

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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

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CHRIST IS COMING AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

The Berean Christadelphian

Please send all communications and manuscripts to the Editor—

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

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

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EDITORIAL

Grow in Grace and Knowledge

"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings"
—Hos. 6:6.

Although Peter does not stand out so prominently as Paul in the work of spreading the Gospel in the first century, there are, however, features of his activities that tower supremely high in relation to the Divine program of "taking out of the Gentiles a people for the Name of the Lord." It is well for us to remember that it was Peter who was the first of the disciples to be chosen by Jesus; that it was Peter who so boldly avowed the Messiahship of Jesus, and that he was one of the three to view the Transfiguration.

Quite often we think of Peter and how he denied the Lord three times, but do we remember just as strongly that, after his resurrection, Jesus received from him a profession of love as vigorous, and as frequently repeated as his denial and, after each declaration on the part of Peter, the Lord commanded him, "Feed my sheep"?

After the Lord's ascension, we find Peter taking the leadership of the disciples, and it was his voice that was heard on the day of Pentecost as he addressed the people of Israel in such a striking and forceful manner. It is also important for us to remember that it was Peter through whom the Word of life came to the Gentiles when he was sent to Cornelius to expound the way of salvation.

If, then, we are what we profess to be, members of the flock of Jesus, we will give eager attention to what Peter has to say in his two letters as he feeds the sheep of the Master.

Among the many things said by this remarkable apostle, there are three statements that seem to stand out above all others—

"Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

"Be holy in all manner of conversation."

"Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Savior Jesus Christ."

Because the first two are comprehended in the third, our remarks will be directed to the latter in particular. According to Young's Concordance, the word rendered "grace" actually has the deeper and broader meaning of *graciousness*. Grace means favor, but graciousness signifies an abundance of favor or mercy.

But graciousness, although a necessary characteristic of the brethren and sisters of Christ Jesus, is *insufficient when alone*. Therefore Peter couples with it that which brings completeness to the life of the believer—"the knowledge of our Savior Jesus Christ." You will recall that Cornelius was a gracious man, who feared God and prayed always, but it was necessary that he receive the knowledge of the Anointed Jesus. This combination—united in him—placed Cornelius in a position that enabled him to grow in wisdom and understanding.

As we meditate upon the words of Peter, our minds turn to the future for we realize that some day we will stand face to face with the Master, and our reception will be in proportion to how we have assimilated his words and commandments during our days of opportunity. Unless we realize that important truth, it will not be possible for us to apprehend clearly the necessity of *growing* in graciousness and in knowledge. However, before growth can take place, it is essential for us to make the acquaintance of that which will supply the *nourishment* for such development.

The supreme importance of knowledge of Divine things cannot be estimated too highly. Through the prophet Isaiah, we have God's declaration that His people had gone into captivity "because they had no *knowledge*," and in like manner Hosea says they were "destroyed for lack of *knowledge*." But knowledge does not stand alone, for it is possible to have our minds full of knowledge without understanding it.

If, then, we would grow in graciousness and in knowledge and understanding of Jesus, we must come out and be separate from that by which we are surrounded on every hand, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world. As bro. Roberts has said, "Salvation depends upon the assimilation of the mind to the Divine ideas, principles, and affections, exhibited in the Scriptures." From this source only can we develop a zeal for God: but it must be "a zeal according to *knowledge*," because it is through knowledge that the just will be delivered. Therefore let the words of God to Israel be vividly impressed upon our minds when He said—

"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings"—Hos. 6:6.

If we are to attain unto the essential high standard of knowledge, we must permit the enlightening influence of the Gospel to have *first place in our lives*. It must never be lost sight of, nor give place to any personal ambitions generated by self-esteem and a desire for primacy. Under ordinary circumstances, we are apt to overlook this great truth. Therefore, we must be on the alert constantly as we grow in graciousness and in the knowledge of our beloved Savior. Watchfulness and introspection should be keynotes in the life of every believer.

In view of the indisputable fact that our friendship of the Anointed Jesus depends upon our believing into him, and keeping his commandments, let us awake to the responsibility that rests upon us because of our belief and obedience of the Gospel of salvation. It is essential that we give diligence to make our calling and election sure, and that we be holy in all manner of conversation, so that we may build up a character that will be well-pleasing to our heavenly Father. Such a character will be indicated by the spirit of humility, and supported by courage and determination to do what we know to be right.

Following a course as indicated above, will cause us to be edified, and built up in love, and the fruits of the Spirit will have free course among us. Then we will have joy and confidence as we walk in the truth, and Yahweh's Name will be glorified. —Editor.

The Wood of the Life

By BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat from the Wood of the Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of the Deity"—Rev. 2:7.

The reader will perceive that I have here rendered that which, in the English version, is expressed by the phrase "of the Tree of Life," by the words *from the Wood of the Life*. This is not a departure from the common form just for the sake of singularity, as the following remarks will show.

In the Apocalypse there are two Greek words, *xulon* and *dendron*, which are both rendered *tree* in the English version—but incorrectly, as I believe. I cannot suppose that the Spirit selected these two different words to express exactly the same idea; but rather because there was a distinction of ideas, which required different words to convey it.

To translate *xulon* by "tree" involves one in a difficulty respecting Rev. 22:2, from which there is no satisfactory extrication. This passage reads thus—

"In the midst of her broad place and on this side and that side of the river a **Xulon** of life, bearing twelve fruits."

Now, if *xulon* be rendered "tree," the difficulty is, how can a tree be at one and the same time on *both* sides of a river? The difficulty, however, vanishes by rendering *xulon* by the word "wood." A wood may be "on this side and the other" of a river, and yet be one wood; a singular of plurality, which harmonizes with the structure of other apocalyptic symbols, which are formed upon the principle of *many in one*; as, many sons of men in One Son of man; many emperors in One Head of the Beast; many popes in One False Prophet; many *dendra* (trees) in One *xulon* (Wood).

The word *dendron*, "a tree," occurs in Rev. 7:1, 3; 8:7; 9:4, and is so rendered there correctly enough. But in Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14, "tree," in the English Version, is *xulon* in the Greek; and in Rev. 18:12, it is also *xulon* twice, but in both instances rendered "wood," as "thyine wood" and "precious wood."

We may here remark that while *dendron*, in the singular, only represents one tree, the word *xulon*, in the singular, may represent a plurality; as "they made their feet fast in the stocks"—"*eis to xulon*." In short, the matter of all trees is used symbolically for any number of individual trees—one material, or *xulon*, typical of a whole forest, or aggregation of *dendra*.

The idea of plurality in connection with what is commonly styled "the Tree of Life," is first suggested in Gen. 2:9, where it is styled by Moses, *aitz ha-chayim*, A TREE OF THE LIVES. In this phrase, the tree is the type of the lives, and though single represents plurality. It was in the midst of Eden's garden, and would have imparted life for the Olahm had Adam and Eve, the representatives of the whole family of man, been permitted to take of the fruit of the tree and eat thereof. But they were excluded on account of disobedience; and the eating of a tree of life was set before the race as a thing to be attained consequent upon obedience to the commands of God.

This Tree in the Mosaic Paradise was allegorical of the Wood in the apocalyptic. The original phrase here suffers a sort of transposition—*Lives* is changed into *life*, and *tree* into *wood*; that is, the idea of plurality is found in the wood, and the oneness in the life. Thus, the Spirit in Jesus said, "I am the life;" "I am the Vine, and ye (my apostles) are the branches." Here was a tree consisting of fourteen living persons, all animated by one and the same life-principle; namely, the Eternal Spirit, Jesus, and the 12 Apostles.

Now let this idea be extended so as to embrace "the multitude which no man can number"—all IN Jesus Anointed"—and we have a *tree*, which in the beginning was—

". . . as a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden, and it grew and waxed a great tree, and the fowls of the air came and lodged in the branches of it" (Luke 13:18).

—a tree, which with its feathered songsters of the aerial, is apocalyptically symbolized by a Wood of trees in the Garden (Paradise) of God.

As Jesus anointed with holy spirit was a vine-tree, so are all his brethren trees also. Speaking of the man who delights in the instruction of Yahweh, the Spirit in David says,

"He shall be as a tree planted by the channels of waters, which shall yield its fruit in its season, and its leaf shall not fade; and whatsoever he shall work shall prosper."

—which is affirmable only of a tree *incapable of decay*. The Spirit also in Isaiah (61:3), speaking of the same class, informs us that Messiah's mission is, among other things—

". . . to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, Yahweh's planting, that He might be glorified."

"As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons" (Song 2:3).

In this, the Messiah is likened to an apple tree, and his brethren, the Sons of Deity, to "the trees of the wood."

"To him that overcomes, saith the Spirit, I will give to eat from the Wood of Life."

A man's victory over the world is not complete so long as he is engaged in the conflict of life. In this present state of existence, then, a man does not eat from the Wood of the Life promised; he is, therefore, in no sense immortal. The promise of life is, that we *shall* have it *when the victory is won*. "I will give to him to eat," points us to the *future*. We must first appear before the throne by resurrection, to learn whether we are accounted worthy of the life; and then if the verdict be in our favor, we shall be permitted to eat; otherwise, not.

"*I will give to eat*." Mastication, deglutition, and assimilation, constitute the whole process of eating, which is the conversion of food into blood, which is the life. But the life of the saints in the Millennial Aion is not blood; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God;" for it is corruptible, and the Kingdom of God is indestructible, and not to be left to a succession; hence, "corruption cannot inherit incorruption" (1 Cor. 15:50).

