Gentiles, for the purpose of taking out from among them also, a people for *The Name*, which was a deep mystery unto the Jews, so that Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, required a special revelation touching it (Eph. 3:6)—

"That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the same promise by the Gospel."

This binding up the testimony and sealing the law among the disciples was to be *the work of ages*, commencing with the ministry of Jesus, and running down through all the times of the Gentiles, until the return from the heavens of him who during this long continuance was to "wait upon the Lord"—

"And I will wait upon the Lord that hideth His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him" (v. 17).

This has been the position of the Anointed Jesus during the time of the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom among the Gentiles—sitting at the right hand of Deity in the heavens—waiting till his enemies be made his footstool.

Simultaneously with these events, God was to "hide His face from the house of Jacob." This He has indeed done. Judah was cast forth out of His sight (as He had ages before cast forth Israel) about forty years after they crucified their Messiah, and the land was given over to desolation.

Scattered among the nations, without political or ecclesiastical organization they have remained. Jehovah has covered Himself with a cloud that their prayer should not pass through. He has broken off the whole house of Jacob from the Israelitish Olive Tree, yet this is not to be for ever, but only until "there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. 11:26). These are briefly the ideas contained in these vs. 16 and 17, which in their execution reach over a period of nearly 2,000 years.

The next verse (18) brings Jesus once more upon the scene attended with a glorious throng who have been gathered out of all peoples, nations, languages, and tongues, having been washed in the blood of the Lamb—

"Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion."

It is the time of his glory; the time so long foretold and longed for by his disciples of every age; the time when—in the glory of his Father, and in the glory of the holy angels—he will come to be admired in all them who believe (2 Thess. 1:10); when the Scribes and Pharisees who reviled him and crucified him in the days of his flesh will see Gentiles from the east, west, north, and south, enter into the Kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the Prophets, while they will be cast out (Luke 13:28-29).

These are *the children given him by Jehovah*—they whom he is glad to call his brethren in the day of praise, and gladness, and honor, and glory, and immortality, when the manifestation of the children of God from Adam's race takes place.

These children are for signs and wonders in Israel from *Yahweh T'zvaoth*, Who in that day shall dwell in Mount Zion, having then "chosen Jerusalem again." They go forth in the execution of the judgments written, to take and to hold the dominion of the earth; to establish righteousness, peace, and praise in every land.

Constituted deathless and glorious at the appearing of Jesus Christ, they nevertheless restrain the bright effulgence of the nature they will then possess until their work of subjugation and reconstruction is done, when their splendor will no longer be held in. Beams of light above the brightness of the noon-tide sun will then envelope them, and render them beautiful beyond compare.

While these are the wondrous themes of these verses under consideration, the following and concluding verses (19 & 20) bring us back again to the point from which we took our departure, as with prophetic flight we passed through many centuries and numerous grand and important events.

We return to the days of Ahaz, to the idolatrous customs of Isaiah's countrymen, and we listen to the injunction laid upon Isaiah and also upon *those whom he represents*, to speak according to the Law and the Testimony, and to avoid all other professed sources of information—

"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter—**should not a people seek unto their God?** (should they seek) for the living to the dead?

"To the Law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."

The passage is now complete and its meaning manifest, and it shines with a clearness and beauty which renders it one of the gems of the prophetic Word, splendid with that light which, until the day dawn and the Day Star arises, illumines the gross darkness which covers all people, *except those whom the Deity has graciously enlightened with His Truth.* —A.B.

"What Shall WE Have, Therefore?"

The Parable of the Penny a Day—Matthew 20.

We must note first the chain of events with which this parable is connected. This begins in 19:16 when the rich young ruler comes running eagerly to Jesus, asking what he must do to have eternal life. He was clearly what would outwardly be considered a faithful and religious man. We gather this from his statement regarding the commandments:

"All these have I kept from my youth up."

—coupled with the information that Jesus was moved with love toward him. Two interpretations of his question suggest themselves. Either he came with a feeling of gratified self-confidence, seeking and expecting Jesus' commendation and assurance that he was an acceptable servant of God, or else—and this seems more likely—or else he had found that an outward compliance with all the commandments had not brought him peace—that he recognized within himself that he *did* "lack something yet," but knew not what it was. He may even have vaguely realized that as long as his treasure and his heart were divided between earthly and heavenly things, he could never have peace.

Whichever may have been the case, Jesus immediately defined the cause and correction of the basic problem (19:21)—

"Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and follow me."

Whether this answer was a surprise to the young man, or whether it was the one thing he expected and feared to hear, he could not then bring himself to face it, and he sadly went away. Jesus, in pity and love for him, remarked to his disciples how hard—how, naturally speaking, *impossible*—it was for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. Riches—possessing more than the basic necessities—are such a snare and handicap in the way of life. They make it so hard for a man to deny *himself*, and take up the cross and follow Jesus in true and selfless humility.

The disciples had seen the young man come, heard the conversation, and seen him go. Peter, speaking for the rest, said to Jesus:

"Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall **we** have, therefore?"

It was a natural thought and a natural question. The mind usually turns to oneself and one's own welfare in relation to any circumstance that confronts us. *Jesus'* mind was filled with selfless pity for the young man who was turning his back on God's greatest treasure because he had the misfortune of being rich, but Peter's mind turned to a comparison with himself, and what *he* was going to get.

Jesus' reply is Divine and beautiful. First is the warm and comforting assurance that this faithful little band who had left all and followed him would sit on 12 thrones with him in his Kingdom. And he broadens the promise to include all, in whatever age and circumstance they may be, who forsake all worldly things for him.

Then he adds, in gentle rebuke of the spirit of Peter's question, and gentle instruction in the more excellent way—

"But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first."

