

# The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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## CONTENTS

ECCLESIAL NEWS: Houston, Boston, Lampasas, London, Toronto.....	Inside Front Cover
EDITORIAL: His Rest Shall Be Glorious.....	289
YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN (Bro. Thomas).....	291
BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED: Equal With God, The Body of Moses, The Unjust Steward, David a Prince Among Them, Belief and Baptism, Perfecting Holiness (Bro. Roberts) .....	293
"JACOB WAS A PLAIN MAN" (Part 2) .....	296
I SAW SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS.....	303
OUT OF EGYPT HAVE I CALLED MY SON (Part 4).....	306
AS BELOVED CHILDREN .....	310
SIGNS OF THE TIMES: "Be Thou a Guard Unto Them" .....	314
TORONTO GATHERING REPORT.....	316
CORRESPONDENCE: The Evils of Division .....	318

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

## Ecclesial News

**HOUSTON, Tex.—8008 Juntas St.—Sun. Sch. 10 a.m.; Breaking of Bread 11; Public Lecture every first Sun. 7:30 p.m.; Wed. Eureka Class 8 p.m.**

The blessing of association and fellowship was extended into the next week at Houston following our Fraternal Gathering at Hye. Visitors around the Table of the Lord that week were bro. and sis. Fred Higham, bro. Ellis Higham, and bro. G. V. Growcott of Detroit; bro. and sis. G. A. Gibson of Toronto; and bro. and sis. R. C. Frisbie of Baltimore.

On Wed., Aug. 8, we were encouraged and strengthened by bro. Fred Higham as he spoke on: "Jonathan and David."

On Fri., Aug. 10, bro. G. A. Gibson lectured. His subject: "God's Purpose with the Earth: Glorification, Not Destruction."

The word of exhortation Sun., Aug. 12, was administered by bro. G. Growcott; his subject: "The Temple of God"—a consideration of our day's portion from 1 Kings 7 and Mark 7.

Sunday evening, Oct. 7, bro. R. H. Carney, lectured on the 38th chapter of Ezekiel. His subject: "The Day of His Coming." Although this lecture was advertised in our local papers, only three or four interested strangers were present, and they attended as result of personal contact rather than advertising.

It has been our pleasure also to welcome around the Table of the Lord, bro. and sis. Oscar Beauchamp of Pomona. Bro. Beauchamp gave us words of exhortation and comfort Oct. 14. God willing, he will lecture Oct. 21 on "Peace to the World."

Last Sunday evening (Oct. 14) we gathered at the Hall to hear the first of the Toronto Gathering addresses.

The Texas ecclesias are planning, God willing, a week-end meeting at Hye Nov. 4. Meetings quarterly are being considered.

May the interest and activities in the things of the Spirit refresh us and prepare us for that Day which by all indications of the times, is upon us. May our weaknesses be covered, and that which is lacking in our faith supplied by Him who is able to present us faultless before the presence of His Glory—that we stand perfect and complete in all the will of God—is our earnest prayer for all Christ's brethren.  
—bro. Charles Banta

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

Some time has elapsed since our last ecclesial news and we had hoped that by this time we might have something more favorable to report concerning the ecclesial situation in this vicinity. As yet no action has taken place and our hopes seem in vain.

Meanwhile we have had several visitors from other ecclesias. During the winter bro. & sis. Prentice of the Worcester ecclesia were with us on several occasions, attending the Bible Class and Memorial, bro. Prentice giving us the word of exhortation.

Bro. & sis. Beauchamp of California were with us on 2 Sundays on their return trip from the London Gathering. Bro. Beauchamp gave a lecture and also exhorted for us, at which time the Worcester ecclesia joined with us around the table of the Lord.

Several of the Worcester brethren have helped us by lecturing, bre. Waid, Elliott, Will Davey and Stanhope being the speakers. We have seldom had a lecture without at least a few strangers, but it seems that the field in these last days contains very little good soil on which the Seed may fall.

Sis. Jones of Worcester visited with us for a week this summer, and was with us around the table of the Lord 2 Sundays. We also had the pleasure of a visit by bro. & sis, Lumley of Florida (formerly of our ecclesia).

Our most recent visitors were bre. & sisters H. Gwalchmai and J. Cartlidge of the London ecclesia, bro. Cartlidge exhorting at the Memorial. It was a short, surprise visit and we regret that their  
(Continued on Back Cover)

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## EDITORIAL:

### His Rest Shall Be Glorious

The eleventh chapter of Isaiah, from which our caption is taken, is one of those sections of the Scripture of Truth that is noted for its perfection of form, and its noble and spiritual qualities which produce a wave of emotion each time we read it. The theme of the chapter relates to the time when the Kingdom of God will be fully established, and—

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

How many times have we read this transcendent and comprehensive statement? In some cases, it has been a great many times. It has also been used to prove a point in a lecture in which all our resources were used to convince the stranger that God has a lofty and enduring purpose with the planet upon which we live.

But do we ever pause to consider the *magnitude of this Divine plan*, and the wondrous effect it will have upon the earth's inhabitants? It would also be well to meditate upon the profound tranquillity that will permeate every phase of social and religious activity. Let us focus our thought upon the similitude employed by the prophet.

If the reader has not had an opportunity of observing the ocean, or one of the great lakes of North America, then we suggest they exercise their visual sense by examining a map of the world. Ponder well the scene before us, and then reflect upon the words of the prophet. When we realize the vastness of these bodies of water, we are able to comprehend the mental picture at once, and grasp the deep significance of this prophetic assurance that Isaiah has given us.

In these days, when the tragic effects of sin fill the earth, only a few have an ardent desire for an intimate knowledge of the purpose of God, and, similarly, only a few are willing to walk in the way of righteousness. But in that glorious day, says Paul, quoting from the prophet Jeremiah—

"They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for **all shall know Me**, from the least to the greatest"—Heb. 8:11.

In the preceding verses, it will be %ped that the apostle is dealing with the future work of Jesus as a mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. This covenant is to be made with the whole house of Israel. Unlike the covenant made with them at Sinai, which was graven on tablets of stone, it will be *put into their mind, and be written in their heart*.

It may seem strange to some that there is any connection between the earth being filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and a new covenant with the house of Israel: but a scriptural understanding

of the Gospel soon reveals *that the former is the result of the latter*. This fact is well established by the declaration of the prophet in the tenth verse—

"In that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."

The "Root of Jesse" is a title Jesus applies to himself in the Apocalypse, and Paul, in his letter to the Romans, quotes the verse from Isaiah, and applies it to Christ. The Authorized version, as above, states that "He shall stand for an ensign, or banner, of the people." But the Septuagint renders it, "He that shall arise to rule over the Gentiles," and that is identical with Paul's rendering (Rom. 15:12)—

"There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust."

But the prophet adds a recondite phrase that Paul does not mention in this particular place—

*"His rest shall be glorious."*

In the letter to the Hebrews, the apostle says considerable about this subject, and uses a word that signifies "a place of resting down." Rest may be required because of weariness, or on account of cessation of work, and it was in the latter sense that "God rested on the seventh day"—Gen. 2:1. The import of Paul's teaching is the same. He speaks of the Rest promised to Israel, of which Moses said,

"For ye are not as yet come to the Rest and to the inheritance, which the Lord your God giveth you"—Deut. 12:9.

But they failed to enter into that Rest because of unbelief which came upon them owing to lack of faith. In addition to that, they walked in their own counsels as David testifies in Psalm 81:12. Continuous rebellion developed among them, and on that account they perished in the wilderness. Their children, however, entered the land of promise under Joshua; but that was only a type of the millennial Rest of Jesus. For, says Paul—

"For if Jesus (Joshua) had given them rest, then should he not afterward have spoken of another day. **There remaineth therefore a Rest to the people of God**"—Heb. 4:8-9.

The lesson Paul emphasizes is that we are in a similar position to Israel, and we can only enter into the promised rest if we are faithful. Therefore, he says in verse 11—

"Let us labor therefore to enter into that Rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (or "disobedience," as we read in the margin).

Let us "labor," or *make haste*, as the word means. There must be action on our part, and the reason is given in the next two verses. Then he concludes with the solemn reminder that—

"All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do."

That is why Paul is so persistent in his urgent and sympathetic appeals, such as "We ought to give the more earnest heed" and "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" and many other such forms of admonition. Therefore he pleads (Heb. 3:13)—

"But exhort one another **daily**, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

The trend of thought underlying this section of the letter is the exhortation for the maintenance of strong faith and abiding confidence in God, and a sober warning against those things that would

lure us from the path of duty and righteousness, and thereby prevent us from entering that glorious rest that remains to the people of God. It will not only be a time when the knowledge of Yahweh shall fill the earth, for it is also testified that—

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

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## Ye Must Be Born Again

*"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God"*—John 3:3.

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

To be born again, as the Lord Jesus expounds it, is to be "born of the water and of the spirit," as it is written—

"Except a man be born **out of** (ex) water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (John 3:3-10).

The New Birth, like the old one of the flesh, is not an abstract principle, but a *process*. It begins with the begetting and ends with the having been born. A son of God is a *character*, which is developed out of the "incorruptible seed" of God sown into the fleshly table of the heart (Matt. 13:19).

When this seed, or *Word of the Kingdom*, is received, it begins to work in a man until he becomes a believer of the Truth. When things have come to this pass, he is a changed man: he has acquired a new mode of thinking; for he thinks in harmony with the thoughts of God as revealed in His law and testimony. He sees himself, and the world around him, in a new light. He is convinced of sin, and experiences an aversion to the things in which he formerly delighted.

His views, disposition, temper, and affections are transformed. He is humble, childlike, teachable, and obediently disposed; and his simple anxiety is to know what God would have him to do. Having ascertained this, he does it; and in doing it, is "*born out of the water.*" Having been begotten by the Father by the Word of Truth, and born of water, the first stage of the process is completed. He is *constitutionally* "in Christ."

When a child is born, the next thing is to train him up in the way he should go, that when he is old he may not depart from it. This is also the arrangement of God in relation to those who are born out of water into His family on earth. He disciplines and tries them, that He may "exalt them in due time."