Their life in that Aion is holy spirit. When this is poured out upon their bodies, posterior to their resurrection, it assimilates to itself, "in the twinkling of an eye," all the particles of their flesh and bones; and they become transformed into incorruptible, deathless, and glorious bodies, according to Paul's testimony, who says—

"The Lord Jesus Anointed, shall change the nature of the body of our humiliation, that it may become of like form with the body of his glory, by the inworking of what enables him also to subdue all things to himself" (Phil. 3:21).

—that is, *the inworking of the Spirit*. This inworking, by which the nature of the resurrected body is changed, so as that it becomes a spirit-body, or spirit, is the *giving to eat of the Wood of Life*. When

the victor has thus eaten he becomes an element of the wood, whose leaf shall never fade, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

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.

"IS ANY AMONG YOU AFFLICTED? LET HIM PRAY."

It is pleasant enough to talk about tribulation preparing us for the Kingdom of God; but it is hard in the actual experience. The heart sometimes grows sick. The waters come into the soul, and the spirit is overwhelmed. Let us beware of straying from the path for ease. Let us not lay down the cross because it is heavy. Christ asked us to take it up and carry it. Let us, when hardly beset, follow the example of David, who says—

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee when my spirit is overwhelmed."

This is what James exhorts,

"Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray."

Resorting thus, in our trouble, to the Rock that is higher than ourselves, we shall be strengthened with a strength that will enable us to endure, and succored with a help that will open a way of escape, that we be not tempted above that we are able to bear.—R.R.

The Blood of Christ

By brother Robert Roberts

PART FOUR

The object of this sacrificial declaration of the righteousness of God is also made manifest in its practical applications. It was—

". . . for (or in order to) the remission of sins that are past,"

—that is, where men believe—"Remission," not as a legal right accruing, but as the gift of grace, "through the forbearance of God." There would be no "forbearance" if a legal claim had been discharged. God "*forgives* for Christ's sake" (Eph. 4:32). This is the literal issue of the whole matter.

God's supremacy having been vindicated, a foundation has been laid on which He can offer forgiveness without the compromise of wisdom and righteousness. He does not offer it, or allow it, apart from submission to the declaration of His righteousness in Christ crucified. There must be the most humble identification with that declaration.

Baptism in our age is provided as the means of that identification. The believer is "baptized into his death" (Rom. 6:3), and buried with him in baptism (Col. 2:12), and receives the forgiveness of all his sins "through the forbearance (the kindness, the graciousness) of God," Who is pleased with our conformity to the form of humiliation He has provided.

The whole sacrificial institution and our endorsement of it in baptism is comparable to a form of apology prescribed by the Majesty of Heaven as the condition of our receiving His mercy unto life eternal. The object secured is the triumphant assertion and recognition of God's supremacy and man's abasement as a dependent beneficiary. *Thus law and mercy are reconciled.*

Thus the meaning of the death of Christ falls easily within the definition that has been supplied to us in the words of inspiration. That definition satisfies all the demands of the understanding, reconciling every apparently discordant element in the case. It occurs twice in the course of Paul's letter to the Romans—in two different forms that exhibit the whole case. Both forms have been frequently on our lips in the course of these remarks; but they bear repeating. In the first, he says (Rom. 3:25) it was to—

"Declare His (God's) righteousness for (and in order to) the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

And in the second, he says it,

"Condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3).

The crucifixion of Christ as a "declaration of the righteousness of God" and a "condemnation of sin in the flesh," exhibited to the world the righteous treatment of sin. It was as though it was proclaimed to all the world, when the body was nailed to the cross—

"This is how condemned human nature should be treated according to the righteousness of God; it is fit only for destruction."

The shedding of the blood was the ritual symbol of that truth; for the shedding of the blood was the taking away of the life. Such a declaration of the righteousness of God could only be made in the very nature concerned; a body under the domination of death because of sin.

It would not have been a declaration of the righteousness of God to have crucified an angel or a new man made fresh from the ground. There would have been confusion in such an operation. This is why it was necessary that Jesus should be "made of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3), that he might partake of the very flesh and blood of man (Heb. 2:14). It was that nature that was to be operated upon and redeemed in him. It was needful that he should at the first "come in the flesh."

This is where the heresy of the first century condemned by John (1 John 4:3) was so disastrous to the scheme of God's wisdom in Christ. They denied that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh, which obscured the lesson taught and the object aimed at in the sacrifice of Christ. This also is the effect of the doctrine of substitution.

There is another aspect of the death of Christ which it is not needful to enter into in this place. It is the aspect involved in Paul's statement that—

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13).

The foregoing remarks have dealt mainly with the hereditary death taint derived from *Adam*. But there was, additional to this, the condemnation of the *Law of Moses*, under which Christ could not be brought by birth; he was born under the Law but not condemned by the Law, unless he broke the Law. If he had broken the Law, he would have ceased to be an acceptable sacrifice for sin.

Yet, if the curse of the Law did not come upon him, he could not take that curse away. What we might call the difficulty of this case was met by the mode of his death, in which, without any delinquency on his part, but rather by an act of obedience, he was brought under the curse of the Law by the mode of his death, brought under that curse without fault, but rather by virtue, and redeemed from it by resurrection. So much is sufficient to say on that point in this place.

Thus far, we have considered the *human* side of the atonement, as we might express it. We have not ignored the *Divine* side by any means, but there is a closer and a higher view of the Divine side that is essential to a complete view of the case. It is a view that is a little difficult to formulate in a palpable manner for the reason appearing in Isaiah 55, that *God's ways and thoughts are as high above ours as the heaven is high above the earth*. Because this is the case, and because the whole work of atonement or reconciliation through Christ is a work of God, it necessarily embodies ideas too high and too subtle for mortal mind to easily apprehend or appreciate.

Nowhere does this aspect of the case come out more strikingly than in the beginning of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. Here, in chapter 1, there occur the following beautiful verses:

"Not with wisdom of words lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness, but unto us who are saved, it is the power of God. . .

"We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them who are called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. . .

"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not to bring to nought things that are, that **no flesh should glory in His presence**.

"But **of Him** are ye in Christ, who **of God** is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption, that according as it is written, He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord" (1 Co. 1:17, 23-31).

The great feature of these declarations is that *Christ is the work of God in a sense in which man is not, that the glory of the triumph wrought out in him may be to God*, and that human nature may have no room for the complacent self-credit which is so common with man. To see the full force of this idea we *must realize the Divine side of Christ*. In all the discourses of Christ, the Father is brought forward as the great Initiator and Operator in the case. This is Jesus' style of language:

"I came down from Heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me" (John 6:38).

"I am not come of myself" (John 7:28).

"The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works."

"I am come in my Father's name" (John 5:43).

"I can of mine own self do nothing" (John 5:30).

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. How sayest thou, then, Show us the Father?" (John 14:9).

So with the apostles. Paul speaks (Eph. 1:5) of the Father—

". . . having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ TO HIMSELF according to His good pleasure."

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified FREELY BY HIS GRACE through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:23-24).

"God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all" (Rob. 11:32).

Again, in his second letter to the Corinthians (v. 18-19), he tells us that *God* hath reconciled us unto HIMSELF by Jesus Christ; and that *God* was in Christ, reconciling the world UNTO HIMSELF. And again, in his letter to Titus (3:4)—

"The kindness and love of GOD our SAVIOR toward man appeared, not by works and righteousness which we have done, but according to HIS MERCY, He saved us."

"For the GRACE OF GOD that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."

It is the grace of God, then—the *act of God*—that we see in the introduction of Christ upon the scene to open a way for mercy conformably with wisdom and justice. This required that he should appear in the nature of Abraham and David, which was sinful nature. How was he—with *sinful flesh*—to be sinless?

God's relation to the matter is the answer. *God did it*. The weak flesh could not do it. Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, that the glory might be to God. The light in his face is the light of the Father's glory. As to *how* the Father could be manifest in a man with an independent volition, we need not trouble ourselves. We are ignorant as to how the Father performs any of the myriad wonders of His power—so small a matter as the germination of the grain in the field, to its multiplication twentyfold is a mystery. We know a thousand things as *facts*, but we are utterly ignorant of the *mode of invisible working* by which these facts exist. We receive them, though we do not understand them.

If it be so with things in nature, our inability to define or conceive the process need be no difficulty in the way of receiving a heavenly fact, not only commended to us on the best of all testimony, but self-manifest before us.

For who can contemplate the superhuman personage exhibited in the Gospel narrative without seeing that the Father is manifest in him? When did ever man deport himself like this man? When spoke the most gifted of men like this? Is he not manifestly revealed the moral and intellectual image of the invisible God? Last Adam though he be—is he not "the Lord from heaven"?

But what are we to say to the plain declaration emanant from the mouth of the Lord himself, that the beholder looking en him, *saw the Father*, and that the Father within him by the Spirit—for as he said on the subject of eating his flesh, it is the Spirit that maketh alive: the flesh profiteth nothing—was the Doer and the Speaker? The answer of wisdom is, that we must simply believe; and true wisdom will gladly believe in so glorious a fact.

What if our understanding be baffled? Shall we refuse to eat bread because we fail to comprehend the essences in which the flour subsists? A childlike faith is alone acceptable in this matter. The words used by Jesus to his disciples we may presume to be applicable to us, if they are true of us:

"The Father Himself loveth you **because ye believe that I came out from God**" (John 16:27).

Those who make the mistake of the Pharisees, and "judge after the flesh," stand back in gloomy quandary and talk of "mere man." Others who think to make a great mystery "simple" and plain, speak of Jesus' flesh as a mixture of human and Divine substance.

Wisdom takes her stand between the two, and seeks to dive no deeper than the testimony that God was manifest in Jesus, and that Jesus was of our nature, and "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," as Paul declares, and "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin."