And then follows this parable, which he closes (v. 16) with the same words with which it opens—

"So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."

The events that follow the parable complete the frame and background of the picture it presents. First, in vs. 17-19, Jesus took the disciples privately aside and solemnly informed them of his approaching betrayal and crucifixion. They are at this time on their last journey from Galilee to Jerusalem.

The next incident (vs. 20-28) shows the great need for the lessons the parable teaches. Heedless of the imminent burden and suffering of which he spoke to them, James and John, with their mother, come to ask the highest places of honor in his Kingdom.

This concern over *self*—how deeply it is ingrained in human nature! Jesus constantly labored to show them the true picture of life's meaning and purpose—*the first shall be last, and the last first*. Could he have put it any more plainly or forcefully? But still it is so hard for us to get these teachings through our minds, and to adjust our lives to them.

It does not just mean we must choose to be last as a *calculated method of getting to be first*. It goes far deeper than that. That is just a higher and more refined form of self-seeking. We must cease completely from any desire for position or importance, realizing that all such desire stands in the way of peace with God.

"Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall have rest unto your souls."

"*What shall WE have, therefore?*" must completely cease to be our basic motive. Jesus' final words on the subject, after the incident of the request of James and John, carry the deepest lesson—

"Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

He came to teach the cramped ugliness of the natural way of self-seeking, and the beauty of selfless giving, even unto death.

"*What shall WE have, therefore?*" does not just apply to possessions and positions. It cuts into the roots of every personal desire—every form of self-satisfaction—every gratification to self and pride. Every instance of hurt feelings or offended pride is an outcropping of this universal disease.

"He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

In this day of seeing through a glass darkly, we can never fully comprehend the depths of these Divine teachings that reverse all human standards, but we can and *must*, by the heavenly light of the Word, gradually approach closer to a comprehension of their marvellous and unearthly wisdom and beauty.

To the two brothers, eager for glory, faithful and devoted but having so much to learn of the way of life, Jesus said—

"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?"

And how confidently they replied, "We are able." "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup," he said. *He knew what lay before them.*

When the other 10 heard of their request, they were indignant at James and John. Would our reaction have been the same? How much they—and we—need to learn about the selfless way of godliness that is illustrated by this Divine parable! Once again Jesus points out that God's ways are entirely different from man's—

"The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them . . . but it shall not be so among you—whosoever will be chief, let him be your servant."

Obedience to this command is very easy to counterfeit, but very hard to fulfil. There is no dearth of proud humility, but rare indeed is the true servant who serves just for the joy of serving, with no motive of self-gratification or self-esteem. The body of Christ is forbidden the normal human framework of authority and discipline. Therefore if there is not *Divine and superlative love* among its members, all its functions break down in anarchy.

* * *

"For the Kingdom of heaven is like a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard."

"Early in the morning"—*together with the dawn* is the literal translation. So often this thought of early, break-of-day activity occurs in relation to the works of God!

There are many beautiful allusions in Scripture to the vineyard symbol. The Vineyard is the community of the Truth, the Household of God—first as portrayed in natural Israel, then in spiritual:

"My beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill."

"I am the Vine and ye are the branches."

"My beloved is as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi."

"Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: Thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it."

"I had planted thee a noble vine, a wholly right seed."

A vineyard is a place of labor and productiveness, where work is required and fruit is expected.

* * *

"And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard."

A penny was the normal wage for a day's work. There has always been discussion as to just what the "penny" in this parable symbolizes. Various things have been suggested—eternal life, resurrection, forgiveness, justification—but none seem to fit completely. Perhaps the conception that fits best is *justice*—though not just bare, *literal* justice, but rather *true, eternal, all wise* justice

tempered with love and mercy in harmony with the highest conceptions of Divine justice. The householder said:

"Whatsoever is **right**, that shall ye receive."

The important point, however, would appear to be that it was a *fair remuneration*, agreed to willingly by the first-hired laborers. It is around that fact that the lesson principally revolves. It was just, fair, and mutually agreeable.

We note that, with the first laborers, the agreement was made *before* the work was begun. It was a *legal contract*. The later ones accepted in *faith* the householder's assurance of fairness.

We may possibly see in this aspect a contrast between law and grace—works and faith—the Mosaic and Christian dispensations. In this sense the parable would teach the Jews that their legal contract and priority of service were no guarantees of pre-eminence—*the last shall be first*. And it would be a warning to them not to murmur at God's gracious gifts to the despised Gentiles who came into the Vineyard later, but rather to forget petty self-interest and expand their hearts in joyfulness that others were so richly blessed.

This aspect is strengthened by two interesting features. First—

It was the **third** hour of the day when the Gospel was first preached in the Name of the risen Christ, on Pentecost (Acts 2:15).

It was the **sixth** hour of the day when Peter was shown the vision of the great sheet containing the unclean animals—teaching him that God was extending the Gospel call to the Gentiles (Acts 10:9),

It was the **ninth** hour of the day when the angel appeared to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, to assure him that his prayer had been heard, and to tell him what to do to be saved (Acts 10:3).

(The other feature concerns the word translated "*supposed*" in v. 10, which we can look at when we reach that point.)

Finally the householder goes out at the eleventh hour and finds some laborers standing idle, and he asks them—

"Why stand ye here all the day idle?"

The answer is significant—

"Because no man hath hired us."

Some have attempted to use this parable to prove that though an individual puts off service to God until the last hour, he may still be accepted equally with the day-long laborers. But these men *had not been given the invitation before*. Their reason was—

"Because no man hath hired us."

When the day was finished and the work done, the laborers were all called together to be given their hire, beginning with the last.

The last were paid the full amount that had been agreed upon with the first. The instructive aspect of the parable now begins to unfold, and we see its relation to the rich young man and the question of the disciples.