Having believed the Gospel and been baptized, such a person is required to "*walk worthy of the vocation,*" or calling, "wherewith he had been called" (Eph. 4:1), that by so doing he may be "accounted worthy" of being "*born of spirit,*" that he may become "spirit," or a spiritual body, and so enter the Kingdom of God, crowned with "glory, honor, incorruptibility and life."

When, therefore, such a believer comes *out* of the ground by a resurrection from among the dead, the spirit of God, worked by the Lord Jesus, first opens the grave and forms him in the image, and after the likeness of Christ, and then gives him life. He is then an incorruptible and living man, "equal unto the angels," and like them capable of reflecting the glory of Him that made him.

This is the end of the process. He is like Jesus himself, the great exemplar of God's family, born out of water by the moral power of the Truth, and out of the grave by the physical power of spirit; but all things of God through Jesus Christ the Lord.

In the way described, sinners are transformed into saints—and *it is the only way*, their conversion being the result of the transforming influence of "the testimony of God." Those who are ignorant of "the law and the testimony," and who yet claim to be saints, and "teachers of divine mysteries," may demur to this conclusion. But truth knows no respect of persons, and while the Oracles of God declare that men are "renewed by *knowledge*," and "alienated from the life of God through *ignorance*," I feel entrenched impregnably in the position here assumed.

According to the constitution of the human intellect, the *knowledge* of truth must precede the belief of it. There is no exception to this. If cases be cited as exceptions, the faith is spurious, and not that with which God is pleased. It is credulity, the faith of opinion, such as characterizes the spiritual philosophy of the age.

Lastly, the *act* demanded of a renewed sinner by the constitution of righteousness, that he may be inducted into Christ, and so "constituted the righteousness of God in him," is *a burial in water into death*. The energy of the Word of Truth is two-fold. It makes a man "*dead to sin*" and "*alive to God*."

Now, as Christ died to sin once and was buried, so the believer, having become dead to sin, must be *buried* also, for after death, burial. The death and burial of the believer is connected with the death and burial of Christ by the individual's faith in the testimony concerning them. Hence, he is said to be "dead with Christ," and to be "buried with Christ." But how buried? "*By baptism into death*," saith the Scripture (Rom. 6:4).

But is this all? By no means; for the object of the burial in water is not to extinguish animal life, but, by preserving it, to afford the believer scope to "walk in newness of life," moral and intellectual. He is, therefore, *raised up* out of the water. This action is representative of his *faith* in the resurrection of Jesus; and of his *hope* that, as he had been planted with him in the similitude of his death, he shall hereafter be also in the likeness of his resurrection (Rom. 6:3-11), and so enter the Kingdom of God. To such persons the Scripture saith—

"Ye are all sons of God in Christ Jesus **through the faith**."

And the ground of this divine relationship is thus assigned—

"**For** as many of you as have been **baptized INTO Christ** have put on Christ, and if ye be Christ's, **then** are ye the seed of Abraham, and **heirs** according to the promise" (Gal. 3:26-29).

They have thus received the spirit of *adoption*, by which they can address God as their Father Who is in heaven.

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## Bible Questions Answered

*By brother Robert Roberts*

Over a period of many years, brother Roberts, in the pages of the Christadelphian Magazine, answered a large and wide variety of scriptural questions that were submitted to him as editor. It is our intention, if the Lord will, and if it meets with general acceptance, to use a selection from this very profitable and interesting treasury of answers for the pages in the magazine allotted to brother Roberts' works.

"*Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God*"—Phil. 2:6.

God says by Isaiah, "To whom then will ye liken Me or shall I be equal? . . . There is no God besides Me." Yet in the Gospel narratives, the leaders of the Jews accuse Christ of making himself equal with God. And, as you point out, Paul in Phil. 2:6 appears to sanction this view. You ask and

think there is something wrong with the translation here. It is not so. The words in the original are, *en morphe theou uparchoo ouch arpagmon egeesato to enai isa theoo*. Literally rendered, word for word, English for Greek, those words would read—

"Who in form of God being, not robbery he accounted (judged, thought, esteemed) the to be equal (or like) to God."

The ordinary translation is about as good a rendering into English as need be desired; and unquestionably gives the idea of the original. The only question is, in what sense did Christ "*think it not a robbery*"?

Some critics think it ought to read "thought not of the robbery" or "meditated not the usurpation;" but this would take away the point of Paul's allusion. It would be no great incentive for us to humble ourselves to tell us that "Christ thought not of a robbery" or "meditated not a usurpation;" but to tell us that Christ, who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," "made himself of no reputation," is to give us a strong argument in favor of our own abasement, who are nothing. The only question to be considered is, in what sense could it be said that Christ was equal with God? This is answered in John 5:18,

"He said God was his Father, making himself equal with God."

When Christ's origin in the Spirit is realized, his equality with God in the New Testament sense is not difficult to perceive. The son of any high personage possesses a certain equality with his father, which is appreciated by those in a lower sphere whom he may visit, notwithstanding that his father is higher in rank than he.

In this way, Jesus, begotten of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: and the Father Himself recognizes the equality in calling Jesus—

"The man that is My fellow" (Zech. 13:7).

The lesson of Paul's words lies here, that if Jesus, so high in station as to rank as the equal of God, was so humble as to make himself of no reputation, we have a great example of humility.

"Let this mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus."

\* \* \*

*"Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee"—Jude 9.*

You may be quite sure that the devil who contended with the angel about the body of Moses was not the popular devil from the fact that he wanted to get hold of a "*body*;" which the popular devil is not supposed to care anything about, he being mainly on the look-out for "souls." What devil was it? This is your question. Well, there are two incidents of Scripture history it may allude to, and Jude refers to it as a thing known.

There is, first, the scene exhibited to Zechariah the prophet (3:1-5), in which the adversaries of Israel appear, by one of their number, in the presence of the angel and Joshua the high priest,

"Satan (margin, an adversary) standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord (that is, the angel) said, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan."

—the very words quoted by Jude. A reference to Ezra 4:1-4 will show the nature of the antagonism or Satanism brought to bear on Joshua and his coadjutors, at this time. If this is what Jude refers to (and the identity of the words imputed to the angel would seem to show it), then the "body of Moses" was

the body politic of Israel, which was the body of Moses in the same sense as the church is "the body of Christ," and the devil would be the adversary that stood up against Israel to frustrate their reorganization, represented by the individual who appeared in the company of Joshua.

The other incident is more in the nature of a supposition than a fact. It is recorded that Moses died and—

"He (the Lord) buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day" (Deut 24:6).

It has been suggested that after the death of Moses, the Israelites made an attempt to discover his grave, so as to obtain the body for embalment and worship, and that the angel appointed to lead the camp interposed in the way described by Jude. The former is the more probable explanation.

\* \* \*

"*The lord commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely*"—Luke 16:8.

Jesus did not commend the unjust steward. It reads as if he did; but a due regard to the context will show the matter in a different light. The statement, "*The lord commended the unjust steward*," is spoken *by* Christ. It is not Luke's record *concerning* Christ. It is a statement by Christ about the lord of the unjust steward. Read the parable through, and you will see this. Having stated that the steward's master spoke well of his servant's prudence in securing the friendship of his customers in prospect of ruin, Jesus adds his comments:

"And I say unto you, make yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

This obscure exhortation is explained by the context. The *forethought* of the unjust steward is the first feature from which a lesson is sought to be enforced. He saw ruin before him, and arranged for his safety. Jesus commends this in saying—

"The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light."

The children of light, or those who know the Truth, are not always equally logical in their actions. They know that destruction awaits "the things which are seen" and yet they too often cling to them, instead of acting in relation to them in a way that will secure the everlasting habitations that are only to be earned by pleasing God, Who has them at His disposal.

Jesus exhorts the children of light to emulate the example of the unjust steward, so far as *this* feature is concerned, but he does not commend the *way* the steward adopted to get at this end. His precept on this head is directly *opposite*—

"He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much . . . If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?"

An *opposite* method is inculcated of reaching the *same* result of safety. But the question is: How can the mammon of unrighteousness be so manipulated as at last to yield everlasting habitations? Paul supplies the answer:

"Charge them that are rich in this world . . . that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come" (Tim. 6:17-19).

*This* is using "mammon" in a way that turns it into a friend, and leads to everlasting habitations, instead of *clinging to it*, finding it "the root of all evil," and the way to perdition at last.

Christ's words amount to an exhortation to "lay not up treasure on earth," but to *use what we receive now for the development of benefit afterwards*. He adds (and this is the key):

"No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

\* \* \*

*"My servant David (shall be) a Prince among them"* —Ez. 34:24.

You have a difficulty in understanding this prophecy as being applicable to Christ. Well, there are various ways of getting over difficulties. Suppose you just take it as it stands, and understand the prophecy to apply to David, maybe the difficulty will disappear. David will be in the Kingdom when Christ reigns. Will he not "reign with Christ" as all the other saints will?

Well, in what position is David likely to reign with Christ? The twelve apostles are to be heads over the tribes (Matt. 19:27; Luke 22:29): approved brethren of the Gentiles are to have "power over the nations" among whom they have been developed (Rev. 2:26). Christ is to be "King over all the earth," with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets under him. What portion more appropriate for David than to be "a prince among them?" By the covenant God made with him his kingdom is to be established "before (or in the presence of) him."

Though Christ, the son of David, is the Head, David himself is there, in some ruling capacity—perhaps "king's friend," like Hushai, the Archite, in the typical arrangement of things under David's mortal kingdom. In whatever capacity, it will be as "a prince among them," necessarily as conspicuous as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, seeing the covenant of the Kingdom was made with him. The headship of Jesus, his son, will not interfere with this conspicuousness of David in the day of glory, when "on the throne of David and his Kingdom," Jesus shall reign in Zion "before his ancients gloriously," who reign with him.

That David should mean the *Beloved* is a beautiful secondary sense, enabling us to see David in the Son as in the father.

\* \* \*

*"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"*—Mk. 16:16.