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

"Thou Hast Done Foolishly"

"To obey is better than sacrifice."

In time of national peril it must always happen that the *many* who are fit only to follow, will be eager to surrender to the *one* who is supremely fit to lead, the whole burden and responsibility of national resolve and action. It has been in face of such dangers as that with which, in Samuel's day, the Canaanite tribes menaced Israel, that Judges, Dictators, Despots of every name and sort have had the reins of government thrust into their willing or unwilling hands.

The people of Israel thought to add to their security by giving to their particular leader, when he should be forthcoming, the title and the prerogatives of *king*; hoping, doubtless, that that leader would shape shrewder projects and strike weightier blows if he were invested with regal state and dignity, and if not only his own tenure of the crown but also that of his descendants hung upon the wisdom of his policy and the strength of his arm.

Among their neighbors they saw that to the person of the king were attached a prestige which no mere private citizen, called forth by crisis from obscurity to sudden eminence, could be expected to acquire; and the Israelites were desirous that their own ruler should enjoy the same weight and consideration. Their anxiety for a change of system was further stimulated by the incapacity and corruptness of their two judges, the sons of Samuel.

But if there was thus, on the one side, a fair show of justification for their demand for a king, there was, on the other, *one unanswerable argument why it should never have been made—*

"Hearken to the voice of the people in all that they say . . ."
—said God to his aged prophet Samuel—

". . . for they have not rejected thee, BUT THEY HAVE REJECTED ME, THAT I SHOULD NOT REIGN OVER THEM."

In such a situation it is evident that the man who should reign over Israel must adapt himself to conditions as hard as they were remarkable. He must substitute for the Divine guidance, the shifts of his own policy; he must usurp the place of God Himself in relation to His people. Upon what man, then, and what manner of man, would the momentous choice fall? Some few minds in Israel must have awaited the answer to that question with an interest that was not unmingled with foreboding.

The true leader of men differs essentially from his fellows, in that he is fully alive to the responsibilities of leadership, that he is of a fiber strong enough to bear those responsibilities, and that, whatever be his doubts of the moment or the hour, he knows in his heart that he is able to bear them. To resolve and to act in one's own petty affairs is not always easy; but to resolve and act for the well-being of a community, a nation, and to continuously so act and resolve, is a task for a man of uncommon mold, breathing an atmosphere of anxious solicitude, bracing to himself, but deadly to a lesser man.

It has to be admitted that the earliest public act of Saul, on whom the choice had fallen, gave little promise of such singular hardiness. Foreboding must have deepened when it was learned that, at the moment when all the tribes were gathered to acclaim him king, Saul had hidden himself, as it is tersely stated, "among the stuff." *This was his response to his nation's call.* He realized the magnitude

of the task that lay before him and shrank from the undertaking. He had not learned confidence in God.

It is true that Moses had at first shrunk from the high position of leadership, but Moses did not run and hide. And Moses was a man of 80 years. That shrinking expressed his diffidence—begotten of humility which, during 40 years of isolation from his kindred and from the stir of human affairs, had gradually supplanted his former self-confidence and pride.

Saul's reluctance at this time was later commented on by Samuel, in contrast with his self-will and arrogance against God in his disobedience in the matter of Amalek—

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

From the Saul hidden away among the stuff to the same Saul at the head of the host which raised the siege of Jabesh-Gilead and routed the Ammonites, is quick and almost startling transition. In this expedition he was at his best; it was one of the few occasions when he did all that could be asked or expected of him.

"The Spirit of God came upon him . . ."
—and with it came valiant resolve, and sure insight how best to put heart into his compatriots. His victory was complete, and was followed by fitting celebration—

"All the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the Lord; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offerings before the Lord; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly."

Less than two years later, Gilgal, alas! was the scene of very different happenings. The king's son, Jonathan (always as good a soldier as he afterwards proved a loyal friend) had smitten—

"A garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba."

The inherent weakness of Saul's character was now to display itself. Elated to boastfulness by the small advantage—

"He blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, Let all the Hebrews hear!"

Unhappily not the Hebrews alone, but the Philistines also, heard, and began to stir in throes of mighty preparation.

"Thirty thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen, people as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude . . ."
—massed themselves ominously upon the frontier, and presently rolled over it towards Michmash. Having succeeded in raising a storm of such unlooked-for fury, Saul was in no mood to brave it:

"As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling."

And Saul, it is safe to say, trembled most of any, and it would be the tremors of the king that set contagion of fear quivering in the hearts and limbs of his followers. Both king and people were eagerly awaiting the approach of Samuel, the prophet of God, the one strong and faithful man to whom Israel could turn in its trouble. But Samuel was slow in coming; and the Philistines, with rumble of chariot wheel, thud of horse hoof, and tramp of many footmen, were quick. Counsel of panic was loud in Saul's ear.

He did not go to the length of hiding himself again, as he might conceivably have done; but he did something very similar—he took refuge in the unlawful offering of sacrifice. All too soon, then, came the prophet with his fateful pronouncement:

"Thou hast done foolishly; thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which He commanded thee; for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now **thy kingdom shall not continue.**"

Meantime the invading army had made no advance beyond Michmash. Three small active tentacles it had stretched forth— bands of spoilers, seeking food and forage and booty—but the great body of it remained strangely idle.

The young prince, Jonathan, would appear to have entered upon the grim business of war with a calm faith. The present conflict was of his provoking; yet, unlike Saul, he was in no wise cast down by the overwhelming numbers of the enemy. He *rejoiced*, rather, in a crisis worthy of his spirit and his steel. His adventure on this occasion—his *second* attack on a Philistine outpost—judged by any ordinary standard would be regarded almost as a military frolic, so ridiculously ill-matched were assailants and defenders, so remote seemed all chance of success.

But at the root of Jonathan's intrepidity lay that perfect faith which his father lacked. Indomitable fighter though he might be, his reliance was not upon himself, but upon that Great God who, in the circumstances of Israel, stood forth pre-eminently as the mighty Arbiter of battles. "It may be," he said to his armorbearer as they set out upon their doubtful enterprise—

". . . that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint upon the Lord to save by many or by few."

Fired by such a thought, those two brave men flung themselves against a whole garrison strongly posted on the summit of a precipitous hill; and victory rested with the two. This garrison was not a detached company, like that smitten earlier by Jonathan; it was linked up with the main body, a tentacle or a limb of it, as it were. Dismay radiated with lightning speed from shattered extremity to palpitating trunk, and in a little space that which had been an ordered army was a mob, overwhelmed in utter confusion.

With such an exploit before one's mind, one is impelled to ask, "Where was Jonathan at that later date when the giant Goliath found the champions of Israel so coy of accepting his challenge?" *Goliath was reserved for the prowess of a greater than Jonathan.*

For a time after the Michmash deliverance Saul, spurred on by success and his brave son's example, and cherishing the hope, perhaps, that he might redeem himself, showed a worthier, more kingly conduct, together with some soldierly skill and energy. Each of Israel's enemies, from Ammon to Moab, from Edom to Zobah, in turn felt the weight of his arm—

"Whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them."

With one foe, however, strife went on unceasingly, and was barren of decisive result—

"There was sore war against the Philistines, all the days of Saul."

It was left for a firmer hand than his to grasp that nettle, and render it for ever harmless. But if Saul still thought to reinstate himself in the favor of the Almighty, he reckoned without his own infirmity of purpose. *Among the conquests he had made, he had not numbered the conquest of self.* In all his life he made no serious beginning even upon that first and most vital enterprise. His last hope of saving the succession of the crown for his house was dissipated by the further lapse of which he was guilty after the overthrow of Amalek.

In this, as in his other lapses, there is apparent the same poor, dilute quality of sin. Saul was no audacious sinner, no Jeroboam, no Ahab; no Nebuchadnezzar, flaunting his arrogance in the face of the Most High. He was a pitiful half-sinner, obeying in part, in part disobeying. He hid his head, so to speak, in the sand of a *little obedience*, and imagined all the rest of his erring flesh to be concealed. It was part of his general ineptitude. The former words of the prophet ring again in one's ear:

"Thou hast done **foolishly**, Saul, thou hast done **foolishly**."

And to these were now added other words, banishing the last ray of hope—words which had in them no whisper of hope—

"Thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel. . . The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day."

There follows in the narrative an incident which illustrates the wonderful completeness and consistency with which the character of Saul is drawn. He begged Samuel to accompany him—

"Now, therefore, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord."

And again, a moment later—

"**Honor me now**, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship."

Worship was the after-thought, the pretext; his chief concern was that he should not be abased before his subjects. How typical of the weak and shallow nature that he should thus clutch frantically at the shadow, after allowing the substance to slip from him! With the passing of the first confusion of mind, he would wake to a full sense of the disaster that had overtaken him. Henceforward he would be, and indeed was, an embittered, broken man.

The moodiness, made up of fits of melancholy alternating with gusts of furious passion, to which he became subject, was the direct means of bringing about his first meeting with that "neighbor of his who was better than he"—his destined successor, David.

At the beginning, the two men were drawn strongly together—the one yielding glad fealty to the "Lord's anointed;" the other, grateful beyond measure to the hand whose loving touch upon the harp strings gave him respite from his pain.

If Saul could have continued to see in David only the gifted personality, the soul-uplifting musician, much of the gloom and bitterness of his closing years might have been spared him. But, ere long, he had to consider him in a new aspect—as the slayer of the Philistine champion, as a general conspicuously successful in two campaigns, as the idol of the people, whose name had been coupled with the name of the king himself in that invidious comparison, chanted by the women—

"Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."