The rewards of God's service are all gifts. No matter how much or how little He may give to any—all is unmerited grace and mercy and more than is deserved. The very best is—at his best—but an unprofitable servant—

"Say ye, when ye shall have done **all those things which are commanded you**, We are unprofitable servants" (Luke 17:10).

—and who ever begins to approach to the doing of all things commanded?

"But when the first came, they **supposed** that they should have received more, and they likewise received every man a penny."

They *supposed*—the word is *nomizo*, from *nomos*—"law." The thought seems to be, not just that they anticipated more, but that they considered they were *entitled* to more. And, naturally thinking, if we were in the same position we would immediately exclaim that it was not fair and just to give the last, who had only worked one cool hour, the same as those who—as they truly said—had borne the burden and heat of the day. How universal is this spirit in the world! No matter how well anyone is treated, they complain bitterly if another appears to be treated slightly better.

But this thought only betrays the selfishness and envy of the natural mind. Jesus sums it up in the words of the householder—

"Is **thine** eye evil, because **I** am good?"

The first men had had the opportunity of working a day and receiving a day's wages. They had agreed beforehand and had received a full and just recompense. Their ground of objection was solely that someone else had been treated with kindness, and men who had had no opportunity to work all day had received a day's wages. Instead of being glad that others had been treated so well, they were envious and bitter.

When we look at it in the light that Jesus, through the words of the householder, presents it, we can see how evil and small was their reaction to his kindness to the others.

But it is when we translate it into *spiritual* things that we perceive the enormity of the evil of this attitude of envy. And let us not think that we are free from this danger. Let us not say that we would never take such a selfish attitude. In the parable it is put in a very obvious and striking way to drive the lesson home, but in the realities of life it is *far more subtle and deceptive*.

Who of us can claim to have learned that one eternal, needful lesson—to forget *ourselves*, and to derive all our joy and comfort from the blessing and happiness of others? Who of us is big enough to spontaneously rejoice when we see others favored at our expense? Jesus says the two basic Divine commands are—

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with **all thy heart . . . AND THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF**" (Matt. 22:36-40).

If we can accomplish the first part with *all* our heart, then all our own inner needs are satisfied. We then possess within ourselves everything that is worthwhile possessing, for *to love truly and completely is to have*, and if we have God we have everything. One with the inner assurance of possessing everything is freed from selfishness and smallness. He does not say, in anxious self-concern:

"What shall WE have, therefore?"

He has learned to rest content in his glorious heritage—

"ALL THINGS are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's!"

He is then ready for the second great half of the way of life—

". . . and thy neighbor AS THYSELF."

He is overwhelmed with the dazzling revelation of the freely-available abundance of spiritual wealth. He has no fear that there will not be enough to go around. He does not feel compelled to seek a guarantee of a chief place in the Kingdom. .

"Grant us that we may sit on thy right and left hand."

When Jesus was about to leave his disciples, he said (John 14:28)—

"If ye **loved** me, ye would rejoice because I said, I go to the Father."

They *thought* they loved him, but they did not yet understand the SELFLESSNESS of love—

"IF ye **loved** me, ye would rejoice . . ."

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself . . ."

"These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto US, who have borne the burden and the heat."

"These many years do I serve thee, yet thou never gavest ME a kid . . ."

"What shall **WE** have, therefore? . . ."

"But he answered one of them and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong . . . Is thine eye evil, because I am good? . . . So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."

There is the heart of the parable. When the secrets of all hearts are made manifest, then nothing will be counted as anything that was not done for the sake of love. What a tremendous rearranging of all present values and positions there will be, when all inner motives are revealed, and first shall be *last*, and last *first*, and many of the called will *not be chosen at all*—all because they have not learned the lesson of love and largeness of heart that this parable teaches! To them the goodman of the house says—

"Take that thine is, and GO THY WAY."

"Go thy way"—*Depart from me*. If we selfishly take our stand upon the claims of justice, we are lost. If we question the extension of mercy to others; if we are too small to sincerely rejoice with them when others seem to be more abundantly blessed than ourselves (and perhaps, it seems, for less cause), then we stand with these unlovely murmurers who are told to *take what is theirs, and go their way*—paid in full for their ill-humored service—leaving the fruits of love and mercy to those they despised as "*these last*."

There is another gross misconception into which these murmurers fell, which further reveals the smallness and falseness of their outlook. It is illustrated in Jesus' remark at Jacob's well:

"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me."

As it was prophetically recorded of him in Psalms—

"I DELIGHT to do Thy will, O my God!"

Do we remember the very *first* instruction given by God to Moses when he went to the top of Sinai for 40 days and nights?—

"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering: of every man that giveth it **willingly with the heart** ye shall take My offering."

This was in preparation for the building of the Tabernacle. We know that the Tabernacle symbolized the Household of God in whom He dwells by His Spirit—

"Ye are the Temple of the living God."

It had to be "*willingly—with the heart*," to be accepted. They had to realize the privilege and blessing and JOY of service. Those typified by the murmurers in the vineyard missed this point completely, in their self-centered ignorance. They thought they were doing God a favor. They thought they were *earning* something!

They failed entirely to realize that they had been given the greatest blessing of the longest and earliest joy of service in the vineyard. Instead of petty, self-pitying envy, their hearts should have been uplifted and enlarged with a gratitude that would overflow in the joy of seeing unearned blessing showered upon others, regardless of how little their opportunity of service.

* * *

As we have seen from the disciples' conduct immediately following the parable, the lessons did not at the time make a very deep impression. But this, too, has an element of comfort in it, both as regards the effect of our efforts in relation to others, and—what is more to the point—our own development in the way of godliness. There is never any justification for discouragement—

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that; or whether they both shall be alike good."