The validity of baptism depends upon the belief of the Gospel. The simple question is: Did the person believe the Gospel at the time he was immersed? If he was ignorant of it, he could not believe it: and therefore immersion was a mere bodily ablution. The only immersion that is valid is the one that God has required; the immersion He has required is the immersion of a believer of the Gospel. The immersion of a person who is ignorant of the Gospel (however sincere) is not a compliance with what He has required.

As to the *extent* to which the Gospel has sunk into the heart of those desiring immersion, we cannot judge of this and are not called upon to do so. All we can judge of is whether the Gospel is believed or not, and brethren applied to for immersion would not be faithful to their trust if they did not make some effort to find this out.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest,"  
—is necessarily the response of every faithful man having in view the appointment of the Lord that—

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

You seem to think that baptism should take place without inquiry. This would be contrary to all apostolic example, and to natural fitness of things. *If we are called upon to administer an institution of the Lord's, we certainly ought to see to it that it is administered under the conditions that*

*he has required.* If the church is "the pillar and ground of the Truth" (1 Tim. 3:15), it is called upon to try all claimants to fellowship in the name of the truth; and if they bring not true doctrine to receive them not (1. Jno. 4:1; 2 Jno. 10).

\* \* \*

*"Perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."*

As to whether it is right for a brother or sister of Christ to go carolling at Christmas time, and accept gratuities for it from the common public; or for such to go pleasuring with worldly people on Sunday evenings, to neglect week-night meetings of the Truth, or to sit down at the Lord's table with clothes redolent of tobacco defilement—we *cannot imagine such questions arising among those who are such as the Lord will not be ashamed to own in the day of his coming.* He gave his life—

"That he might **purify** unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works" (Tit. 2:14),  
"Cleansing themselves from **all filthiness** of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord" (2. Cor. 7:1).

When he sees such a people at his return, he will—

"See of the travail of his soul and be satisfied" (Isa. 53:11).

He will have no satisfaction in the defiled and the unholy, the carnal and the disobedient. Much will be forgiven to those who are *striving to walk in all the commandments of the Lord blameless*: but such as "defile the flesh and despise dominion and are not afraid to speak evil of dignities" are "spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear" (Jude and Peter), who cannot hope for much under the ordinance of the Holy City, which has been placed on record in advance (Rev. 21:27)—

"There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, nor whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie."

Nevertheless, in the application of these principles, we must be severe only on ourselves. We have no permission from the Lord to judge others. He has reserved this prerogative for himself (1 Cor. 4:5). We are, of course, to (1 Thess. 3:6)—

"Withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly"  
—but there are shades of inconsistency that do not amount to disorderly walk, and which we must leave the Lord to deal with. He will vindicate the just, and put to shame all transgressors.

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## **Jacob Was a Plain Man**

### **PART TWO**

Esau was a fitting type of our sin-cursed nature in its natural inclinations. Paul points this out in writing to the Hebrews. He said Esau was a—

"Profane person who for a morsel of meat sold his birthright."

With this picture before him Jacob should have seen in his brother that basic nature which we all possess, and should have applied his energies toward *supplanting that nature in himself* rather than trying to deceive his brother. The lesson applies equally to ourselves. As we frequently read from 1 Cor. 11:31—

"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."

If we concentrate on this personal inward aspect of supplanting, God will take care of the rest of the promise, and that without any manipulation on our part. As the Psalmist says (127:1):

"Unless God build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

And yet how it takes a lifetime for us to learn this lesson! We stumble and fall to realize how faulty are our efforts, to rise again in humility and concede that God's ways are best.

Turning to Genesis 27 we again see the natural efforts of mother and son combined to obtain the Divine blessing, by false means. They had a zeal for the things of God but at this time not according to knowledge. They had a desire for the ways of God but not the patience to wait for God to work it out.

The incident of Isaac blessing Jacob was used as a means of Divine rebuke of the whole family. In retrospect three of the four would see the providential hand of God directing a course much higher than their finite minds at first could grasp. They would later see that the promises related to things much higher than could be obtained upon natural principles or upon fleshly desire for venison. Paul said—

"Ye have need of **patience**, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (Heb. 10:36).

The epistle of James follows in the same strain—

"The trying of your faith worketh patience. Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (Jam. 1:3-4).

In this incident from Gen. 27 we once again see the true character of Esau—the flesh asserting itself. Immediately he desires to kill his brother Jacob. If he had been of the godly character he would have submitted to being defrauded. But his actions show him to be related to Cain who slew his brother.

The incident also severed the close bond existing between Rebekah and Jacob; caused Jacob to lean directly on the Creator for wisdom and guidance. It does not appear that Rebekah ever saw Jacob again; they only being united in a common grave with Abraham, Isaac and Sarah, in the cave of Macpelah.

It should also be noticed that in the preparation of the deception of Isaac that two kids of the goats were used, rather than a lamb. The whole picture presents incongruities when measured alongside that obtaining of the eternal blessing of all nations through the sacrifice of Christ, the lamb of God without spot and without blemish.

The principle of separation from the world impressed by Abraham upon Isaac, now comes into effect, brought about in a very natural way—the animosity of Esau—

"The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother" (Gen. 27:41).

And also (Gen. 26:34-35)—

"Esau took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah."

The result was a firmer stand by Isaac (Gen. 28:1-4)—

"Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

"And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham."

The whole incident causes a re-evaluation of their lives in the light of God's will. Recalling the wisdom of Abraham his father, Isaac sends Jacob to Mesopotamia, while Rebekah said:

"Flee to my brother Laban" (Gen. 27:43).

Here was Jacob fleeing from the very land upon which he had set his heart; fleeing because he had tried to obtain the heirship to the same promise made to his father and grandfather. The principle of salvation was not yet learnt, his zeal had to be directed and tempered through the fires of affliction.

The blessings of his father would sound hollow as Jacob departed to the north-east, away from the land of promise. This change of circumstance would give him time to think of the higher aspects of the Divine promise. He was yet to learn that the possession of the land was secondary to the major principle of service to God. The main purpose in the calling of the servants of God is the *ascription of glory to the Divine Name*. This could never be accomplished by deception. All efforts must be productive of this result; otherwise they will miscarry.

Patience for the things of God can only come by tribulation and experience, as Paul states in Rom. 5:3-4—

"Tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience, and experience hope."

To which James adds—

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect, and entire, wanting nothing."

Here was a new birth for Jacob; he was now to rise to newness of life; the supplanting was now to be his *own nature*, typified by Esau. Here was a confession of God's way as best—

"Because God will be with me and will keep me in this way I go, so that I come again to my Father's house in peace—then shall the Lord be my God" (Gen. 28:20-21).

He now accepted the position of relying upon God and not on his own cunning or his own righteousness. He was humbled, and could now see a much larger view of the Divine purpose than his own personal attainment. The promise included multitudes, not a few individuals—

"In thee and thy seed shall **all families of the earth** be blessed."

Now Jacob, as David, confessed—

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want . . . God will keep me in this way that I go."

A new life starts for Jacob, but it was not many years before he realized that there were the same old problems. The supplanting externally was on the part of Laban his father-in-law. For 20 years he endured the inhumanities of the Syrian; yet he was led by God to the complete spoiling of his adversary. Jacob sums up the trial in these words (Gen. 31:38-42)—

"This 20 years have I been with thee. That which was torn of beasts I brought not to thee, I bare the loss of it, of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day or by night.

"In the day the draught consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. Thou hast changed my wages 10 times.

"Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen the labor of my hands."

The apostle Peter seems to have had such circumstances in mind when he exhorted us to wait patiently for *God's* purposes:

"Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

"For what glory is it if, when ye be buffeted for your **faults**, ye take it patiently? But if, when ye do **well**, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, **this** is acceptable with God."

If we humble ourselves under the guiding hand of God, He will be with us, even as He was with Jacob. We will find it impossible to convince the world of the wisdom of such a course. But the wisdom of trust in the Creator will be revealed in due time for all the world to see.

The events in Padan-Aram gradually grew worse. Laban's sons now realized that Jacob had all the substance of Laban—

"Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory."

Envy creeps in. The storm is again gathering over the head of Jacob. What was he to do? Was flight once more the answer? God had told him that He would be with him wherever he went. Yet to leave Laban without advice from God would be to repeat the previous mistake of not seeking God's wisdom.

So he patiently waited the Divine instruction. This applies in so many ways in our own lives. Many times it would seem so easy to move and leave all our trouble behind. *But we would be running away from what God in His wisdom saw was most needful for the development of our character.*

Twenty years had taught Jacob a lesson. "Tribulation worketh patience." The "old man" nature was being supplanted, giving place to that "new man" of the Spirit. Finally the message came from God (Gen. 31:3)—

"Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred: and I will be with thee."

"*I will be with thee.*" These words have to be understood in the light of the constant chastening and developing that is being exercised upon the sons and daughters of God.

"Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Psa. 23).

The Rod means correction and trial. Though God is with the faithful it does not assure a tranquil existence during probation. Jacob's path continued through much tribulation as his steps led him constantly upward toward perfection. He encountered the wrath of Laban, as he fled at God's command. He had the fear and anxiety of meeting his brother Esau who came to meet him with 400 armed men. He experienced a turbulent family life through the strivings of Leah and Rachel. He lost his beloved Rachel at Benjamin's birth. His daughter Dinah by unwise associations brought an evil report upon his family in the eyes of the surrounding nations. Is not the warning clear in the following words—

"And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land . . . And Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite lay with her, and defiled her"

(Gen. 34:1-2).

The bride of Christ can have no dealings with the world nor association with its ways. Strict separation is required or else defilement will be the result.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15).

The sky grows darker for Jacob. Joseph is sold into slavery in Egypt, whom Jacob believes to be dead. The son of his hopes is violently removed from his life.

*"I will be with thee, saith the Lord."*

He stands with Abraham in point of similar circumstance, as Abraham was about to offer Isaac.