It was part of the tragedy of Saul's life that his fate should have been interwoven so closely with that of such a man as David, with whom he could so ill afford to measure himself. At every point, save that of physical stature, the subject was superior to his king; in arms, in policy, in all graces and accomplishments of mind and body, in force of character, in conception of duty to both God and man; above all—in *that subtle perception of the wonderful beauty of holy things*.

The king in *name* found himself confronted with *the king by nature*. It was little wonder that the lesser man, with his career already a failure, should "eye" the greater, who had apparently a brilliant future stretching out before him.

Yet, with this coming of David into his life, Saul in all probability was given his second chance. Here, ready to take Saul's hand, was a henchman who would have led his armies from victory to victory; who would have brought wisdom to his council and godly admonition to his private ear; who would in large part have filled that place which, by the death of the aged prophet, Samuel, was soon to be left empty.

If Saul had embraced the opportunity offered him, what a different lot might have been his! The kingdom was lost to his descendants; but he might still, for the balance of his years have reigned over it in security; he might have looked forth upon a people great and prosperous, with a greatness and prosperity which anticipated at least something of the glory of Solomon's day; he might in own person have shone among his contemporaries in the eyes of all posterity with a bright (though reflected) luster.

It was not to be. The promptings of his jealousy and his vanity were too strong for him. He chose, instead, to do his country the disservice of driving her ablest citizen into exile, and to fritter away that country's resources and his own energies in the pursuing and harrying of a man who asked for nothing more than to remain his loyal subject and servant. Twice, in the course of that pursuit, David gave proof of his unalterable devotion; such proof that Saul himself could not resist its appeal, and exclaimed—

"I have sinned; return, my son David, for I will no more do thee harm. I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly."

David put no faith in his repentance, saying in his heart:

"I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines."

The craving to make an end of the son of Jesse had become with Saul a disease. Saul had arrived at that stage when, like Pharaoh, he had turned aside from every right path lying open to him, and God had hardened his heart to his own final undoing.

Among the disastrous consequences arising out of this one-sided feud was the estrangement of Jonathan, of whom it is written that, discerning his father's murderous intention—

"He rose up in fierce anger."

Yet the mass of the Israelites, and the tribe of Benjamin especially, attached though they had been to David, continued to give to Saul a willing allegiance, being still a little dazzled, doubtless, with the first glamor of their first anointed king.

Their loyalty, to all appearance, survived even the committal of an act foul enough to put its perpetrator altogether outside the pale of human sympathy and fellowship. The priest Ahimelech, in ignorance of the circumstances of David's flight, had provided him with a little food and a weapon of defence; ministrations which might well have been overlooked even by David's enemy.

But it was not Saul at that time to be either magnanimous or just, or even politic. The blood of fourscore priests and of every living thing pertaining to them, was the sop his rage demanded. His body-guard, men of his own tribe, flatly refused to obey his commands, and it was fitly left for an alien sycophant, a renegade Edomite, to do the foul work of massacre.

There ensued inevitably the final departure from Saul of the Spirit of God. Henceforth—

"When he enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets."

His people still rallied half-heartedly round him; but God thereafter withheld from him all further countenance and succor. Saul's night pilgrimage to the witch of Endor exhibits, once again, his susceptibility to panic; in face of emergency, he was at his wit's end to know what to do, and ready to resort to the first miserable expedient that seemed to offer a way of escape.

To dispel his fear, light was needed. But into the mind of Saul, whose spiritual eye—which is the window of the mind—had been allowed to fall into disuse, no light could gain admittance.

Great things were not asked of him; it is notable, indeed, how very little was really required: obedience to a few formulated commands; a moderate courage in the moment of trial; that was all.

The use of the spiritual eye would have taught him that difficulty and danger diminish in proportion to the ability to project one's vision over and beyond them, and that behind every trial of the moment it is possible to discern the mercy of God. It would have made clear to him that, did he but contribute the little asked of himself, all else that mattered would be forthcoming; his own meager powers would be reinforced by the Divine might, and the burden of his kingship would rest lightly upon him.

Disuse of spiritual perception had brought him in his last hours to this witch's hut at Endor, to grovel before that dread vision of his former counsellor, and to listen to words of prophecy that melted his very heart within him for the morrow's battle.

It was under such dark auspice that Saul marshalled his armies for his last great struggle with the Philistines, in whose ranks was certain doom—doom for himself, and disaster for country. The issue of the battle was never for a moment in doubt. The Israelites, with little confidence in themselves and none in their leader, broke at the first onset, and were slaughtered as they ran.

Jonathan, reluctant, one can well believe, to admit defeat, giving ground but slowly, and with grim dispute, was slain early in the day, and his two brothers died with him. The king himself, sore wounded, a fugitive, with the enemy hot in pursuit, was in hopeless case.

He had "*done foolishly*;" he had "*played the fool*:" from folly he had sunk to foulest crime . . . and now at last came recompense. No hiding place now offered him its kindly shelter. Death was his only refuge.

He commanded, he implored his armor-bearer to draw his sword and deal the mortal thrust. The servant, faithful, obedient in all else, recoiled, overwhelmed by the thought of such a deed. The king took the weapon from his nerveless grasp, pressed its hilt to the ground, and flung himself upon the blade. The failure of Saul was consummated. —H. M.

"THY GENTLENESS HATH MADE ME GREAT"—Psalm 18:35.

Psalm 18 is majestic and warlike throughout. Its theme is vengeance and victory. All the destructive elements of nature are marshalled on the side of omnipotence, but right in the midst of it we read, v. 35, "Thy gentleness hath made me **great**."

The destructive power is the outer shell. The Lord is not in the whirlwind, the earthquake, nor the fire. These are but the passing manifestations of His fury which endures for but a moment, but the still small voice of gentleness remains. Whirlwind and earthquakes and fire—those mighty evidences of power—can pull down and purify and destroy, but gentleness alone can build and make **great**.

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

PART FIVE

"Your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcases be wasted in the wilderness . . . And ye shall know My breach of promise."

Such was the irrevocable fiat of Jehovah against the responsible element of the Divinely-elect nation, which He had redeemed from Egypt for a people to Himself; and it was the just punishment of their unfaithfulness. The responsible class consisted of—

". . . all those men which have seen My glory, and My miracles, which I did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted Me now these **ten times**, and have not hearkened to My voice."

The doom of the *whole nation* was respited by the earnest and prevailing intercession of their faithful and unselfish leader; but these murmurers against God were doomed to perish, though not yet. They were to gradually die out during the fixed period of their wanderings in the wilderness.

In this we may discern the greatest wisdom and kindness towards the survivors of the nation, amongst whom there must have been a vast number who could not discern between their right hand and their left; and so by this wise and merciful arrangement the distrustful and faithless murmurers would be succeeded by a generation nurtured and educated under the beneficent institution given to their fathers at Sinai, and thus become more fitted for the Divine favor which would have devolved upon their fathers had they proved themselves worthy of it. The nation thus mercifully saved and Divinely moulded would be a perpetual monument of—

"The truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which He had sworn unto our fathers from the days of old."

We may also discern the Divine wisdom and prescience under the circumstances of a long period of wilderness probation, and the *continued existence of the rejected*, in thus making apparent the reason of the delay, and thereby furnishing His faithful servants with an effectual answer to the remonstrances of future discontent should it again manifest itself; and so making it clear that their only wisdom was now to submissively resign themselves to the fate that their rebellious spirit had justly brought upon themselves.

The Lord had sworn to Moses that all the earth should be filled with His glory; and this unalterable purpose was to be effected with, and through, Israel. But the men which had seen His glory, and His miracles which He did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and had tempted and provoked Him to their destruction, were excluded—not only from participation in that great and beneficent Purpose, but were not to be permitted even to *see* the land in which that glory was finally to be manifested.

This incident of Israel's experience in the wilderness is made the ground of an *earnest apostolic appeal to faithfulness* on the part of all to whom the Gospel had been preached in his day—

". . . lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them.

"But the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Heb. 3:4).

In the course of his argument in these chapters the apostle points out that the "*Rest*," or Millennial Sabbath, "which *remaineth* to the people of God" has to do with the land and people of Israel in a day subsequent to that in which he wrote; and, therefore, subsequent to our own day. If, therefore, we are wise we shall listen to the Divine exhortation to take heed, lest there be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief, which would certainly prove as effectual as in their case to prevent us entering the Rest that remaineth.

From the lengthened halt of the encampment at Kadesh it would appear that Jehovah, knowing that thoughts of evil and open hostility to the Divinely existent arrangements were in contemplation, thereby afforded both time and opportunity for the manifestation of that spirit of insubordination and rebellion by which it was hoped to set aside those arrangements, and to substitute leaders of their own choice, both of a political and sacerdotal character, for those whose very names had become abhorrent to them, and so frustrate the impending doom which had been pronounced upon them, and then—energized by their own leaders—reach the much coveted goal of which they thought themselves unjustly deprived.

The administration, in its sacred and political arrangements, from under which the factious leaders of the plot groaned to be delivered, was but of recent origin; and, doubtless, from its very commencement, had been a continual source of dissatisfaction and disappointment to some of the heads of tribes and families who considered that they had not been justly dealt by in the preferment of others to positions to which they felt entitled.

And—calling to mind the position of the tribe of Levi before its separation for sacerdotal services, and that according to this, Moses and Aaron could not claim to belong to the ruling branch of that tribe—we can see on what grounds Korah (who was a Kohathite, a descendant of a brother of the progenitor of Aaron) contended that the priesthood, by right of birth, should have belonged to *his* family; hence his supposed prior claim to that office.

Some such grounds as these were also urged by certain of the chiefs of Reuben, as the *eldest of the tribes*, who were dissatisfied with the deposition of that tribe from its natural birthright by the recent administration under which Judah obtained the precedence.