Though Jesus was passing through the valley of the shadow of death, his disciples—obsessed with their own desires—were dull of hearing and unimpressed by the weight of impending events.

But the time was to come when all these lessons would be remembered, and pondered, and taught to others. When we read the epistles of Peter and John, we begin to realize how these men grew in grace and knowledge and spiritual stature.

This Jesus would know as he spoke these things to them which were mysteries at the time, for by the wisdom and guidance of the Spirit he had chosen these men for the great work before them.

These parables were the means by which he taught them these deep spiritual lessons, which later bore such beautiful fruit. Where is John, the son of thunder, who pressed to the front with the request that he be given the pre-eminence—where is this John, when we read his marvellous epistles of love?—

"He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God."

What fuller and deeper exposition of life could there be than that? What greater ambition? What higher pre-eminence? And with Peter, it is no longer, "*What shall WE have, therefore?*" but,

"All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you."

—G.V.G.

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 FOUR

The first halting-place of Israel in the wilderness of Paran was characterized by the name of *Kibroth-hataavah*, signifying, "the Graves of Lust." This was the name Divinely bestowed upon the place to commemorate in the annals of Israel's history the scene and cause of the Divine displeasure to which we have already called attention. How many days Israel halted here we are not informed; but it was sufficiently long to permit of their depositing in this cemetery the remains of their fond ones who had perished by the plague which consumed them in their lust.

With the heart-rending scenes of this awful judgment fresh in memory, the Divine signal for their departure was given; and the journey was resumed, and they made a second halt, at *Hazereth*.

During the encampment at this second halting-place a scene of further trouble and embarrassment to Moses occurred; not, however, with the people, as before, but his own sister and brother—

". . . spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married. And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath He not spoken also by **us**? (Num. 12:1-2).

The incident shows that the spirit of insubordination in the Divinely-chosen small family circle existed, and now began to manifest itself in the claim to equality in authority with God's faithful servant, whom He had made ruler over His house.

This disorderly conduct called for the immediate intervention of God in the vindication of the exalted position of His servant Moses, and the humiliation of the offenders. It would appear that Miriam had conceived the idea that the introduction of the wife of Moses into the camp of Israel was an innovation calculated to lessen her dignity and position as "a mother in Israel;" and under that fleshly conception she "beguiled" her brother Aaron to take part with her in an endeavor to weaken the position of Moses by bringing upon him slander and reproach, which but for the timely intervention of God might have proved destructive to Israel, with whom it would, doubtless, have found a ready response.

It was a manifestation of the same unhallowed ambition which brought destruction upon Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, in the form of challenging the position of Moses as the sole expositor of the Divine will, and an attempt to enforce the expulsion of the unwelcome intruder from their presence. All this evil was apparently borne by Moses in silence, but the Lord interposed in his behalf; for the Pillar of Cloud suddenly appeared before the Tabernacle, whither Miriam, and Aaron, and Moses were summoned.

There the hard speeches launched forth against the meek servant of God were severely rebuked by the Lord, Who showed in the most emphatic manner the distinction between an ordinary prophet to whom His will might be made known by vision or dream or in an audible manner, and the man Moses, with whom, by reason of his faithfulness, He had, as He said, condescended to:

". . . speak mouth to mouth, even apparently and not in dark speeches, and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold . . .

"Wherefore, then, were ye not **afraid** to speak against My servant Moses?"

With this open vindication of the true position of Moses, the Cloud was withdrawn. Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold!—she had become leprous, as white as snow! Thus was the calumny wiped out, and the traducers brought to acknowledge and implore the forgiveness of their folly.

In answer to their earnest entreaty, Moses interceded for Miriam, and the Lord heard him, and promised to heal her, but as unclean she must remain in seclusion from the camp seven days, until the expiry of which the host halted at Hazeroth (Num. 12:4-16).

The journey "through that great and terrible wilderness . . . by the way of the mountain of the Amorites" was delayed at Hazeroth seven days at least for the purification of Miriam. When she was brought into camp again, "the people removed from Hazeroth" in a northerly direction and after halting at no less than nineteen stations reached *Kadesh-barnea* (see Numbers 33).

At the previous halting place, *Ezion-gaber*, Israel were almost within sight of the borders of their land, and the excitement consequent thereon must have been somewhat after the manner of passengers on board a vessel when they sight in the distance the shores of the land of their destination. We may be sure that the excitement was no less when the signal for halting was given here.

With alacrity they pitched their tents and refreshed themselves after the wearying journeys, and the great topic of conversation throughout the entire host concentrated upon the Land of Promise which was now in front of them, and the means whereby they were to come into possession of the inheritance. In his rehearsal of the journey from Horeb to Kadesh, Moses informs us that on their arrival at Kadesh he said to them,

"We are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us. Behold, the Lord our God hath set the land before thee. Fear not, neither be discouraged."

These encouraging words were attentively listened to, and their hope of reaching the final goal strengthened; and after some deliberation among the officials of the nation a proposition was made to Moses that they should proceed cautiously in the matter by first sending out spies to search the land, and ascertain what cities should be first attacked, and generally of the situation.

This proposal was pleasing to Moses, and readily obtained his assent, and was approved by the Lord. Twelve princes, one from each tribe, were accordingly selected to make the necessary search, and report as to the character of the land, its products and inhabitants, and their possessions (Num. 13:1-20).

It was the time of the first ripe grapes (in or about the month of September), when the spies, under the auspices of the Divine approbation, set out on their mission. They accomplished their search in FORTY DAYS, traversing the land as far north as Rehob, on the way to Hamath (in the valley of the Orontes, which divides the two mountainous ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon); and ascending by the south they came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the gigantic children of Anak, were ensconced in strongly fortified cities.