Famine strikes the land of Canaan. *Where is the God of Isaac?* Where is the blessing of corn and wine? The cattle and the herd and the family were starving. Why had the God of his fathers blessed him so abundantly at Padan-Aram, only to have it taken from before his eyes? Had the promise failed? Naturally speaking he was supplanted at every turn. Gradually the lesson of higher values was being forced home upon the consciousness of Jacob. He was learning that the present is not the promise. The blessing referred to a different age.

Darkness closes in. The famine increases. His sons now plead for Benjamin as the only avenue to escape the famine. Jacob in resignation to the Divine will, declared—

"God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother (Simeon) and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved" (Gen. 43:14).

All unaware to Jacob, God's hand was working out a wonderful salvation. How easy for us as we read objectively this touching drama! But let us place ourselves in the scene, in Jacob's position. This we must do as the problems of life press in upon us. If we are really God's children we must go through this trial. We must come to realize the transitory nature of all present possessions. If perfection is to be wrought in each of us we must endure the chastening.

Our natural birthright is in Adam—"In Adam all die," which is typified by Esau. This birthright must be removed or supplanted by trial and affliction, and their resultant influence of good where they have their perfect work.

*The working out of the supplanting will be by the operations of God in our lives.* It will never come by any planning we may do ourselves. As Christ told Nicodemus (John 3:5-7)—

"Ye must be born again; ye must be born of the water and the spirit."

So Jacob was born again in all his travail. He gradually supplanted his old nature, and committed his ways into God's hand:

*"I will keep thee in all places whither thou goest."*

The trial of Jacob was over. The door opens before him, as it will in our lives if we remain faithful, and commit our ways into His hands. Joseph is yet alive. It was as though he was raised from the dead; a type of the resurrection of Christ.

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept"  
(1 Cor. 15:20).

This is our hope. As Joseph was the hope of natural Israel, and was raised up to preserve much people alive, so Christ's position in the purpose, rejected of his brethren, was in a much larger sense to preserve much people alive.

Plainness or perfection in Jacob was a process, as in all of God's servants. He confessed complete humility before God—

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*"God . . . fed me all my life long. The Angel redeemed me from all evil" —F.H.*

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## "WE ARE OF GOD"

With John, brethren of Christ take high ground. They say "We are of God." They acknowledge themselves strangers and pilgrims in the world to which their coming captain has told them they do not belong. They refuse to be of it. They accept the consequences: the contempt of the rich; the opposition of the poor; the enmity of neighbours; the loss of privilege; the deprivation of honour; exclusion from profit; exposure to loss and shame and poverty and suffering; yea, unto death itself, if, in the will of God, such a result await the course of faithfulness.—**Bro. Roberts.**

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## I Saw Seven Golden Candlesticks

### STUDIES IN THE APOCALYPSE — No. 2

As the servants of God to whom the Apocalypse was sent, and reaching out to secure the blessing it pronounced upon him—

"That knows accurately, and they who give heed to the words of prophecy, and observe narrowly the things which have been written in it."  
—we look with deep and sustained interest at the first symbol that John saw, while he was "in spirit on the Lord's day."

The Spirit of God, which alone knoweth the things of God, had so acted upon and influenced the mind of John that he was carried forward in time, through the centuries, to that epoch which in the Scriptures is styled, "The great day of the Lord" (Zeph. 1:14), or the Lord's day. John heard behind him a great voice, as of a trumpet—

"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks" (Apoc. 1:12.)

John was told (v. 20)—

"The 7 candlesticks thou sawest are the 7 churches (ecclesias)."

As we look with John at these seven golden candlesticks, our minds naturally turn first into the background of scriptural revelation, which was written for our learning, to the seven lamps on the seven-branched golden candlestick that Moses made (after the pattern shown him on the mount). This was placed against the wall, on the south side of the Tabernacle, over against the table of shewbread, in the Holy Place. Paul speaks of this Mosaic or "worldly sanctuary,\*" with its ordinances, fixtures and appointments, as "patterns (types) of things in the heavens" (Heb. 9:23), or of that heavenly tabernacle "which the Lord pitched, and not man."

The fact that the candlesticks were in the Holy Place, on this side the veil, "where the priests went always . . . accomplishing the service of God" (Heb. 9:6), would give us to understand that they were typical of *the One Body in their relation to the holy things of God in the days of their flesh*. And, too, these "lamps of God" (1 Sam. 3:3) were under the daily care of the priests in the Holy Place—

"And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring Me pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always.

"In the Tabernacle without the vail, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the Lord" (Ex. 27:20-21.)

The light from these lamps in the Holy Place was necessary as the priests went about the work connected with their daily ministry therein; for there were no openings through which the light could enter from the outside; and the light from the glory of God between the cherubims over the mercy seat in the Most Holy was shut out by the vail between the two compartments.

We cannot miss the meaning of this—

". . . figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices" (Heb. 9:9.)

The beaten olive oil, supplied by the children of Israel, with which the lamps were filled twice daily; and the careful "ordering of the lamps" by the priests from evening to morning, together with the gold of the lamps themselves, are a delightful and fitting type of the ecclesias of God, as with faith in the things "not seen," beyond the vail, the antitypical oil of the Word shines forth in their lives and manifests itself in works of love, faith and obedience. Jesus told his disciples—

"Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14.)

This is the "true light" of which that produced by the combustion of the oil in the Mosaic candlesticks was the type—

"The entrance of Thy Word giveth light" (Psa. 119:130.)

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Candlesticks are introduced again in the symbols of Apoc. 11, in connection with the two witnesses (vs. 3-4)—

"I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks, standing before the God of the earth."

Now we learn that these two witnesses are styled "candlesticks" here because of the fact that *by their combined efforts the light of God's Truth was able to shine in varying degrees of brightness through all those ages of world-wide papal sway.*

One olive tree and its candlestick stood for that class in whom the testimony of Jesus was upheld and maintained in its saving purity and fulness against the prevalent apostasy of the times; while the other, though not of the One Body, having been influenced to some extent by the principles of truth and righteousness shining from the lampstands of the ecclesias, were opposed to the state systems of their day.

Being not averse to taking the sword in defence of freedom of thought and religion, they constituted the "Earth" that helped the "Woman" and swallowed up the flood of waters cast out against her by the dragon; thus making it possible, under God's merciful arrangement, for His people to be nourished in the wilderness, for 1260 years, from the face of the Serpent.

The saints of the "good olive tree" class had only the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, with which to combat their enemies; and had it not been for the protecting sword of steel in the hands of the "wild olive tree" class, no doubt the light from the seven candlesticks that John saw

would have flickered and died out from the earth, and the gloom and darkness of the surrounding world have closed in on the ecclesias.

Zechariah saw two olive trees with a candlestick between—

"All of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof" (4:2.)

There were two other pipes, each leading from a branch of one of the olive trees and extending to the bowl on top of the lamps, through which the oil was supplied from the trees to the bowl, and thence to the lamps. He was told these were (v. 14)—

"The 2 anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

The candlesticks here represent the same body of people who held the testimony of Jesus, and stood before the god of the earth clothed in sackcloth, but at a *different period in their history*. Zechariah saw them as they stood before the "Lord (God) of the whole earth," as the manifestation of His Memorial Name. At this time they had passed through their long period of down-treading by the Gentiles of the outer court, and are shown here in symbol at that epoch when they stand resplendent in the power of the Spirit, preparatory to bringing into subjection all nations to their rule.

Looking at these symbols where candlesticks are employed to represent the whole community of God's people, in type and antitype, we are able to perceive at once the beauty and fitness of their use in this first vision shown John on Patmos—

"The seven candlesticks thou sawest are the seven ecclesias."

The symbol here brings together in one that which stood for the two witnesses of ch. 11 (showing the sackcloth prophesying period of their history) and the lamps that Zechariah saw upon the candlestick, all of gold, in which *perfection of development* is indicated by *Spirit-manifestation*.

Thus in John's seven golden candlesticks, in the midst of which stood one like the Son of man, we see a setting forth of *that relationship that existed between the personal Christ and his mystical Body*, not only in the days of their flesh, but also in the beauty and fullness of their final development.

That the whole body of Christ in all its history is indicated by the seven candlesticks is plain, not only from the scriptural use of the word "seven" to denote completeness, but also from the closing words of each message to them: "*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the ecclesias.*"

It is the responsibility of each individual ecclesia, the same now as in the days of John, to maintain this lightstand of God's Truth in the earth. "To cause the lamp to burn always" there must be careful ordering and trimming and an abundant supply of the oil of the Spirit Word. The true light will shine from such a lightstand, and spread its rays into a world of darkness, as with community of effort and zeal each individual member is enlightened by the Word and manifests a living example of him who was the "Light of the world."

Though we struggle now in weakness to keep the oil pure and its light undimmed, yet if the Lord finds us so engaged at his coming, and peering through the glass dimly, the light which we prize so highly will be merged into that glorious day when the "*Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings.*"

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—E.W.B.

# Out of Egypt Have I Called My Son

## PART FOUR

There is another matter in this beautiful narrative which we must not pass over without notice; and that is the last objection raised by Moses, namely, his *lack of eloquence*. This must have been especially displeasing to God. It is a very common objection, even today, among the friends of God. There is, however, this lesson to be derived from the case of Moses, that *God does not require mere human eloquence as an accessory to the advancement of His work in the earth*.

Had this been the case, we should have expected to see first and foremost in this work the eloquence of the schools of Demosthenes, Socrates, Plato, and the galaxy of worldly luminaries developed in our days at Oxford, Cambridge, and such places.

But no, not so. The Deity requires men who can become, if not eloquent, at least *fired and burning with zeal* for the spreading forth of the knowledge of which He Himself is the Author—men who, in the love of His Truth, think not of the gratification of their own worthless selves, but of *how much they can do in the love of Him* for the kindness and mercy which the Truth exhibits, and in which they have been brought to share, in bringing others to see that Truth which is—

"The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

No wonder, then, at the anger of the Lord being kindled against Moses for pleading, as an excuse for accepting the work to which he was called, the want of eloquence! Let us take care that in our individual cases, having been called to the Kingdom of God, as truly as Moses and Aaron were called, we do not excuse ourselves, as "labourers together with Him," from doing the work to which the Spirit has called us in saying—

"Let him that heareth say, Come!" (Rev. 22:17).