With some such causes of discontent rankling in their hearts, the leaders of the two factions joined hands, and sought opportunity for remedying the supposed wrongs, which opportunity they found in the prolonged halt at Kadesh, the position of the two tribes being favorable to the completion of the scheme which they had concocted in those solitudes (Num. 2:10; 3:20).

In harmony with these considerations is the fact that the chief conspirators were *the chiefs of these two tribes*, in the persons of Korah, a Kohathite of the tribe of Levi, and Dathan, Abiram, and On, of the tribe of Reuben. The conspiracy was doubtless the result of jealousy of the sacerdotal pre-eminence of the line of Amram on the one side, and the right of primogeniture in the line of Reuben of the other.

The leaders of the conspiracy, having successfully won over to their views 250 of the princes of the people, now made bold to prefer their wicked accusation against their Divinely-appointed leaders in preferring the evil insinuation that they were *self-elected*, saying to Moses and Aaron—

"Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is with them: wherefore, then, **lift ye up yourselves** above the congregation of the Lord?"

That Moses was astonished at this unfounded complaint and the seriousness of its nature, may be judged from his falling on his face when he heard it. Perceiving the need for immediate action—

"He spake unto Korah, and unto all the company, saying, Even to-morrow the Lord will show who are His, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto Him: even **them whom He hath chosen** will He cause to come near unto Him.

"This do: take your censers, Korah and all his company; and put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord tomorrow: and it shall be that the man the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy; ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.

"Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi; seemeth it but a small thing unto you that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? . . . and seek ye the priesthood also?

"For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord; and what is Aaron that ye murmur against him?"

And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, who said:

"We will not come up. Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except **thou make thyself** altogether a prince over us? Wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up" (Num. 16:1-4).

The reader will call to mind the case of offering strange fire by two of the sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, when—

"There went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord" (Lev. 10:2).

At that time Moses had said unto Aaron—

"This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me; before all the people I will be glorified."

If any departure from the Divinely-prescribed course, even though of the priestly order, as in the case cited above, was visited with swift and irremediable judgment, what shall we say to the wilfully wicked calumny and arrogant presumption of the conspirators in the case before us! The conspiracy, doubtless, originated with Korah, whose claims found a ready response in the disaffected chiefs of the tribe of Reuben.

Korah himself, being a chief of the very tribe most honored of God, was peculiarly guilty, for the Levites were chosen of God to minister for the whole people before the Lord. And whatever the meaning of the charge of the princes of the tribe of Reuben may have been which they made against Moses—

"Wilt thou put out the eyes of these men?" (Num. 16:14).

—whether in the form of an accusation of perverting the understanding of the people, or treating them as if incapable mental imbeciles, or to liken him to the tyrannical barbarians of the Gentile nations who celebrated their conquests by perpetrations of cruelty such as that alleged against Moses, it was but the fabrication of a base calumny made for the express purpose of inciting the whole nation to take part in the attempt to overthrow the Divinely-elect administration which did not permit of human ambition and self-rule, which they would have greatly preferred.

It is testified of Moses, on the occasion, that he—

". . . was very wroth, and said unto the Lord, Respect not Thou their offering: I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them" (v. 15).

This form of speech is evidence of a clear conscience before Him Who had appointed him, and the expression of implicit confidence in the righteous judgment of God in the matter. As the legislator and Divinely-elected governor, Moses was faithful in all things.

They could not accuse him of ever having accepted at their hands any form of present, even of an ass, though such presents were highly esteemed and gladly received by the great men of the East. And he rebuts the evil accusation of cruelty and oppression—

"Neither have I hurt (or injured) one of them."

And having acted the part of a good shepherd towards the flock Divinely committed to his care, and ruled over the house of God with righteous impartiality, he had the best of reason for believing that he should be vindicated from every unjust aspersion, and in the end justified in the eyes of the nation.

We have thus endeavored to consider the nature and objects of the conspiracy, that we may be the better enabled to see the necessity there was, not only for its frustration, but that it should be *absolutely nullified by some such signal and terrible judgments* as should have the effect of repressing the latent tendency of human ambition and popular discontent, and afford the necessary protection against any repetition of the machinations of evil men.

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

It is characteristic of human nature to be more keenly alive to what is "nice" and "respectable" than to what is **right**. A man may be profane, and he is regarded with equanimity, so long as he is polite. The truth saves us from such mistakes. Yet we too must beware. Let us ever keep to the forefront of our mind, what is right in the sight of God; not what is "proper" in the eyes of men.

"Thou Wilt Perform"

Of what profit is it for us to meet together to consider a book such as that of the prophet Micah? Can it serve any *practical* use as touching our daily walk? Will it help us to become more faithful custodians of the Truth, and to better apply its precepts in our lives, and enable us to be more helpful to the ecclesia?

Briefly stated, the subject of the book resolves itself into two heads, namely, *coming judgment* and *coming blessing*. The judgment applies first to the two houses of Israel, then to the nations.

The blessing has a similar scope. It is extended first to Israel, and then through them to the nations. In no uncertain language does Micah foretell the doom of the two Israelitish kingdoms, of which one capital was Samaria and the other Jerusalem (Mic. 1:5).

"I will make Samaria as a heap of a field and as plantations of a vineyard. I will pour the stones thereof into the valley and I will discover the foundations thereof" (1:6).

Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, was, when the prophet spoke, a populous city wherein the reigning king held court. It had, according to profane history, many people and chariots and great natural strength, and only after a siege of *three years* did the powerful Assyrian Empire succeed in taking it.

What is Samaria today? Travellers who have visited the spot where once it stood tell us that no better words could be used to describe its condition than those by which its overthrow was predicted. The stones of Samaria have been literally poured down into the valley, and what buildings once stood upon the scattered columns and the bared foundations no one can tell.

Touching *Jerusalem*, capital of the southern kingdom, Micah says:

"Therefore shall Zion for your sakes be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest" (3:12).

When Micah wrote these words, Jerusalem was in a more favored condition than Samaria. Not only did a Davidic king hold court there, but the Temple was still standing. With the final overthrow of this city by the Romans some 800 years later, we are all familiar. We know how its Temple was burnt, and how the soldiers plowed the Temple precincts in hope of finding treasure, and as a symbol of the city's complete destruction.

But what about the profit of all this to us? Israel, at the time when Micah wrote, were the custodians of God's Truth. That Truth—rejected by Israel—has now been given to us. *Micah's words are a searchlight thrown on God's dealings with Israel.* If we take notice of what the light reveals we shall be able to trace the cause of God's displeasure with Israel and the ensuing punishment, and apply the lesson to ourselves.

Micah treats of Samaria and Jerusalem as the representative cities of two kingdoms in the land of Israel. This gives rise to the inquiry, Why were there TWO kingdoms, seeing that at first there was only one? *The second kingdom stood there as a mark of God's displeasure at Solomon's alien marriages* and subsequent apostasy (1 Kings 11). Let us note this, for what displeased Him in Solomon will never please Him if seen in ourselves.

But neither house of Israel gave heed to the warning which the division of the kingdom was intended to convey. Israel's princes, who should have known judgment, hated good and loved evil—

". . . the statutes of Omri are kept and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels" (6:16).

The distinguishing evil feature in the house of Ahab, who was stirred up to do evil by his alien wife Jezebel, was the worship of Baal, and in this worship Judah participated (2 Chr. 28:2, etc.).

Some might perhaps say, "There can be no parallel between Ahab's idolatrous system and the Christian surroundings in which our lot is cast." *Let us not deceive ourselves.* Worship of images is not a necessary accompaniment of either idolatry or of utter apostasy. Anything which is made to rank before God is an idol. Paul, for instance, says that *a covetous man is an idolater* (Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5), manifestly because possessions occupy a leading place in such an one's affections.

The Jews in Christ's time abhorred images, and yet Christ shows that their wickedness was not exceeded by that of any previous generation (Luke 11:50-51). The wickedness of the Jews of Christ's day consisted in the *hypocritical wearing of a cloak of godliness whilst utterly repudiating Divine principles and teaching.* No, apostasy cannot be gauged by the worship of images.

An idol, as Paul says, is nothing. It is a piece of fashioned wood or metal which is used to *symbolize a lie*—an imagination— a nothing. In Rome's Divinely-abhorred system images of the virgin abound. No one supposes any of these images to be the virgin herself. The image simply gives visible form to the false idea that the virgin is alive and responds to prayer.

The lie exists quite apart from its symbol, and *it is the lie which dethrones God.* Thus it is with the whole of Christendom's beliefs, both papal and protestant. They flatly contradict God and are thus subversive of Truth, and grossly immoral in God's eyes.

Roman Catholics and Protestants, like the Jews in Christ's day, sport the truth's garb. They *profess* to follow Christ whilst in *both doctrine and practice* they deny him. Woe will be the day when Christadelphians, as a community, fail to perceive the enormity of hugging a lie in place of Divine

teaching—when they hold up a Christ-repudiated Christianity as a respectable and harmless system not to be mentioned with Ahab's idolatry.

So far as wholesale apostasy is concerned, there is not much to choose between the matters to which Micah refers and the works of Christendom. Should we be disposed to doubt it, let us do to our religious contemporaries as Hezekiah did to the Ahab-followers of his day—*let us proclaim faithfully the Truth*, and a similar result to that experienced by Hezekiah will follow. His messengers were mocked and laughed to scorn (2 Chron. 30:10), and so are those who now speak in earnest contention for the Faith.

The contrast between Ahab's religion and the one which exists today is not that of truth with error. It is a contrast, rather, between a coarse, open system of false worship and a more refined, subtle one. *Let us be in no doubt as to how God views departure from the Truth*. We know from the New Testament writers, and from Christ's last message especially, that He looks with no less disfavor upon the *Gentile* corrupters of the faith than Jewish ones.