Coming unto a valley celebrated alike then as now for its vineyards, they plucked pomegranates and figs, and a bunch with one cluster of grapes of such size that it required to be carried on a staff between two men (from which circumstance the valley was called *Eshcol*, or "the valley of the cluster"), and returned, bringing with them the evidences of the fertility of the land which they had searched.

"And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, and said,

"We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey, and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless, the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great; and moreover, we saw the children of Anak there.

"The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south; and the Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by Jordan.

"And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

"But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go against the people; for they are stronger than we.

"And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying,

"The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

We may easily imagine the rapidity with which the "evil report" of the ten princes would travel from tent to tent throughout the vast host, with the saddening result that,

"All the congregation lifted up their voice and cried; and the people wept that night."

A sleepless night spent in tears of lamentation—caused by the prospect of what appeared to them certain destruction in any encounter with such formidable foes as those with whom they were called upon to enter into open conflict—only tended to increase the fury and enrage the passions of the people. On the morrow, the supreme moment in the history of Israel arrived, and a scene of indescribable frenzy ensued, which no effort on the part of the few men of faith in God could quell (Num. 14:1-10)—

"And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses, and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them,

"Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would God that we had died in the wilderness! And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey?

"Were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return.

"Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. And Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: and they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel,

"The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into it, and give it us—a land flowing with milk and honey.

"Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not.

"But all the congregation bade stone them with stones."

What a striking contrast is here presented between "the counsel of the ungodly" and that of the godly, as represented by the faithful servants of God, Joshua and Caleb! Let us try to realize this marvellous illustration of the faith which is pleasing to God, for the record of this incident has been preserved unto all generations that the precious characteristic may be known and recognized wherever it exists—we mean FAITH IN GOD. The importance of its possession will be apparent from Paul's statement:

"Without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).

It is the consciousness of God's existence and providence *THAT TAKES POSSESSION OF THE MIND* which is instructed in the counsel of God. It is generated by that counsel, and has no existence apart from it. The subject of it has laid hold on God, and embraced certain things which have become *realities* in the mind, and, consequently, *things being hoped for*—the conviction of things not seen. This is precisely what Joshua and Caleb had done, and what all the Joshuas and Calebs have done before and since.

But the picture is not complete as presented. We require to add to it the counsel delivered to the nation by Moses on the occasion, before we can fully realize this perspicuous representation of faith in God, and by contrast, its absence.

We therefore turn to the rehearsal of the incident by Moses to the survivors of the nation, some 38 years subsequent to its occurrence, on the occasion of their arrival at the borders of the land which their fathers had despised. We find in that rehearsal the man of God pleading with his people in the vain endeavor to reinspire confidence in God, and to avert the impending wrath which threatened the destruction of the nation. They murmured,

"Because the Lord hateth us, He has brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. Whither shall we go up?"

"Our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; moreover, we have seen the sons of Anak there!"

But Moses said—

"Dread not, neither be afraid of them. The Lord your God, which goeth before you, He shall fight for you, according to all He did for you in Egypt, BEFORE YOUR EYES: and in the wilderness, where THOU HAST SEEN how that the Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went until ye came unto this place.

"Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God, Who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to show you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day" (Deut. 1:26-33).

It is impossible to conceive an address more calculated to inspire confidence, under the most distressing circumstances, than this noble appeal of Moses to Israel, based as it is upon *visible facts*, unique in the history of the world's experience.

But neither the wisdom and eloquence of this eminent man of God, nor the wise and brave counsel of Caleb and Joshua, in their unparalleled endeavor to pour oil upon the troubled waters, could save the violent rebels against God from the wrath which their wickedness had provoked.

With all these facts of this most thrilling and instructive narrative before us, is it possible, we may ask, to miss the lesson which it is intended to convey? With this vivid illustration of what faith in God consists, *let us test our own position in relation to its actual possession.*

Do we not discern thereby that the desire created within us by the exhibition and belief of God's goodness, set forth in the Gospel of His grace, to participate in it, and the readiness we manifest to avail ourselves of it, if it is to be of any value to us, must be accompanied by *acts of faith of a very decided character?*

And that, furthermore, there must be that trustful confidence in, and committal of ourselves and all our ways, to God Who hath called us to "glory and virtue"—not merely an idle expectation and hope that all will be right if we only hold on to the faith of the Gospel, taking no part in those joyful *activities of the Truth* in which the true children of God delight themselves.

Moses and Aaron were prostrate before God, when His glory appeared before the Tabernacle in the sight of the whole of the people. The great and terrible God, provoked to wrath by the faithlessness of His people, now threatened to destroy them utterly with pestilence, and to make of Moses a nation greater and mightier than they. Their destruction would therefore be no barrier to the performance of His oath to the faithful fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

But, as before at Sinai, their unselfish and faithful leader stood heroically in the gap, and earnestly pleaded on their behalf with their justly offended God in the manner of his former successful pleadings, and finally appealed to the Name which the Lord Himself had proclaimed on the top of the sacred mountain—the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth—and implored forgiveness for them (Nm. 14:11-19).

In answer to his faithful appeal for mercy, he was assured that the nation—as a nation—should be preserved, and that their name should not be utterly blotted out. But save Joshua and Caleb, *not one of that generation should enter into the promised land*; that every one, from 20 years old and upwards, should die in the wilderness, while their children, whom they had deemed a certain prey to the Canaanites, should atone for their faithlessness by wandering 40 years, a year for each day the spies had been engaged in searching out the land.

The ten spies, who by their faithless despondency, had been the primary cause of the mutiny, were struck with instant death, and the rest of the host were commanded to *return into the wilderness*.