This is the especial privilege and work to which every saint is called. And if we cannot say "Come" with our tongues let us at least do our best to circulate the Truth of God in calling attention to, or placing in the hands of others, the writings of those servants of God who have been most conspicuous in the enlightenment of their fellow men, as exhibited in the monuments of their work of labor and love which they have left to us as an example and legacy. If we lack in the duty to which we are called, *may we not also provoke the anger of the Lord*, and imperil our acceptance at the judgment-seat of Christ?

We need, therefore, to make no excuse for Moses, for doubtless Moses was ashamed when he heard the reply which he had by his opposition elicited from the mouth of the angel. *Let us well consider that reply in every objection which the flesh may raise against our ability to do the work of God*; but rather let us be assured that God, Who co-operates with human instrumentality, will do so *in each individual case where the instinctive selfishness, inherent in our nature, is subdued and subordinated to the will of God*. Thus silenced—

"Moses went and returned to Jethro, his father-in-law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which are in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace" (Ex. 4:18).

Meanwhile,

"The Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life."

Here again we are brought face to face with the divine attribute of omniscience. How otherwise did the angel know this?

Again, it lets us into the secret somewhat of the mind of Moses, accounting to some extent for the attitude of Moses in his attempt to get away from the responsibility; for *Moses' mind was, perhaps, better known to the angel than he himself knew it*; for not only the thoughts then present to his mind were known by the divine representative, but *future thoughts and actions* were all foreknown to his divine instructor.

All the circumstances, therefore, connected with the cause that led to Moses' flight into Midian forty years previously were known to the angel, who in all probability had had to do with the manipulation of those circumstances and the providence which had preserved Moses for the work he was now to do.

"And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the **rod of God** in his hand.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I WILL HARDEN HIS HEART, that he shall not let the people go.

"And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is My son, even My firstborn: and I say unto thee, Let **My** son go that he may serve Me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay **thy** son, even thy firstborn."

To the natural mind this is dreadful doctrine indeed—to harden a man's heart, make him stubborn to resist the demands made upon him, and then punish him for doing so! I have heard it said, even by the brethren of the Lord—

"I don't believe that God ever did really harden Pharaoh's heart."

*Why not, my brother?* Is it not stated by the Spirit of God in David, speaking of Israel under these very circumstances—

"He (God) increased His people greatly, and made them stronger than their enemies. **He turned their heart to hate His people**, to deal subtlety with His servants" (Ps. 105:24-25).

Just as well may we deny this statement as that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. Again, Paul, in his letter to the Roman ecclesia, in illustrating the action of God in the case of the two sons of Isaac, proceeds to explain the principle of that action—

"That the **purpose of God according to election might stand.**"

He then asks (Rom. 9:14-23)—

"Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For He saith, I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

"So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh,

"Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee, and that My Name might be declared throughout all the earth, Therefore hath He mercy whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.

"What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, **endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath** (the Egyptians) fitted to destruction; and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy (Israel), which He had afore prepared unto glory?"

There is no appeal from this answer of the apostle's; and when we consider the Bible doctrine of man in his relation to God as a condemned rebel, under sentence of death from his Creator, can we charge God with unrighteousness in *making use of His own creatures in any way He chooses in the carrying out of a purpose which is ultimately to fill the earth with His glory and everlasting blessedness to those of His creatures, who, while equally death-stricken sinners, yet turn their hearts towards Him in deepest humility and contrition*, having faith in His promises, manifesting that faith in the obedience which He requires, and thus affording pleasure to Him who created them with this ultimate object?

In the case of Pharaoh, we have a man whom God had specially "raised up" for use in His Own way for the glorification of His Name—a Gentile of great pomp and power outside the pale of God's purposed mercy to Israel, to whom it was then entirely confined. As well may we attempt to find fault with this attitude towards Pharaoh of the Creator and Possessor of heaven and earth, as blame the builder of a house for selecting certain stones and rejecting others.

The children of Israel were "vessels of mercy" to whom God was about to show favor. They were the objects of malignant hatred on the part of the Egyptians, who cruelly persecuted them. This hatred of their enemies was doubtless a divinely-arranged ingredient in their preparation for the mercy and favor to be shown to them in their contemplated deliverance.

By this hatred and persecution they were wrought upon with a view to facilitate that object so that none of them might be left in the land of their exile. They were of great value to the King of Egypt, hence his determined opposition to the demand of God for their release, which we shall hereafter more particularly consider, together with the message of God to him. Meanwhile we travel with Moses and his family toward Egypt.

"And it came to pass by the way in the inn that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him.  
"Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me.  
"So He let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision"  
(vs. 24-26).

This is a very interesting part of the narrative. We are reminded by this event that Moses had been remiss in his neglect to see that his children were circumcised, for he was of the tribe of Levi, having in his own person "the token of the covenant" enjoined upon Abraham and his seed if they would participate in the covenanted blessings to which the children of Israel were conditionally related.

This was the cause of God's anger, and the opportune moment for its manifestation in case of refusal to obey, as we may be assured; for God, who knows all hearts, knew the most fitting time to see to enforce obedience on the part of His servant.

The angel, therefore, appeared to Moses when on his way to Egypt and enforced the obedience of circumcision of the male element of his house on threat of the penalty of death. This necessary deed accomplished, the angel let them proceed on their journey to Egypt.

We must not, however, infer from the enforcement of this rite that there was *in the rite itself* any virtue or efficacy, for Paul tells us that—

"Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandment of God" (1 Cor. 7:19).

It conferred, in itself, no right to the eternal inheritance of the land promised to Abraham. It was, however, a fixation in the flesh of the *token of the covenant* between God and Abraham as a *reminder* that God had made choice of them for His people, and the glorious future to which they

stood related, and a rite to be observed upon pain of exclusion from all participation therein in all their generations. *There was also required—from all carrying this token in the flesh, in order to such participation—that circumcision which is of the heart in the spirit and not in the letter.*

This joint circumcision of flesh and heart was essential to the salvation of every Jew who should by faith and obedience inherit the Kingdom of God in the day of its future manifestation and glory, which was the peculiar "hope of Israel," until, in the mercy and favor of God, the Gentiles were, by the Gospel preached to them, invited to joint-participation with them.

Its spiritual significance will be readily discerned by those instructed in the Truth as it is in Jesus. *There must be a cutting off of the flesh in that "circumcision of heart" apostolically declared,* preparatory to the putting on of that immortality or incorruptibility of nature, which is the indispensable pre-requisite to inheritance in the Kingdom of God; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit" it as the apostle Paul explains, and the necessity for such a radical change of nature we may readily perceive.

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

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## As Beloved Children

*"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."*

Our New Testament reading this morning (Eph. 5 & 6) brings before us 2 chapters of great beauty and practical power. No words of men can approach the power of these words. Our wisdom lies in centering our minds continually upon them, endeavoring to extract a maximum of their spiritual value. V. 1:

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children."

Literally, "*Become*"—a stronger word than just "Be," indicating a process and an accomplishment.

"Be ye therefore"—this turns our attention to something preceding, and we look back to the end of ch. 5, beginning at v. 30:

*"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."*

What greater incentive could there be to love and holiness? "*Do not cause sorrow or grief to the One Who has manifested so much love to you.*" Consider the infinite graciousness of God's condescension—that the Almighty Lord of heaven and earth, has, by loving us, made it possible for us to grieve Him!

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, (that is, loud, angry words) and evil speaking, be put away from you."

*All these things grieve the Holy Spirit of God.* "Evil speaking" is anything that we say about others that is not in the true spirit of the love that covers a multitude of sins. Straightforward things must be said when Truth is at stake, but how careful we must be that the *Spirit*, not the *flesh*, motivates them!

"And be ye kind to one another—tenderhearted—forgiving, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

There is not much virtue in forgiveness when one comes to us humbly repentant. Forgiveness is then a comparatively easy and pleasant operation. But Jesus said, while they crucified him, "*Father, forgive them,*" and Stephen followed his example.

And while we were yet sinners he died for us to make manifest the power of a love that could lift us out of our sins. Forgiveness to mean anything, must be, as Jesus says, freely from the heart; grudgingly given as a duty, it means nothing.

5:1—"Be ye therefore followers of God."

The word for followers means "imitators," as the Diag. and RV give it. *Pattern yourself after God*—the greatest achievement man can strive for, for God is love and holiness, hating evil, but infinitely patient and understanding and slow to anger, rejoicing in mercy and forgiveness.

". . . as dear children."

"Dear" should rather be "*beloved*"—again as in Diag. and RV. Love is the power, and the motive, and the reason for everything. Children must be beloved, or they cannot grow up to be lovable. Love is not just food and raiment, but warmth, sympathy and the closeness of heart to heart. God's children are beloved children. Because they *know* He loves them, they see love even in His wise and necessary chastisement.

"And walk in love" (v. 2).

This sums up all the teaching that follows in both chapters, in fact, *all* teaching—"All the law and prophets are comprehended in this." This cannot be too strongly, or too often, emphasized. So much of ecclesial trouble, and of all trouble, is a direct result of failure in this. "*Love seeketh not her own.*"

Without love, all else is vain, all else is hypocrisy. Irritation, impatience, bitterness, harshness, self pleasing—are *not* love, and such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. "*Walk in love.*" We ourselves are our own greatest problem.

V. 3: "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you."

Have we not often noticed the significant association of "*covetousness*" with these *other evil things*? In these days of abundance and infinite variety of desirable things, covetousness is a basic problem to those in whom the Spirit is striving against the flesh, though covetousness can equally be manifested in connection with the simplest of objects and activities.

Paul says that covetousness—the *desire to have things*—is idolatry. The Spirit's instructions (1 Tim. 6:8) are:

"Having food and raiment, therewith **be content.**"

Anything desired beyond this, except strictly and sincerely for spiritual purposes, is covetousness or idolatry. God is the all-sufficient desire and portion of the true saint, and any desire outside of God is to that extent an indication of imperfect love and incomplete spiritual satisfaction.