Micah's searchlight, however, not only throws its rays across the darkness of the past, it shines right into the future and reveals what is to be. By its aid we see Israel no longer desolate and downtrodden, we see her related to exaltation and blessing. We see the Temple restored, the Lord once more enthroned in Zion, and His law again going forth from the midst of His chosen nation (Mic. 4). Associated with the time of Israel's blessing our light reveals judgment upon the Gentiles:

"Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron and thy hoofs brass, and thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth."

"And I will execute vengeance and fury upon the heathen (nations) such as they have not heard."

We have seen what happened to Samaria and to Jerusalem, and we can realize how foolish were the Israelites in thinking themselves safe and secure from calamity. Do we apply the lesson? There are many indications that the day of visitation is at hand.

During the past few years we have been, in relation to the Israelitish nation, the privileged witnesses of a marvellous fulfilment of prophecy. As Ezekiel foretold, so has it come to pass. There has been a noise amongst the dry bone—a shaking—bone has been coming to bone, and the flesh and sinews have been coming to them. It only remains for the Word of God to give breath, so that Israel shall live and stand upon their feet an exceeding great army. When once this happens, it will mean the passing of the cup of affliction from Israel to Christendom.

We have seen the terrible certainty with which God's displeasure was visited, as foretold by Micah, upon Israel. Let us not shut our eyes to what the same prophet reveals as touching the judgments to which Christendom stands related. Let us endeavor to press home the certainty of these things, remembering that none of us will be floated into the Kingdom on the labors of bro. Thomas and other toilers. Each will be judged as to what he has *done*.

We know why judgment fell upon Israel. It was because of rebellion and wickedness. But why the blessing? Because of the oath which Micah brings to remembrance:

"Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob and mercy to Abraham which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old."

But what is there in the oath that should relate Israel to blessing in the future more than in the past? *The oath provided for a seed who through his righteousness should both make the blessing possible and also bring it to pass*. The oath has been confirmed by the coming of this Seed, even "the Lord our righteousness." In him verily "mercy and truth are met together," for in him mercy and

blessing will be extended on the basis of truth and righteousness—first Christ's own righteousness, and then the righteousness of Israel, as it is written:

"Righteousness shall go before him, and set us in the way of his steps."

Then verily—

"Truth shall spring out of the (Israelitish) earth, and righteousness shall look down from (the Israelitish) heaven."

What will Israel's time of blessing bring to *us*? Shall we then form part of Israel's righteous heaven? Shall we form part of the multitudinous Christ through whom blessings will flow to all nations? Or shall we then be found to be part and parcel of the world, and be cast back into that which we have loved and served?

The answers to these questions largely depend upon *the use we are now making of our searchlight as provided in the prophets*. In its exhibition of coming glory and blessing lies our incentive to right-doing, and in its revelation of coming judgment lies our deterrent to laxity. Israel's rulers in the past, as touching righteousness, were worse than failures. In the rulers of the future, the oath provides for righteousness absolute and certain.

Not any will enter upon the office save those who have previously been entrusted with the Truth, and *tested concerning the use to which they have put it*. Now is *our* time of proving, and our test lies in whether we apply Christ's precepts in our daily walk.

As parents, for instance, we are bidden to be very diligent in training our children in the fear of the Lord. If we are giving heed to this injunction, we shall be found placing our children in the way of *all available instruction in the Truth*, encouraging them to give careful attention to Bible study and Sunday School.

Christ's great charge against the rejected generation of Israel of his day was that they believed not Moses and the prophets. *Are we familiar with Moses and the prophets*? Have we an intelligent conception of the contents and circumstances of each prophet's Divine message? That which we do not *know* we cannot *believe*. This is our frequent charge against Christendom. Let us take care that Christ's charge against Israel does not apply to us. It is so easy to imagine that we are interesting ourselves in the Truth itself, whilst we are really filling our minds with mere *ecclesial externals*—the various appointments, disagreements, short-comings, the popularity or non-popularity of speakers, and so forth.

Matters such as these will never move us to live the Truth in our various spheres in life. Far different is it with the things which the prophets bring under our notice. To them, then, let us give heed, that in the great inspection day we may be found to be:

"Built on the *foundation of the apostles and prophets*, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."
—H.J.

Seeking Rest and Finding None

"*Learn of me, I am meek and lowly, and shall find rest unto your souls*" — Matt. 11:29.

There is small need to speak of the desirability of rest. Its abiding sweetness is acknowledged. It is sought for in many and varied ways. We may take it for granted that it is a thing desired. All through the ages have men wandered, hungry and thirsty, "*seeking rest but finding none.*"

We seek its attainment, and wonder at its elusiveness. The fault is our own: the means are shown, and plainly enough when once the idea is grasped, but the knowledge of the means is not sufficient unless *practical use* is made of the knowledge. It must be grasped fully, not in mystic vagueness, but with a robust grasp, for it is a material good, not a spiritual abstraction. We can attain to rest not in the future only, but now. It is held out to us in Scripture as a promise for the present as well as the future.

We live in the midst of unrest. Disquietude is on the sea of national life: all the elements of storm are present, and ever and again it seems that the tempest must burst and the pent-up passion and mistrust rage forth in war.

We are not blind to the meaning of these signs, nor do we wonder at this tempestuous sea. "How can it be quiet," seeing the Lord hath raised its billows? But though the world were drenched in blood, and the stability and continuance of the country in which we live threatened, and even if the sounds of strife were around us—*even then there should be peace in the hearts of all who through faith can see through the battle-smoke to the peaceful end*, when the power of armed man shall be broken, and righteous law go forth from Zion, from a King against whose word, declarations of war would be of no avail.

The unrest of our surroundings is contagious. It becomes more and more necessary to live closely to the guiding Word, through which we can abide without fear, the thought of the coming evil. Without this support, in the face of coming terrors the faith may weaken and the understanding waver. *And now, before the storm increases, is the time to strengthen foundations*, and buttress the weak places of our defences, saying to the fearful— "Be strong of heart."

—and encouraging one another by example and precept. Calmness begets calmness, as anxiety begets anxiety. There is such a thing as the calmness of despair, but the calm of the Christ-life is founded on pure reason, and on hope that will be justified. Then, though the waves roar and are troubled—

"Rest on the Lord, and wait patiently for Him."

"Let not your hearts be troubled!"

It is *not* "resting on the Lord," when foreboding and anxiety fill the breast. It is not resting on the Lord if thoughts of "wherewithal shall we be clothed and fed?" in the coming troubles are permitted to hamper the hands and heart in the service of God. It is not resting on the Lord if the actions of brethren and sisters are made excuse for negligence and slackness on *our* part.

Sink all personal differences; bear and forbear. Incompatibility of temperament, and all its accompanying little exasperations and petty slights, often more imaginary than real, are inevitable. They are part of the enemy that *must be overcome* before the goal can be reached. They are coals in our furnace of affliction, from which the true gold shall come forth purified. Cast out the obstruction to progress in the paths of peace, and find rest.

In ordinary everyday life, apart from higher things altogether, *there is no rest without labor*. We may do nothing, throwing off all feeling of responsibility, and exist like insects in the sunshine, without care or anxiety. But *this is not rest*, it is stagnation. Stagnation for any length of time is impossible with most things and all men: if we do not move forward, we move backward, there is no standing still. We must improve or deteriorate. We have knowledge of only One who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever; One who is above all our conceptions of perfection. But for ourselves we know that without work there can be no rest.

So in relation to rest of a higher kind; we may seek for it, pant for it as the hart for the water brooks, but *never will it come to us save through labor*. Even Christ in his invitation tells us it must be worked for—

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

But not for the mere asking will rest be given; read further—

"Take my **yoke** upon you, and **learn** of me, for I am meek and lowly, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

We must *work* for (and in the spirit of) Christ, before his rest can descend upon us. And he outlines, or shadows forth, the spirit of the work, the spirit of humility—

"I am MEEK AND LOWLY, **learn of me.**"

The absence of this meek and lowly attitude is at the root of the restlessness that we find among the brotherhood of Christ. Pride is an insidious thing, and creeps unrecognized into the heart.

What is the reason of the heart-burning at the supposed slight? *A sense of wounded self-esteem.* Banish the undue self-esteem, and there can be no wound. Let each esteem another better than himself to be. Christ made himself of no reputation: slights could not hurt him. He, the King of kings and Lord of lords, made himself the Servant of servants. His indignation was never for himself, but for the outrage or dishonor of his Fathers name.

In the midst of his murderers, when Peter denied him before the assembly—denied him, declaring with an oath that he never knew him—Peter, who had seen his works, and followed with him—the record says,

"He turned and looked upon Peter."

Only a look. And what was in that look we may learn from Peter's after life—from the bitter and disgraceful hour when he went, weeping and repentant, from the room, to the time of triumphant suffering years afterwards, when he shared the cruel fate of the Master he had slighted.

No sense of personal wrong was with Christ. Peter was the man for the work, and to him he entrusted the keys that opened to us the Kingdom of God. Not till he had tasted the humiliation and entered on the work of Christ did he taste of the Rest that comes with the consciousness of peace with God. His own words tell us that he recognized the principle—

"Likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and **be clothed with humility**: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

"**Humble yourselves**, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time" (1 Pet. 5:5-6).

True humility—not the humility that is in itself pride—*true* humility, and true work, are the things that make for rest. Rest apart from these antecedent causes is an impossibility. More and more as we ponder this do we find it true; we long for rest, but till this Christ-declared principle is grasped and applied, our longing will be ungratified, our thirst unquenched.