This announcement was received with universal lamentation by the people, and on the morrow they rose up, and, in spite of the earnest entreaty of Moses, made a wild rush up the steep and difficult pass leading into the uplands of Southern Palestine, where they encountered the Amorites and the Amalekites, by whom they were smitten and driven back (Num. 14).

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

Buffalo Gathering, July 2-3

Dear Brethren and Sisters: Greetings in the Master's Name.

The Buffalo Berean Ecclesia plans, God willing, to hold their annual Sunday School outing on Saturday, July 2. The brethren and sisters of this ecclesia extend a hearty invitation to join us in fellowship for this weekend.

On Saturday we plan to meet at a central point and go to one of our state parks where we shall assemble before noon. The mid-day meal and lunch in the evening will be provided. There are to be three speakers in the afternoon—one on each of the Daily Readings.

On Sunday, we plan a spiritually profitable day wherein our breaking of bread meeting will be followed by a lecture. After this we will assemble in the lower hall for dinner. The remaining time can be spent just being together with those of a "like mind."

If you can come and spend this weekend with us, let us know quickly. Please advise us as to how many will arrive on Friday and how many will arrive on Saturday and whether accommodations will be necessary for one, two or three nights.

We are looking forward to a joyful and profitable weekend with all that are able to be with us.

"THERE WAS NO MAN THAT TOOK THEM INTO HIS HOUSE TO LODGE"

We never know how far-reaching may be the results for ill, of any omission on our part of duty—even though it **seem** but a very small omission. You know one evil leads to another. Thus it

goes on, and the aggregate, who can tell? See the terrible trail of evil that followed in this case! (Jdg. 19).

In the day of Christ, many who were "called" will not be "chosen," because they have failed in (apparently) little things—things they have deemed too small to trouble about. Not that a failure (or a good many failures) repented of will debar from "the inheritance of the saints in light," else would none inherit it, but the "little things" of service or omission show the heart.

"Lord, when saw we thee an hungered or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?"

"Then shall he answer them saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these LEAST, ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment" (Matt. 25:44-46 RV).

Conferring With Flesh and Blood

"But when it pleased God. . . to reveal His Son in me that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood"—Galatians 1:15-16.

Bible Lexicons define the Greek word from which "conferred" is here translated as meaning "to put anything up toward one: to seek advice or counsel of one." So the Apostle means that, when he was arrested in his mad career of persecution against the saints, and was called to preach the Gospel—which necessarily involved a complete reversal of his life—he did not consult his *own* thoughts or desires, neither did he seek advice of any *mortal man*, but surrendered himself wholly to the Divine decree and sought advice from none other source than from Him as to his heaven-sent mission. Therefore he could say in all truth (Gal. 1:11-12)—

"But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ."

"Flesh and blood" in scriptural terms means mortal, sinful nature, with all of its weaknesses and tendencies toward evil and away from Divine principles. It is the "old man of the flesh" whose thoughts and actions are contrary to God, and whose advice and counsel are almost invariably wrong when viewed in the light of Divine teaching.

In Heb. 2:14 we are told that Jesus Christ was a partaker of "flesh and blood" nature, that he might through death redeem those who are of that sin nature. Therefore he inherited this sin-stricken nature that he might condemn it. He was "tempted in all points like as we are," but he "conferred not with flesh and blood." He sought no counsel of man, but when tempted, *his sole standard of appeal was to the Word of God.*

And so he conquered and condemned sin in both its physical and moral aspects by keeping God's law and being offered as a sacrifice for sin, that sin might be condemned in his mortal flesh—thus winning a right to immortality through a resurrection. He has been given a Name above every name, and made the "Resurrection and the Life" that he might give eternal life to "the children" of God who also, like him, *overcome the temptations of "flesh and blood."*

In Matt. 16:16-17, when Peter confessed to Jesus that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus told him—

"Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

God through Isaiah says, speaking to "flesh and blood" man—

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are My ways your ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8-9),

All thought, reasoning and philosophy which emanates solely from "the mind of the flesh" is not only of no spiritual value, but tends to lead away from Divine teaching, if not diametrically opposed to it. It is foolishness with God. The old man of the flesh reasons after the flesh and judges after the flesh, as Jesus told the Jews. He follows the dictates of the carnal mind, which—

“. . . is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

There must be created in the believer a *new* mind, "created in righteousness and true holiness." The mind of Christ, the spirit of Christ, *must* dwell in him, and the Word of God *must* be his guiding light and his counsel, with which he must constantly confer, and strictly abide by its instructions. Humanly-inspired counsel is dangerous to the spiritual man, therefore the prophet Isaiah warns us to—

"Cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isa. 2:22).

This is as applicable to *ourselves* as to others with whom we come into contact. It is our *own* natural tendencies which are the most liable to lead us astray. Bad advice from without will not harm us if we, like our Savior, are always prepared with a "Thus saith the Lord" to guide our every thought and action.

The old man of the flesh is always ready to hold a conference with us, and he is always liberal with his advice and counsel. But in any conference with him, he always comes out the winner. He has advantages to start with because—though the spirit be willing—yet the flesh is weak. He has the advantage because there dwells in every one of us a law that when we would do good, evil is present with us, ever ready to flame into sin at the slightest encouragement. Therefore, says Paul (Rom. 13:14)—

"Make no provision for the flesh, to obey it in the lust thereof."

Once we lend a willing ear to the counsel of "flesh and blood," we have taken the first step toward obeying the dictates of the carnal mind. There is only one safe rule—"Confer not with flesh and blood." Seek not, neither heed, its "reasonable" suggestions. If advice which one seeks to give is not wholly derived from the Word of God, and based solely upon Divine principles, let us have nothing to do with it. Let us put it in its proper place, with the "*things that be of man*" and not the things that be of God.