V. 5 tells us that *foolish talking and jesting* are utterly out of place and unbecoming in those who claim the holy and exalted position of children of God.

*Here we all stand condemned.* Here is one of the childish and juvenile things among the hardest to put away when we aspire to be mature and spiritually-minded men.

The perfect pattern of a Christlike life is too beautiful and gracious to be cheapened by foolishness. Humor is the world's poor, thin substitute for the deep happiness and joy of the Spirit. Let us strive to say nothing we would not say in the presence of Christ, remembering that—

"Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36).

And Solomon testifies similarly in solemn warning—

"The thought of foolishness is sin" (Prov. 24:9).

"Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor" (Eccl. 10:1).

A few foolish words can make all our preaching seem like hypocrisy and destroy all the good we have tried to do among men in manifesting the joyful beauty of a holy life in Christ.

V. 6: "Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things—**including foolishness and coveting**—cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

"*Let no man deceive you*"—do not be deceived by any who belittle the seriousness and importance of these things. The way is narrow, and few find it. It will only be those who *tremble at God's Word* and take it all in utmost seriousness. Light, foolish talk and desire for earthly things are incompatible with spiritual-mindedness (v. 8)—

"For ye **were** darkness, but **now** ye are light in the Lord."

From here to v. 15 the apostle speaks of light and darkness. Darkness is the natural state—the state of all the world. Light is the wisdom to realize that the natural way of the world, though appealing to the flesh, is darkness, and can end only in darkness. *All natural thought is darkness*—God's Word alone is light. A full realization of this is the finding of life.

"*Let your light shine*," said Jesus—quietly, gently, but brightly and consistently—let your Christlike character and conduct be your witness and your preaching of Christ to the world.

V. 15: "Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

The world walks as fools, foolishly drifting away the time with their merriment and covetousness till death swallows them at last. This state of affairs is the evilness of the days. But the saints of God realize the preciousness of every passing hour as the brief time of opportunity to lay hold on wisdom and life.

V. 17: "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of God is."

Don't be unwise by accepting the world's general view of things, or what yourself naturally think, but be anxious above all things to know and obey the will of *God* in everything.

V. 18: "Be not drunk with wine, but **be filled with the Spirit**."

Does this seem a strange comparison? A little meditation will manifest its fittingness. Wine has an exhilarating effect on the mind, giving a sense of well-being. It is typical of all the world's false and passing excitements.

"*But be filled with the Spirit*." The Spirit is to wine as the true is to the false. It gives in eternal reality what men vainly seek in wine. It too has an exhilarating effect and gives a sense of well-being and comfort, but this time it is not false and transitory, but deep and true and everlasting. (V. 19)—

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs."

—not only *among* yourselves, but *within* your *own* selves—

". . . singing and making melody **in your heart** to the Lord."

What a joyful and delightful and desirable character is portrayed! No anxiety, no self-pity, no childishly hurt feeling *which are just the flesh's wounded vanity*, no dissatisfaction with present circumstances *which is ingratitude to God*, no disquieting desire, *which is idolatry*; but relaxed, contented, joyful, thankful singing in the heart to God—perpetual sunshine within, regardless of what is without.

"Giving thanks **always** for **all** things" (v. 20).

Here is the perfect antidote for all the evils that trouble the mind. The true children of God are always so intensely and continually thankful that all that is unpleasant and unlovely is crowded out of their minds.

V. 21: "Submitting one to another in the fear of God."

*This is very important in our relationship in the Truth.* It will naturally follow the development of a contented mind. The one who has accomplished contentedness is ready to contribute to general harmony and the wellbeing of others. There will be no self-assertion, no desires demanding attention and satisfaction—but a gentle, Christlike yielding and serving and pleasing of others. Jesus said, "*I am among you as one that serveth.*"

\* \* \*

From this point well into the following chapter, the apostle applies these divine principles to specific circumstances.

The first, occupying the remainder of this chapter, is the relationship of husbands and wives. It is a relationship of love, just as all relationships must be.

He states first, in 2 verses, that the wife must be subject to the husband in everything. Wisdom and harmony require that there be a recognized head and authority on whom the responsibility before God for all family decisions and arrangements rests. Any deviation from the divine standard is confusion.

But then, in 9 verses, he speaks of the height and breadth of the love that is necessary to bring to fruition the fulness of the divinely-intended pattern from the beginning, as the beautiful type of the eternal, perfect union of Christ and his Bride.

Christ first, by the power of God, perfected himself, in the doing of which he laid down his life for his Bride. And now he ever liveth to make loving intercession for her—

Vs. 25-27: "Christ also loved the Ecclesia—the Called-out— and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word.

"That he might present it to himself a glorious Ecclesia, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Has he the power to do it? Can he accomplish this in those who wholly and unreservedly cast themselves upon him? *Who dares to deny it*—blindly measuring themselves by themselves and setting limits to the power of God?

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands in everything . . . This is a great mystery . . . I speak concerning Christ and the Ecclesia."

*Are we part of the operation of this glorious divine mystery?*

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

## Signs of the Times

*"Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou (Gog) a guard unto them"—Eze. 38:7.*

As we observe the march of events which is steadily unfolding toward that "great and terrible day" of Christ's coming and judgment, **the shadow of Russia looms larger and more prominently on the horizon.** It was more than a century ago that Bro. John Thomas wrote in *Elpis Israel* that,

"There cannot be the shadow of a doubt that the Autocrat of Russia, when he shall have attained to the **plenitude of his power and dominion**, is the subject of the prophecy contained in the 38th and 39th of Ezekiel."

Since that time the career of Russia has been a checkered one, and at times Bro. Thomas' prediction has seemed doubtful of fulfilment, as Russia appeared to have been forever pushed back and rendered incapable of ever attaining to that power and dominion assigned to Gog in the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel.

But, if it could be said in 1848, "There is not a shadow of a doubt," it can be said now that it is "more sure" that Russia is that power foretold, and that she is on the **very verge of assuming her role** as Gog, the King of the North, and starting her mad career which ends in destruction on the mountains of Israel.

Russia alone can now qualify as that great military overlord and guardian chieftain of the prophecy. Her vast domain, stretching across two continents, from the Pacific to the Baltic, and from the warm waters of the Mediterranean to the Arctic ocean; her 200 million population and her boundless resources formed a backlog of potential power which only needed the proper genius behind it to, in God's Own good time, develop into that "Colossus of the North" foretold as one of the greatest figures in the world-shaking events coincidental with the return of Christ and the establishment of His kingdom.

The devastating effects of World War II upon European nations rendered them virtually powerless, and incapable of ever offering any worthwhile resistance to Russian expansion and influence. Russia alone, of all European powers, was strengthened by the late war, and the weakening of Britain prevented her from giving more than token assistance to the European nations who sought organized resistance to the rapid growth of Russian imperialism.

To say that Russia's rise to world power has been phenomenal is to state it mildly. On this point we cannot do better than make use of a recent statement by a New York Times correspondent—

"Communist Russia, 39 years old next October, was ruled for 30 by Stalin. In that time Russia jumped a gulf traversed by other countries in centuries. From a backward country of ignorant peasants, she grew to an industrial colossus, overshadowing Western Europe, challenging the U. S. From an isolated state, checked on every flank, she expanded to a super-power, terrifying neighbors she did not engulf, threatening the world."

And now the non-Communist world fearfully beholds Russia in direct control of one-third of earth's population, and, like an octopus, her tentacles of influence reaching out to draw many other peoples within her sphere.

Russia has now accomplished what her rulers have desired, but failed to do, over a period of 200 years. SHE HAS GAINED A FOOTHOLD IN THE MIDDLE EAST, and through clever

diplomacy has gained the favor of almost the entire Arab world, while at the same time bringing the prestige of the Western group to an all-time low.

Russian tactics are so subtle that her objectives are not readily recognized by those over which she seeks to extend her power. She no longer attempts to penetrate the weak and destitute countries solely by teaching them Communistic doctrines, but her plan now is to make it appear that she is the great champion and liberator of all the oppressed and downtrodden masses. She has espoused the cause of anti-colonialism, while enforcing her own iron rule upon many unwilling peoples. She is attempting to create chaos in the Middle-East that it may be blamed on the Western powers and turn Arab sentiment against them, thus enabling Russia to fill the vacuum thus created. She sends arms to Egypt and upholds Nasser's seizure of the Suez canal as a move to establish her own influence and create goodwill not only in Egypt but in all the Arabian countries, and at the same time dealing a heavy blow against British interests.

The 38th of Ezekiel pictures a great aggregation of nations all dominated by a single overshadowing power who is to be "a guard unto them." That organization is rapidly becoming a reality; not several great nations allied together, but **many small and weaker nations completely under the power and influence of one great overlord**, Gog, King of the North.

This is the portrait painted by the Word of inspiration. We cannot doubt that Russia is that power and that the time is at hand for the fulfilment of the "sure word of prophecy" written down 25 centuries ago for our learning.

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The repeated raids and punitive excursions along the Israeli borders would seem to definitely indicate that efforts of the UN peace group in that area are a failure. There is a strong bloc of the Israeli government which favors full scale war against their enemy-neighbors, that Israel's frontiers may be made safe. Their plan is to drive their enemies back so far as to free their frontiers from constant sniping and raiding. Those who favor this militant action claim that Israel is strong enough to do this now, but time is on the side of their enemies who are in a better position to obtain arms than Israel. One thing is certain: The present situation cannot continue indefinitely. Tremendous possibilities are in the offing.

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It would seem, at this writing, that some kind of an agreement will be worked out for operation of the Suez canal, but only after many concessions are made by Britain and France. Nasser's bold move (backed up by Russia and Arabian nations) has probably been more successful than even they expected. Several things stand out prominently in this humiliating surrender to most of Egypt's demands: The inability of Britain and France to back up their demands; the weak support given them by the U. S. and other Western nations; the ability of weak nations to say "I am strong," when supported by Russia; the weakening of Western prestige in the Middle-East, and consequent strengthening of Russian influence; encouragement given to Egypt and the Arab nations to make further moves toward expelling the Western powers entirely; and last, but not least, it gives a powerful boost to Russian stock, not only in the Middle-East, but throughout the whole world, confirming her claim as being the outstanding champion of the "little peoples." —O.B.