Following up to its first source the reason of unrest in ourselves—going *truthfully* (for self-deception is fatally easy) to find causes of unrest, we find them rooted in *selfishness and pride*. Ugly names, but gloss them over as we may, the names must stand. Unrest arises from petty personal mortification, small disappointments, the trivial pressure of our ordinary daily affairs, discord in the home—all the little unnameable crossings and jarrings and *unsatisfied selfishness* of life.

Petty they sound, and petty they are, but great is their power in the life of men—of *good* men and women, too; for who is above their influence? Their very smallness is an irritation; great trials are

not nearly so powerful for evil and for sorrow. We can judge best the meaning of rest by thus dwelling upon its opposite, which is, unfortunately, so familiar.

Consider the effect of Meekness, Lowliness, Humility upon these causes of unrest. As we apply them to each one, it vanishes away. Where is mortification, when self is put aside? Where is wounded vanity, when self-esteem is not prominent? Where is disappointment, when the lowliness that expects no recognition is present?

The invitation is open for all to learn the secret. It cannot be bought, it cannot be given, it cannot even be earned—*save in one way*. And for that way we must go to the fountain of peace. Christ himself will teach us, not so much by word, as by example—

"Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart."

Christ was the embodiment of self-forgetfulness. Enduring the pangs of the cross, he commits his mother to the care of a disciple. He gives gracious words to the dying thief. He asks forgiveness for his murderers. Learn of him, and find from his own lips the open secret of his rest; for though his life was, for those last years, outwardly one of tumult and distress, yet *within* was peace.

Even in his hour of agony in the Garden—even then we can see peace and rest with God, that triumphed over weakness of flesh.

"*Father, not my will, but Thine, be done.*"

This is the peace of a perfect trust, the rest which he said he could not give save in the way in which he received it. He had it through meekness and lowliness. What could touch him, thus clothed with humility? He had no wealth: the troubles of the rich were unknown to him. He had no honored position: none could abase him, he had abased himself. All that the world could do, could not take from him the rest that he had won.

What could they do with such a man, but kill him?—blot him from life—blot him from remembrance. And they attempted both. They did kill him; but, blot his name from remembrance? *Never*. The very means they took, have in the hands of God been turned into lasting memorials of his fame. And the end is not yet. Servant of servants he has been, washing the feet of his disciples. Insulted, persecuted and slain—he *has* been. King of kings, and Lord of lords, he *will* be. Praised and honored, every knee bowing in reverence before him.

The life of Christ is our example. And the life of every perfected being that sings the "new song" of the redeemed on Mount Zion will be in some degree the life of Christ. In deprivation, contempt, and self-abnegation endured in lowliness and meekness; in work done for the Master—work tempered with the rest which he even in sorrow enjoyed. This is the portion of each saint.

Not now the crucifixion and the crown of thorns, but the crucifying of the fleshy desires, the ambitions and the pleasures of this mortal state. The present reward is that rest and peace which Christ has declared the world cannot give—

"My peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you" (John 14:27).

But though we may rest on the Lord in patience, and though we have rest now, when we fulfil the conditions, this is not Rest in perfection. There is a peace that passes our present understanding, such as Christ tasted to the full when he ascended to the Father. All the pain and humiliation behind him; before him love, light, and joy unspeakable, on the right hand of the Eternal King.

And in the future, brightly and clearly seen, the hope and certainty of the coming triumph of the work of God on earth, with himself the leader and head, the chief among ten thousand, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, come again to vindicate the words he had spoken to the unheeding world. What perfect peace is his now—the prize of his high calling with him—his work before him, work which none but he can do.

This is the peace to which we stretch our hands; the peace that floweth like a river in the presence of the Father. This is the Rest that remaineth for the people of God. For the Rest of Christ is the Rest of his people. In the body of Christ, one member cannot suffer or rejoice without the others, and in the day of the Apocalypse of Rainbow-ed-Angel—the multitudinous Christ—we shall be one with him, even as he is one with the Father.

Let us enter into the rest that is available now; *for if we fail in this, we shall fail in attaining the Rest of the Aions*. This present rest born of meekness and lowliness is but a foretaste of this sweetness, a mere glimpse into the unspeakable possibilities of the beyond. What pure and lasting peace can there be for any earthly being while the practices of Jezebel corrupt the court?

We cannot rest in perfection now, for we cannot fit ourselves truly to our environment, for the environment is false and hollow. Not till this state of things has faded away can we expand our correspondences with the true environment that produces peace.

The final rest will not be stagnation; there will be work in plenty. Even then the present law will hold, that is the outcome of work, the two cannot be separated. What work may mean then, we can only faintly see and realize; but weariness will not be connected with it. Are we not promised a—

" . . . strength renewed as the eagle's"?

Strength is renewed by rest. We can but dimly see visions of a state in which Work is Rest, and Rest is Work, a glorious commingling and blending, to which nothing we experience now can be likened—a time of joy unspeakable and full of glory.

There is another Rest—apart from the partial rest of the present, and the perfect rest of the future—the rest to which Daniel went, according to the angelic word—

"Go thy way, Daniel, for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

This rest holds many a shining ruler of the future age. It is not to be desired save as a brief release from present evil; there is no real rest in the grave—that is, no intelligent rest. Non-existence has no pleasures and no pains. The sweetness of this cessation from toil is realized only by the living, who perceive that the righteous have been taken away from evil to come.

"The dead know not anything."

But when they stand upon their feet again, and are received into the ranks of the deathless multitude of the chosen, then will they know how the weary years have been shortened for them by this gracious "bridge of silence." It is possible, if Christ's appearance is near, that many of us may not taste death, but be of those:

" . . . changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."

But whether or not, is of small consequence, *provided that we neglect not the present work*. Let us learn to follow Christ, humbly and diligently, not cumbering ourselves with unnecessary weights, but casting aside all that would impede.

We cannot afford to do otherwise. Consider the price to be paid if we indulge our selfishness and our petty inclinations to self-esteem. Man at his best, now, is but a poor thing; we have little of which to be proud. It is unpleasant to be pitied and despised by our fellows, *but better that than to be despised at the judgment!*

How very insignificant then will seem the things that ruffle us now. Cannot we, for our own benefit, take this view of it now? Has anyone offended by action or word? Do not brood over the slight—embittering a life that is already bitter enough, but cast in the fountain this healing branch—

"How will this appear when looked back upon from the standpoint of the bar of judgment?"

Surely, in this light, the thing will shrink to its true dimensions and disappear. Let us use the thought as a weapon—

". . . casting down imaginations and everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, bringing into captivity **every thought** to the obedience of Christ."

This is Paul's word. And again, he warns the Hebrews against the possibility of losing the rest promised to them that overcome—

"Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

—C. L.

Ecclesial News

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

Greetings to all those of Like Precious Faith from this portion of the Master's Vineyard.

As another summer approaches, our memory goes back to the pleasant company of visitors we enjoyed last summer: bro. and sis. Beauchamp of Calif., bro. and sis. Gibson of Toronto, bro. and sis. Fred Higham of Detroit. The brethren strengthened and encouraged us by way of exhortation. Bro. Beauchamp and bro. Gibson also lectured for us.

We were further strengthened and encouraged by our joint Fraternal last October at which bro. D. Gwalchmai of London, bro. Growcott of Detroit and bro. H. A. Sommerville of Hawley, Pa., were speakers for the afternoon program. Bro. Mammone of Jersey City gave us the word of exhortation in the morning.

We have also been visited by sis. Louise Martin, of London, Canada, and many brethren and sisters from Worcester, whom we heartily welcomed around the table of the Lord.

Several of our brethren and sisters attended the Fraternal Gathering in London, Canada, last April and were greatly uplifted and strengthened by the rich supply of oil obtained on that occasion.

As a result of these inter-ecclesial visits and associations with those of like Faith, we have been encouraged to hold another Fraternal Gathering this year, God willing, on Saturday, Oct. 8, at our Hall, 581 Boylston St., Boston. We would appreciate it if all who plan to attend would let us know in advance so we can arrange accommodations.

—bro. E. A. Sargent

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BUFFALO, N. Y.—O. F. Temple, Kenmore & Myron Aves.—Memorial 10:15 a.m., Sun. Sch. 11:45; Bible Class Wed. 8 p.m.; Public Lecture 3rd Sunday of month 11:45 a.m., Oct. thru May.

We enjoy the good articles published monthly in the "Berean" which help us to try to keep the Lightstand burning in this section of the Lord's Vineyard.

We have a very recent and welcome report concerning the well-being and health of our beloved bro. Dowling, which we believe will be of great Interest to all our brethren and sisters.

He has been visited recently by some of our brethren and sisters, who have reported that his mind is clear and that he wishes to thank all the brethren and sisters for their expression of congratulation on his 101st birthday, May 24. He was delighted with all the messages of love which he received.

A few brethren and sisters were with him on the day. After a brief reading of the Scriptures, bro. Dowling gave prayer and enjoyed cutting the cake. He was very good, having conserved his strength for days to be as well as possible. (A few days later he had contracted a cold but the doctor said his heart was good, blood pressure good, and the cold was probably due to the extreme weather changes.

During his birthday visit, bro. Dowling dictated the following and he asked that it be conveyed to his brethren and sisters—

"It is hard to express the depth of love I have for you. I hardly know what to say. My breath is short and the reason I do not go to length in expressing my thanks is because every writing or talking exertion wears on the strength of my nerves.

"As I lie on my bed, or sit in my chair, I remember these dear ones in silent prayer. I'm praying all the time that Christ may soon come and reward these who aid me so bountifully.