We might note some of the advice and suggestions commonly handed out by the old man of the flesh which, though sometimes well-meant, is solely dictated by his fleshly mind:

"The Word of God should not be taken too literally or too seriously. God does not always mean exactly what He says, and there should be wide scope or "differences of opinions."

"Customs and circumstances have changed; God does not require us to follow closely the example of the saints of old."

"Our presentation of the Truth should be modernized so as to appeal to the modern world."

"We should confine our addresses to pleasant and upbuilding things, lest we discourage the brethren, particularly the young."

"It is the spirit of Christ and an exhibition of brotherly kindness to show a tolerant attitude toward false teachers and wrong doers."

"We should preserve peace in the body at all costs."

"There's much good to be derived from worldly literature."

"It is 'nobody's business' how one conducts himself, and we should not be concerned about the conduct of others."

"Those who want to conform to the principles of teaching and conduct of the past generations in the Truth are old-fashioned and behind the times. We need brethren whose preaching and writing conform more to modern times and ways."

"As long as we have the Truth and commit no grave sins, we can take things easy and still expect to enter the Kingdom."

"There's no harm in many worldly pleasures and amusements."

There are some things that hardly anyone would *say*, or even consciously *think*, but which may be *very clearly manifested by our actions*, as—

"We are too busy to give very much of our time to the service of the Truth."

"We should note carefully what the majority prefers, and follow them and seek to please them."

"We are justified in bettering our temporal welfare even though it may be cutting us off from rendering very much, if any, service to the Truth."

"We should be at liberty to 'forsake the assembling of ourselves together,' or give no support to the work of the Truth, except when we feel like it or it suits our convenience to do so, or there is nowhere else to go."

"We should first consider our temporal welfare and comfort, and then if we have any time or substance left over to give to God, we might do so."

Such thoughts as these spring from the carnal mind, and are therefore rightly termed "thinking of the flesh." They war against the mind of the Spirit, and must be put down if we are to win the race for eternal life. Let us give "flesh and blood" no quarter but "*bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*"
—O.B.

**“OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES AND SUCKLINGS HAST THOU ORDAINED
STRENGTH” —Psalm 8:2**

A little land. A small, despised people. The weak things of the world used to carry on God's mighty purpose and to confound the wise. Jesus said—

"I thank Thee, Father; Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

The last shall be first, the weak shall be strong, the abased shall be exalted, the poor shall be rich.

"That which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God."

And to our mind comes that vicious parade of selfish virtues and glorified vices that comprise the philosophy of natural man. Let us distrust every natural thought and inclination.

"God . . . SPAKE in times past." This makes all the difference between the wisdom of the Bible and the wisdom of "the wise" of this world. In the one is light and harmony; in the other, darkness on the highest problems. Let us walk in the light and rejoice in the light that we may be children of light, both now and in the glorious age to come.—R.R.

Death by Sin

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin."

The one man of this passage (Rom. 5:2) is undoubtedly **Adam**. The passage may therefore be read: "By Adam sin entered into the world, and death by his sin." The words "entered into the world" are equally true of death as of sin. Although these words are not repeated the simple purport of the passage is, that death has entered into the world by sin, and that sin has entered by man.

Sin is therefore the cause which man brought that has produced the effect—death. Both are thus traceable to man, as we read—

"By man came death" (1 Cor. 15:21).

"Death is the wages of sin" (Rom. 6:23).

Now these passages, especially the first, are enlightening concerning Adam's nature and relation to life and death before and after he sinned. We learn by them that through his sin death has **entered into the world**—not the world that is made up of hills, mountains, rivers, seas and oceans; but the world referred to in the following:

"God so loved the **world** that He gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

—the world of man, to whom death has become the common lot, inherited—as all other characteristics are—from parentage.

Man, in a purely natural condition, and in consequence of this inheritance (which is really part and parcel of himself) is by Jesus spoken of as dead:

"Let the DEAD bury their dead."

This death is with every child born into the world, as stated above, and will demonstrate its presence to all, sooner or later. Even in the midst of life it manifests itself to our senses, in a gradual decaying of our natures, which reach the bottom, provided no other law is set in motion to stop it. In other words, all men are by nature inevitably tending, yea, **hastening**, towards death.

This is the condition of man SINCE sin entered, **but not before**. As Adam **brought** sin, and death came **through** his sin, Adam could not have been mortal, death-stricken, or tending towards the grave—as we are now—before he sinned. If he were, then death was in the world before sin, and it must be untrue to say either that death came by sin, or that it is the wages of sin.

If Adam were in the same state of nature before he sinned as he was after and as we are now, then it must be false to say that death came by sin, or that it is the wages of sin; for it would then have been in the world—that is, in Adam—as much before he sinned as after, and then as now, only requiring time to demonstrate itself.

But, as the Scriptures plainly declare that death came **BY** sin, it could not have come before any more than any effect can precede cause. Therefore, before Adam sinned he must have been free from death, and therefore in a different condition to what he was in after he sinned, and also to that in which we are. Otherwise death did not come by sin, nor by man, and could not be the wages of sin.

It is by no means difficult to believe this, though what his exact nature or condition was, is not revealed to us. But this much must be true—he was in a nature which was capable of being made either absolutely mortal or absolutely immortal, but which at the time was absolutely neither.