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## Toronto Fraternal Gathering

The Fraternal Gathering held at Toronto, Canada on Oct. 6 and 7 was an occasion that brought together as one family in unity and love many brothers and sisters from various parts of the country. The faithful and untiring efforts of the brothers and sisters of Toronto, in their work and labor for the Truth, as they made the arrangements for the Gathering, and tendered a continuous and united effort in carrying through to the end the various duties that brought the best success to the occasion, was an example of consecration and devotion to the Truth.

Those of us who attended from a distance can never forget the wholesome spirit of brotherly kindness, the open and heart-felt welcome we received and the prevailing sense of oneness manifested there, which made us happy with the privilege of being among them. It was felt, as we noted the family spirit of love and unity in evidence throughout the Gathering, that the words of Christ's prayer for his brethren had been heard and answered.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us" (John 17:20-21.)

A subject that answers well to the times in which we live was selected as the basis for the lectures given on Saturday, the first day of the Gathering: "The Rising of the Sun of Righteousness." At the opening of the service at 2 p.m., Mal. 3 & 4 were read.

Bro. N. Mammone, of Hopatcong, N.J., opened the discussion with his discourse on "The Way of the Kings Out of a Sun's Risings." It was shown that this translation of Rev. 16:12 by bro. Thomas was in line with that found in the Diaglott, which reads:

"So that the way of those kings who are from the Sun-rising might be prepared."

The American Standard Version also reads similar:

"That the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the sunrising."

The events that contribute to making ready the way for these kings of the Sun's risings are spoken of as the drying up of the water of the great river Euphrates. This was explained to mean that the power of the Ottoman Turkish Empire, of which the Euphrates was the principal river, was to begin a gradual decline or drying up with the outpouring, in 1820, of the 6th vial, so that the land covenanted to Abraham and his seed might be taken possession of by its rightful heirs when the set time had come.

Bro. V. C. Gilbert, of Buffalo, N.Y., continued the discussion under the above head, speaking on the subject; "Behold, I Come as a Thief." He emphasized the importance of this strong declaration, strikingly inserted among the world-shaking events of the 6th vial, coming after the drying up of the Euphrates, but before the gathering of the nations to a place called Armageddon. It was pointed out that the one who comes thus as a thief is identical with the "one like unto the Son of man" of ch. 1, and the rainbowed angel of ch. 10—Christ and his saints in their post-resurrectional appearance in world affairs, preparatory to their mission of executing upon the nations of the world, the judgments written.

Bro. H. A. Sommerville, of Lake Ariel, Pa., followed with a discussion of, "Blessed Is He that Watcheth, and Keepeth His Garments." Our brother was emphatic in his two-fold application to the necessity that falls upon the brothers and sisters of our day in respect to the Spirit's meaning in the use of the word "Watch." Watching the developments in world affairs as they unfold from day to day toward the final consummation is important and necessary, but there is another sense in which the word is used that must not be overlooked. Watching must be done at our very door steps to see that each of us is "keeping his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame—

"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

At 7:00 o'clock in the evening bro. Fred Higham, of Detroit, brought to a close the day's enlightening and upbuilding activities with a discussion of the closing words of the last book in the Bible: "Even so come, Lord Jesus." The word here rendered "even so" is in other passages translated by the words "yea," "yes," "verily," "surely," and "truth." There was a fervent appeal to the Household, that, as they breathe these words in their supplications to the Father, that they come from the depths of

a sincere heart that earnestly desires their realization. For when he does come, the books will be closed; the door will be shut, and the words will apply:

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: he that is holy, let him be holy still."

Sunday morning at 11:00 o'clock the brothers and sisters gathered around the table on which were the emblems of that unblemished Lamb of God that gave his life that God's Name might be honored, and His righteousness declared, so that as He extends a saving hand to us through Jesus' Name His Own majesty might be upheld.

The word of exhortation, given by bro. G. Growcott, of Detroit, was based on Ephesians 5 and 6, which were the readings for the day. Heart searching words that stirred us all to a sober realization of our meager attainments in the way of righteousness, but leaving us inspired to greater effort and more complete devotion to our holy calling, still come to mind as we meditate on the things we heard.

As we endeavor to be followers of God as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, the greatest one problem we have to deal with is not to be found in our brothers and sisters, or in the world about us, but in ourselves. Foolish talking and jesting, a matter in which we all stand condemned, to a greater or lesser degree, are a serious problem, for—

"Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

"Jerusalem, the Future Center of a Worldwide Kingdom," was the subject of the lecture given by bro. W. D. Gwalchmai, of London, at 7:00 P.M. The brethren had advertised the lecture in the newspapers, which resulted in the attendance of some friends, and a show of interest in the things spoken was in evidence at the close of the meeting. A beautiful picture was presented of the glorious things spoken of this City of God,

"The place of the soles of His feet where He will dwell with the children of Israel forever."

It is a subject that is very near to the hearts of us all, and as the subject was ably presented on this occasion, our pleasure in the stones of Zion's hill was fanned into flaming zeal. —E.W.B.

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The arrival of the day of the Lord will be preceded by a cry of "Peace and safety!"—and while this comforting cry is in full voice throughout the world, sudden destruction will descend like a whirlwind upon the whole fabric of human society, and lay it in ruins for the manifestation of the righteous judgment of God, and to pave the way for the new order of things, styled "New heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." —**Bro. Roberts.**

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## Correspondence

### "EVILS OF DIVISION"

In the July number of "The Christadelphian Magazine," under the heading of "Letters to the Editor," there are two letters published, without comment by the editor, which if generally acceptable, would definitely pave the way for the merging of all factions called "Christadelphians." These letters also justify the opinions of a number of brethren who have believed from the start of the present "reunion" movement that its final objective was to merge all factions with the Central group.

The first letter, under the heading "Reunion," assumes that all factions are so many segments of the "One Body," and that it is a case of "Christ divided." The writer concludes that the "Final

Statement" serving as a basis for reunion in Britain should "be used as a common denominator upon which the unity of the whole body, and not only two fellowships, might be built."

The writer appears to be entirely overlooking the fact that all incorrigible violators of the commands of Christ, and all who teach or condone error, place themselves **outside** the Body of Christ by their actions, and until reformation is effected, must be considered so, and not merely "erring members of the Body."

Please consider the following passages of Scripture on this point: Matt. 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:5-7; 1 Tim. 1:19-20; 2 Tim. 2:15-19; 2 John 9-11. Scriptural teaching on the relationship of the Body toward errorists and backsliders is clear and unmistakable. While every effort must be made to redeem them, both before and after they are withdrawn from, **there is no basis whatsoever on which they are to be considered members of the Body while persisting in their erroneous course.**

By persisting in false teaching, fellowship of the same, or wrongdoing of any kind, they put themselves out of the Body, out of fellowship with the ecclesia, and out of fellowship with the Father and the Son, and must be considered so for Scriptural reasons else we dare not withhold fellowship from them. If this is not the case, then we would be compelled to resort to the ideas already being advanced that there is no justification for disfellowship at all, which would be a direct contradiction of Scripture.

While the writer of the letter speaks of "Christadelphian" groups "who may believe and accept the same doctrines," he ignores the fact that the wording of the "Final Statement" is arranged so ambiguously that it is no certain test of what those who "accept" it do believe. Like all the "proposals" used in this reunion movement (beginning with Jersey City), the one and only safe and scriptural test is conspicuous only because of its complete absence from all the statements drawn up for acceptance by the erring groups—there has never been so much as a request, let alone a requirement, that the erroneous doctrines, sole cause of the "divisions," be unequivocally and unreservedly renounced and repudiated. Until this is done, and ambiguous statements are discarded, there can be no real unity.

In the August, 1953, number of "The Christadelphian Magazine," the editor, in answer to a proposal from the editors of the "Advocate Magazine" that the Central and Advocate groups unite, outlines in detail the erroneous doctrines which have been harbored in the Advocate fellowship for 60 years, and concludes—

"If we have established the case that error **was** introduced, in loyalty to truth, **let error be abjured** . . . Our appeal to the readers of the Advocate is to abjure the errors that **were** introduced by a previous editor, and get back to the truth set forth in the writing of Dr. Thomas and Bro. Roberts."

The above words are sound, reasonable and scriptural. But one wonders why they were ever written, in view of the fact that every formula, every method, every proposal used as a basis for reunion both in America and Britain have been in exact contrast to the above suggestions. On the other hand, every means possible has been employed to prevent anything entering into reunion proposals which would require abjuration of either former or present errors. In fact this has been one of the conditions imposed by the erring parties, that they be not required to make such renunciations.

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In the second letter, under the heading of "Evils of Division," the burden of the writer's remarks is an attempt to show that present "divisions" in "the Body" constitutes an unjustified evil situation; that the Apostle Paul did not advocate disfellowship except for "grave" moral offences; that Paul still considered those who denied the resurrection and those who had become "enemies of the cross of Christ" as his "beloved brethren."

In view of the fact that these assertions are so obviously contrary to the inspired record of Paul's denunciation of false teaching and teachers; and in consideration of the fact also that it is the **very antithesis of Christadelphian teaching since the days of Dr. Thomas**, we feel that we would be wasting time and space giving any lengthy refutation of the same. But by way of "putting you in remembrance," we suggest that you read the passages already cited, and in addition, we append the following: Luke 12:51-53; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 3:3; 1 Cor. 1:10, 11:18-19; 1 Cor. 2:25-26. The inescapable implication of all Paul's teaching on the subject of unity in the Body is, either to convert those who are causing division from their error, or to separate from them.

The writer on "Evils of Division" bases all his misdirected arguments on an entirely wrong definition of the word "division" as used by the Apostle Paul. The division spoken of by the Apostle has reference exclusively to factional strife and contention within the Body, and it is a gross misapplication of Scripture to take his condemnation of "division" within the Ecclesia and turn it against brethren who oppose and who have separated from false teachers and wrong doers who are the first cause of the division.