"God has raised up wonderful friends for me. Never did I expect such kindness would be shown to me in this life for what work I have done. May the Lord surprise them with His goodness to them, and, may He give them a glorious entrance into His Kingdom."

On behalf of the brethren and sisters of the Buffalo Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia,
—Bro. Geo. A. Kling.

* * *

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

Since our last report we have been visited by: bro. N. Mammone (Jersey City), sis Hallie Smith (Houston), bro. & sis R. Frisbie (Baltimore), and bro. & sis. W. Phillips (Canton, Ohio). Bro. & sis. Phillips have recently adopted the Berean position regarding fellowship. This has been a joyful encouragement to us.

Bro. Mammone is a great help in the word of exhortation, as he pays us frequent visits.

In these trying times, when ecclesias and families suffer estrangement from many whom they dearly love, there is urgent need of willing workers in the Vineyard while it is yet the Day of Salvation.

If we do but realize that the harvest is nearly over, then let us hold up each other's hands in this vitally important work of retaining the old landmarks where we know they belong. This must be done regardless of appearances being against us while we are firmly opposed to any leniency in fellowship with error.

Our fraternal love and Godspeed to all who are endeavoring to hold fast.

—bro. H. A. Sommerville

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PAPAKURA, New Zealand.

To all our brethren and sisters of like mind with us in the Berean fellowship throughout the world. We, my sister wife and self, send loving Greetings in the One Faith and One Hope in Christ Jesus.

It is certainly with deep gratitude and thankfulness to our Heavenly Father that we have been brought together by adoption into that great Abrahamic family, which creates in us a far deeper perception of love and attachment, and family feeling, than we feel towards our merely fleshly relations. Christ has given us a lead in this respect, recorded in Matt. 12:49. What wonderful comfort we derive from that portion of the Word of God.

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth."

We know in this very particular lies our worthiness in the sight of God, and His Son Jesus Christ, for it is written,

"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed (or family), and heirs according to the promise (Gal. 3:29).

We greatly strengthen this theme by observing from the Word of God that there have been, and still are, only two classes of people in the world, exemplified in Abel and Cain, Jacob and Esau, Jew and Gentile—the one termed light and the other darkness, the one has promise and hope of eternal Life, the other Death.

It is for us, dear brethren and sisters, to endeavor to make our calling and election sure, and not be found among those—

"Who say they are Jews and are not."

We have been greatly moved by the happenings among the Berean Fellowship of recent years; it has certainly been a testing time. We have a fellow-feeling towards the few who are left, for we are but few in the Berean fellowship in New Zealand. Our observation is that the majority have not been sufficiently actuated by a desire to obey God's Word to—

"Earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints" (Jude 3).

—but rather by a desire for a numerous fellowship. But how can we compromise in anything which does not belong to us? For the Truth is not ours to do as we please with, but in the great kindness and mercy of God He has placed it in our trust.

We do appreciate the help and comfort we derive from the Berean.

We have been greatly comforted and spiritually benefited in this our wilderness journey by several visits through the past year from: bro. Macdonald, bro. and sis. Marsich, bro. and sis. Griffin, and bro. Calvert, all of Whangarei Ecclesia; and bro. Brandt (Putaruru).

Being in isolation, we do the more appreciate these visits from our loved ones, and the exhortations of the brethren which indeed are a help to us, to keep in that narrow and straight path, which alone will lead to life. With fraternal love in Israel's Hope, your brother in Christ, —A. J. Starr.

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

We have much pleasure in reporting a visit from bro. and sis. Starr when on holiday. We greatly enjoyed their company during the week they remained with us. At our Sunday morning Meeting bro. Starr delivered an upbuilding exhortation on our position and duties in the Truth. In several meetings following, an enjoyable time was spent on the advice of Paul in Eph. 5:16—

"Speaking to Yourselves in Psalms and Hymns, making melody in your Hearts, unto the Lord."

As one brother remarked, the Hymns are an exhortation in themselves. Such meetings are reminiscent of the words of Isaiah (51:3), and look forward to the time when—

"The Lord shall comfort Zion, and make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody."

Meantime we rejoice in that we have been permitted to see these things even afar off, and realize in some measure—

"The depth of the riches bath of the wisdom and knowledge of God; How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out" (Rom. 11:33).

Such meetings, where all are of one mind and working in harmony, must ever be a great uplift to us in our day and generation in things spiritual in preparing a people for the Lord, whose coming is now nigh at hand.

We continue our meeting for the Breaking of Bread in remembrance of Christ—"this do until he come"; also Lecture every Sunday evening, though to the latter there is a poor response.

We recently gave a lecture, in answer to a broadcast by the Dean of St. Paul's, London, the subject being—as his was—"Can the Dead Get Through?" The Dean said he thought "Psychical search could help the Church." Our Lecture as advertised brought some six strangers, some of whom took notes.

The attendance of six out of a population of 13,000 may be regarded as quite a fair response in these days, considering the apathy of the people generally on religious subjects, but we must sow beside all waters and not be discouraged. God alone can give the increase if we go on with the sowing.

We regret having to report the falling away of two brethren. First, brother Hughes of Nuhaka, H.B., who is in isolation some hundreds of miles away, decided to leave the Truth, being overcome by the allurements of this present evil world. Our bro. and sis. Griffin being on holiday called on him, remonstrating with him and pointing out the evils of such a position, and he promised to reconsider the matter. Asked if he would meet any of the brethren who should call for the Breaking of Bread, he replied that he would and would take the Berean Magazine again. Shortly after, the writer wrote him stating he would be visiting a relative nearby and asking him if he would set aside a Sunday for the Breaking of Bread. He replied, refusing to see me or speak to me, and "washed his hands of us and our religion," as he termed it. Under these circumstances there appears to be no alternative, but to announce our withdrawal from him on account of his going back into the world. We pray that he may in time repent ere it be too late.

Another brother, Roger Jones, was remonstrated with for consorting with an alien woman, and admitted having made a promise of marriage. One of our brethren had several talks with him to no purpose and finally three of the serving brethren endeavored to induce him to break off the

association, which he refused to do. The matter was then brought before the Ecclesia, who after due consideration passed a resolution withdrawing from our bro. Jones.

We have been warned that in the last days perilous times should come, and they have now come in the full sense judging by the wholesale falling away spoken of by Paul (2 Thess. 3). Surely this is a time we should carefully examine ourselves whether we be in the Faith and consider what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness (2 Pet. 3).

—bro. K. R. Macdonald.

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

We are very happy to announce the baptism of Robert Hanna who has been attending our meetings and lectures for some time. He was baptized on June 16 and given the right hand of fellowship on the 19th. Bro. Hanna is well-known among the Christadelphians. In his search for the truth he attended various religious meetings, always coming away with the feeling something was lacking. He finally found what he was searching after in our belief, for which we of the Household of Faith rejoice. We pray that he may run well and receive that grand prize eternal life that awaits all those of like precious Faith, who seek for honor, glory, and immortality.

On June 5 we held our outing at the farm of bro. and sis. Rankin in Charlton, Mass. It was a very beautiful afternoon and an enjoyable time was spent with the association of brethren and sisters from Boston: bro. & sis. Sargent, bro. Edgar Sargent, sis. Strong, bro. & sis. John Davey, sis. Hilda Davey and bro. & sis. Mark Russell.

On June 24 we had the pleasure of meeting at bro. & sis. Will Davey's in Northboro, Mass., in the afternoon to hear some of the tape recordings of exhortations recorded at the London Fraternal Gathering of Apr. 8. Again we had the association of a number of our brethren and sisters from Boston.

With much love to the Household from the brethren and sisters in Worcester, —bro. R. Waid.

A Letter to Our Children

Hello, Dear Children: This month we are going to conclude our trip to Africa by visiting the Gold Coast. We take a plane from where our boat took shelter to a place called Sekondi. This is situated in the territory called the "Gold Coast Colony." While we are waiting for our plane to refuel we take a look at some of the pamphlets in the waiting room.

Some of the articles tell us why it is called the Gold Coast. Man has found a great deal of gold here and still there is quite a lot being mined. The processing of the gold is very interesting. The gold is in the rock and in order to get the gold out, it must go through a very hot fire. By this fire they separate the true gold from everything else and from all impurities. When man is processing the gold, he very carefully puts the gold to one side, then takes the ore and other baser materials and puts them in huge piles. The gold is guarded but the other materials are shipped to plants that will use them. The men are not very interested in the other minerals at this plant, just the gold. The gold is tested and tried and they make sure that it is the pure gold that they have. Nothing else will do, it is just the pure gold they keep.

Now while we are reading about the gold and discussing it we think of the gold mentioned in the Bible. In a number of places we find that gold is a symbol of tried faith. This means that we are to be tried with many things just like gold is tried in the fire. God wants the gold or pure faith from us—He is only interested in the gold. If we try to walk with the world and also with God then we have failed to show forth our gold.

Peter tells us that "The trial of our Faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Now the Bible tells us that "Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen." We are also told that "Faith without works is dead." This means that our faith must run hand in hand with good works. It is with constant labour on our part that we finally have a place in that glorious Kingdom to be set up in Jerusalem.

Next month we are going to continue, God willing, to another distant land on our imaginary tour of the world.

As many children as can write, can make up a little story about gold as we learn about it in the Bible, and send it to me and we will judge them and send a small prize for the best story written. I will be looking forward to hearing from a lot of you.—Uncle Joe.

(Write to: Joseph Jackson, 77 Glenwood Crescent, Toronto 13, Canada).

Can we imagine Noah allowing his children to join in the social gatherings and festivities of the people who were shortly to be drowned? Do we allow our young folks to keep company with those who are walking in the way of destruction?—Christadelphian, 1908.

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