Because we are acquainted with no other natures than the two—mortal and immortal—it does not therefore follow that there is, or was no other. On the contrary, this testimony and others require there should be, and proves there was. **Christadelphian, 1879.**

Caleb the Kenezite

In the second year after their exodus from Egypt, the children of Israel came to Kadesh-barnea in the extreme south of Canaan. There Moses, at the command of God, (Num. 13) chose 12 men, one out of each of the 12 tribes of Israel, and sent them to inspect and report upon the land into which Israel was about to enter in fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham more than 400 years previously. Among these were **Caleb**, the son of Jephunneh, who was the representative of the tribe of Judah, and **Oshea**, the son of Nun, the representative of the tribe Ephraim.

Upon their return, the majority gave so evil report of the land that the congregation of Israel refused to proceed any farther, and spoke of appointing another captain in the place of Moses, under whom to return to Egypt. **Caleb and Joshua**, on the other hand, did their best to reassure the people. They reminded them of the wonders which God had already done on their behalf in Egypt and in the Red Sea, and urged them to go up at once and possess the land, for if God had, so far, been able to perform all He had promised, they need have no fear as to His ability to subdue the inhabitants of Canaan, But the only effect upon their hearers was they—

" . . . bade stone them with stones."

In the result, however, God showed His pleasure at this manifestation of their faith in His word, even at the risk of their own lives, for when, 40 years afterwards, the children of Israel at last entered the land of Canaan, Caleb and Joshua went in with them, the only survivors of the generation of unbelievers which had witnessed the wonderful events of the exodus and yet had no faith in God, for they had this witness that they, **and only they**, had "wholly followed the Lord."

Of Caleb little more is recorded. In Josh. 14 we read that he came to Gilgal to Joshua and the Elders, who were there engaged in dividing the land among the families of Israel, and related to them how, 45 years before, Moses had sworn to him that the land upon which his feet had trodden, when he went from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, should be his and his children's for ever, because he "wholly followed the Lord God of Israel" (v. 14); and in the following chapter we are told that he was given—

" . . . a part **among the children** of Judah, even the city of Hebron."

We learn also, in this chapter, of a younger brother (nephew?) named Othniel, who afterwards became the first judge of Israel (Jdg. 3:9); but of Caleb himself we hear nothing more.

As mentioned above, when Moses selected the twelve spies, and sent them into the land from Kadesh-barnea, he chose Caleb as the representative of the tribe of Judah, and Joshua as the representative of the tribe of Ephraim. From this, we should infer that the one was a descendant of Judah, and the other of Ephraim.

As far as Joshua is concerned, this inference is correct, but with Caleb the case seems different, for he is called a "Kenezite," and Jephunneh does not fit into the genealogy of Judah. It would appear therefore that Caleb (whose name means, "a dog") was not by birth an Israelite, but belonged to a family which, for some reason, had joined itself to Israel, and had been incorporated into the tribe of Judah. If this be true, then the strange expression in Josh 14, that he "wholly followed the Lord God of Israel," and the equally strange expression in the following chapter, that he was given "a part **among** the children of Judah," are at once explained.

And, further, if the suggestion be correct that he was a stranger who, like Ruth the Moabitess in after years, had come to trust under the wings of the Lord God of Israel, then he and Joshua are strikingly typical of the **two classes** which shall at last enter into the Rest which remaineth, for the people of God, of which the rest into which Israel entered under Joshua was a shadow.

Both were faithful men who believed implicitly in the promise of God in face of much opposition, even of grave, personal risk; both entered the Land of Promise as the result of their faithfulness; and both were Israelites, but with this striking difference, that one was an Israelite by **birth**, the other by **adoption**.

Ecclesial News

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

It is with sorrow that we record the death of our sister Anne Growcott, at the end of her 68th year. She put on the Saving Name of Jesus in baptism on Dec. 20, 1902, at the age of 15.

She suffered a stroke during the early hours of Tuesday, June 7, and fell asleep on Thursday morning, June 9, about 6 o'clock. She was partially conscious during the interval, but there was no indication of suffering. She was laid to rest on Saturday, June 11.

She was active as usual during the day preceding the stroke, and had done several pages of typing for the Berean on that day.

Her work, presence, and influence are, and will be, greatly missed. She watched the developing Signs of the Times with keen and increasing interest. The loss—and the memory—of her is a searching incentive to self-examination and renewed application to the only activity in life that has any true value.

The presence of many brethren and sisters, from considerable distances was a moving token of the close and comforting fellowship of the Truth; and the many messages of love and sympathy that have been received have been a source of sustaining help and strength. We thank God for this comfort in the midst of our sorrow.

—bro. G. V. Growcott

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

The month of May was a period of refreshment and encouragement as we watch and wait for the fulfilment of God's promises. Many say, "Where is the promise of his (Jesus) coming?"—but we are fully assured that He is faithful that promised, and absolutely persuaded that, what He has promised, He is able to perform. Therefore, do we with patience wait for it.

We have been cheered and comforted by the fellowship of those who are of one mind concerning the things of the Kingdom and the Name. They were bro. G. V. Growcott and sister Anne Growcott of Detroit; bro. & sis. Calvin Clubb and sis. Louise Martin of London; and sis. Marilyn Sparham of Hamilton. On May 15 bro. Growcott administered the word of exhortation by which he stirred us up by way of remembrance. It creates both comfort and satisfaction when we are in the company of those who have the Truth, not only in their minds, but in their hearts as well, and can bring forth from their store house of treasures things both new and old.

During the past two years, although our group is small, it has had the effect of drawing us closer to the Bible by which many of its beauties have become apparent. Previously, we were so busy looking after the details of ecclesial life, that, to a certain extent, we were surface readers, and failed to

get the wisdom and understanding of the Truth that lies hidden in the Scriptures, and can only be found by searching for it as for hid treasures. In the reading of God's Word, we should endeavor to get right inside the Bible for there we will find our highest happiness as we study what God has given us to make us wise unto salvation through faith in His beloved Son. —bro. G. A. Gibson

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