The word "division" or schism as used in the New Testament never refers to a situation comparable to the divided state of "Christadelphian" factions. Such factions were created solely as the result of divisions created by teachers of error, and a merger with them, without full repudiation of their errors, will not heal the division, but it will be a return to the strife and division from which we were delivered. And it will be in a sense a repudiation of all the good work performed by faithful brethren in times past who were instrumental in exposing these errors and advocating separation from them.

The words "separate" and "separation" occur 12 times in the New Testament, and are used in a good sense 10 times. They describe that act by which those who would be faithful to Christ separate themselves from evil conditions. The only places where "separate" is used in a bad sense are in Gal. 2:12 in reference to Peter's dissembling, and in Jude 19 where it speaks of certain—

". . . who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."

It is significant that the writer of "Evils of Division" seizes on this one passage in his effort to discredit faithful brethren who in times past have separated from teachers of error. He slants his arguments so as to leave the impression that such brethren are all "sensual" and guilty of unjustified separation from the Body, while as a matter of fact it takes but a casual reading of Jude 19 and the context to see that the very reverse is the case. These who separated themselves were not the self-righteous "extremists" which the writer tries to have one believe, but "mockers" who were following "their own ungodly lusts," who separated themselves from the disciples that they might follow their natural, sensual desires with impunity.

Those who try to condone modern corrupters of the Faith resort to such tactics as trying to make it appear that the heresies of Apostolic times were much more serious than modern departures from the Truth. Who gave us the authority to say that one perversion of the Truth is more, or less serious than another? Was it more serious for the Judaizers to teach that circumcision was necessary to salvation, than for some in our day to teach that we are guilty of Adam's sin and must be baptized for remission of this imputed sin? Was it any more serious to deny that Jesus came in human flesh in John's day than for modern perverters of the doctrine of the atonement to teach that Jesus came in "clean flesh"? We think not.

Let us bear in mind that the subtle doctrines which corrupted the ecclesias during the first centuries were not horrifying, repulsive doctrines—not complete departures from the Faith, but teaching which was **made to appear** harmless and differing so little from Apostolic teaching that the Truth was almost entirely lost in a maze of philosophical reasoning.

The greatest enemy of the Truth today is not the occasional teacher of error, but those who seek to condone and advocate fellowship of the error. For the teacher of a crotchet is propagating one error—the weak fellowship advocate is opening the door to every imaginable kind of error.

A type of separatist has always existed—self-righteous, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," Pharisaic, puritanic, exacting. But it is unjust to assume that all who separate for every cause are of this type. Separating from teachers of error is not only justified; it is a solemn obligation. Separation from Renunciationism, Partial-Inspiration teaching, the Adamic Sin and Resurrectional Responsibility heresy, and the Clean-Flesh heresy which caused separation in 1921-23 were all fully justified; yea, necessary.

The veiled charge that in all these cases there was little or no effort put forward to redeem the errorists is not only unjust; it is contrary to all the facts, and has not a shred of evidence to support the charge. We do not doubt that there have been isolated instances of brethren being withdrawn from unjustly, where not enough love and patience was exhibited. But any who attempt to create the impression that all or any of the "divisions" were brought about by hasty, untempered action, without every effort being made to reform those who caused the division by false teaching, is either altogether unacquainted with the history of these cases, or else he is guilty of flagrant misrepresentation.

As a matter of fact, the very reverse is the case. In every instance, every effort within the bounds of scriptural precepts, reason or justice was resorted to before separating as a last resort to clear the Body of responsibility for condoning error.

Separation from the teachers of the "Clean Flesh" theory in America, 1921-23, is a case in point. For at least 12 years faithful brethren pleaded with the teachers of this error to no avail. Though they were warned time and again that such teaching would lead to separation, yet they rejected all pleas that they cease to promulgate their teaching. It was only after all efforts failed that separation took place.

And the group who for more than 30 years continued to fellowship these same obdurate teachers of error have never, in this "Reunion" movement or at any other time, acknowledged that fellowship of such teachers was contrary to sound fellowship or to the Amended Birmingham Statement of Faith.

It has been the sad experience of all who have sought to restore those who have fallen away from the purity of the Faith, or those who fellowship teachers of error for any length of time, that they seldom ever fully return to a sound basis. This fact alone should cause us to be doubly careful that those with whom we merge fellowship clearly demonstrate that they have fully renounced all false doctrines, and that they fully understand and agree that fellowship with error cannot be tolerated.

To merge fellowship with whole groups who have for many years complacently fellowshipped teachers of error, and who signify no change in their attitude toward teachers of error, is madness. It is deliberately taking back into our fellowship bad leaven which may easily leaven the whole lump. Instead of **healing** division, it is certain of doing one of two things: either create constant strife and division, or else lead to total apostasy. Under present circumstances, the latter appears most likely.

In contrast to the "good words and fair speeches" of those who seek to justify or condone teachers of error (and those who fellowship them), while condemning faithful brethren for separating from them, we cite the scriptural designations that are applied to false teachers: "enemies of the cross of Christ, deceivers, perverters of the Gospel, false teachers, false brethren, evil men and seducers, blasphemers, heretics, false apostles, false prophets"—expressions we should be very careful about applying to any particular individuals, but how clearly they express the Spirit's mind regarding any who teach any adulteration of the Saving Truth! Did Paul consider these his "dear brethren in Christ" when he said, "**Let them be accursed!**"?

The present "Reunion" movement has the blessing of every loose-fellowship group using the name "Christadelphian." We believe that, regardless of what its intentions may be, it amounts to a surrender to the loose and liberal notions about fellowship which were so strenuously opposed by faithful brethren in times past, and we urge all who have well-meaningly allowed themselves to be drawn into it to take time to stand back and view its broad trend over the years, and think back and compare the present outlook with what they well remember to have been the outlook among us when sound brethren of a previous generation in our own ecclesia and in others who are now asleep, were alive and active. What would they think of conditions today?

Are we not at the beginning of that state of almost complete apostasy foretold by Jesus and his apostles to occur in the last days before his coming? "Who will be able to stand?"

—bro. Oscar Beauchamp

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If a man will not bear examination at home, he is not worth anything abroad, whatever he may appear to be in a public capacity. There must be the gold underneath — not on the surface only: Christ's brethren must be men of integrity and scrupulous honor in everything. It is for them to uphold what is honorable, and to reprobate and avoid everything that is dishonorable.

They must not look to the world for their lessons: the world is a liar in this matter. There are many things the world calls white that are black; and the things that are thoroughly white in the sight of God, they oftentimes call black and foolish.

—Bro. Roberts.

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#### **ECCLESIAL NEWS—Continued from Inside Front Cover.**

time with us was so limited. We were also pleased to have sis. Louise Martin (London) with us for a few days.—bro. E. Sargent.

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#### **LAMPASAS, Tex.—Christadelphian Hall, Avenue I East—Bible Study 10 a.m. Memorial 11 a.m.**

It is with joy that we record the obedience of another to the Way of Life. On Sunday morning, Sept. 23, WAYNE WOLFE, JR. was baptized into the Saving Name, after giving a good confession of the Truth. The baptism took place in Sulphur Creek, near Lampasas, with quite a few of the brethren and sisters present to rejoice in this happy occasion, including visiting brethren and sisters from Houston and Johnson City.

Just before the Memorial Service, our new brother was given the right hand of fellowship by all the brethren and sisters. Our prayer to God is that at the end of his race the Master will say, "Well done."

— Your brother in Christ, Wayne O. Wolfe.

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

It was our pleasure and privilege to assist the Detroit Ecclesia in the baptism of ELLIS HIGHAM, son of bro. and sis. Fred Higham, on May 27. We extended the right hand of fellowship to our new brother. It was also our pleasure after a good confession of the Faith once delivered to the Saints to baptize into the Saving Name of Jesus Christ on Sunday, August 26, MRS. WANDA EVANS, daughter of bro. and sis. C. Clubb. We extended to her the right hand of fellowship. Our earnest prayer is that our young brother and sister may continue their zeal and earnestness that they may be found acceptable when Christ comes.

Our Annual S. S. Outing was held June 16 in Springbank Park.

We have been much edified and strengthened by the labors of our bre. Fred Higham and G. V. Growcott of Detroit, and bro. V. Gilbert of Buffalo. We have also had the pleasure of the company and fellowship of sis. Fred Higham, bre. Ellis Higham and A. Fabris (Detroit); sisters V. Gilbert and L. Anderson (Buffalo); bro. & sis. Jos. Jackson, and sis. Crone (Toronto). We have gained by removal of sis. Clara Sparham from the Hamilton Ecclesia. We welcome those of like faith.

—bro. W. D. Gwalchmai.

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

Since our last report, we have been comforted and strengthened by the return of two more to our association and fellowship. Bro. Robert Simpson and his mother, sis. Lillian Simpson, met with us on Sept. 2, and are now members of our ecclesia.

On Oct. 6 & 7, we held our Fraternal Gathering in the Carpenters' Hall. The attendance was far beyond our expectation. Visitors were welcomed from Pomona, Calif.; Houston, Texas; Boston and Worcester, Mass.; Hopatcong, N.J.; Glendale and Hawley, Penna.; Buffalo, N.Y.; Detroit, Mich.; Montreal, Que.; Hamilton, London and Mount Albert, Ontario.

The whole-hearted support of our visiting brethren and sisters is profoundly appreciated. A full report appears elsewhere in this issue. Tape recordings were made of all addresses, and will soon be available at the tape library in Houston, Texas. For information, write bro. C. W. Banta, 10606 Wiggins, Houston 29.

Brethren and sisters should keep uppermost in their minds that we are not just one of the many churches, but a portion of the Ecclesia of the living God. Therefore it is for us to serve the Lord faithfully to the best of our ability, and leave the result with our Heavenly Father, patiently waiting for the day to come when the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of God as the waters now cover the sea.

—bro. G. A. Gibson

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