

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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

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CHRIST IS COMING AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

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EDITORIAL

Fellowship

In the New Testament there are four words rendered "fellowship." The principal one is KOINONIA, which literally means *communion*, or the act of sharing; and further signifies unity, concord or agreement. This is forcibly illustrated in Acts 2:42, where Luke, speaking of the early Christians, said they—

"Continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship."

These words express the fundamental principle of the Bible doctrine of fellowship. They were *stedfast in the teaching of the apostles*, i.e., they were sure of what they had been taught, and were firm in holding to it. Being of one mind in things pertaining to the way of the Tree of Life, they had fellowship one with another. But this was not an ordinary association of persons with a common interest; it extended far beyond their immediate circle, and brought them into a close relationship with the Father, and His beloved son Jesus, as John has said—

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His son Jesus Christ"—

1 John 1:3.

From this, it is evident that true fellowship is strictly confined to the members of the body who are bound together in the one faith based upon an affectionate belief, and faithful obedience to the Truth as it is in Jesus.

As in all things pertaining to the way of salvation, there are conditions set before us that must be fulfilled before we can share in this high and exalted association with the Father and Son. Here are the terms as set forth by John—

"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin"—1 John 1:6-7.

It is unmistakably plain from the apostle's definition that if we are to have fellowship with the Father and Son, *we must "walk in the light."* John uses the word "light" as a metaphor for *divine*

wisdom and knowledge, and "darkness" for that which is the opposite—carelessness and disregard for divine wisdom and knowledge. Therefore if we walk in darkness, we are not entitled to share in the close-linked association that is based on faithful walk and reverential obedience to Christ's law.

We can, of course, be in fellowship one with another even though we may not be in agreement on things divine, but it is a false, or deceitful form that, in the day of Christ's appearing, will result in being placed at his left hand, and hearing him say:

"I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

There is one principle upon which we will all doubtless agree: that the Gospel is constituted of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, and those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ. To truly walk in the light, we must believe all things revealed in the Scripture of truth relating to the Gospel, and rejoice in the hope of it. But that is the foundation only. There is a superstructure that must be built up in our lives, without which a belief of the Gospel would be useless.

In writing to the ecclesia in Corinth, Paul, in one place, speaks of the unbeliever, the unrighteous, the works of darkness, infidelity and idolatry, saying (2 Cor. 6:17-18)—

"Wherefore **come out from among them, and be ye separate**, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Is it not extremely plain—from what we have submitted from the pens of John and Paul—that if we are to have true fellowship one with another, and the only form of fellowship possible with the Father and Son, *we must cast aside the pleasures of this world, and separate ourselves from all its social life, which is built upon the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.*

Let us not forget that it is God Who sets the standard to which we are asked to attain, and we have no right, or authority, to alter it; for He has said—

"**I will be sanctified** in all them that come nigh Me."

The Bible doctrine of fellowship is both fundamental and exacting. It not only insists on the separation of the believer from the unbeliever; but it also insists upon the separation of the faithful believer from the unfaithful who teach things contrary to sound doctrine. The faithful believer is expected to do all in his power to maintain the truth as the basis of fellowship in the brotherhood, even to refusing to walk with any who reject any element of the truth (Rom. 16:17; 2 John 10).

Those who adopt a compromising attitude become partakers with those who would break down the barriers established by Christ and the apostles. *It is only necessary to read the history of the early church to realize that a similar course sowed the seeds that brought forth a corrupt faith mingled with heathen philosophy.* Faithful men did everything possible to stem the tide, but were swept aside by those who followed their leaders instead of depending on the Word of God for advice.

The standard set before us by apostolic command is to contend earnestly for the faith, and stand aside from all who would corrupt it. This is directly contrary to the principle of bringing together large groups that are not in agreement doctrinally. This principle is expressed as a desire to have all people bearing the name Christadelphian incorporated in one large body to meet the Lord at his coming.

The paramount issue is obscured by this policy, for when we appear before Christ, our qualification for entry into the Kingdom of God will not be determined by the size of the religious body of which we are a member, but by our names being written in the "Lamb's book of life." To

attain unto this divine honor, we must have the faith, courage and determination to stand alone—if need be—in order to please God by a faithful walk in the truth. There is no other way. —*Editor*

Wisdom's Pillars

BY BRO. JOHN THOMAS

"The victor, I will make him a Pillar in the Temple of my Deity"—Revelation 3:12.

In the Spirit thus saying, "pillar" evidently is representative of a saved person. Therefore to make such a pillar in a Temple of Deity is to make him an integral part thereof; and for a saint to be part of the Temple, indicates that *the Temple itself is composed of persons*. Now a temple is a dwelling; not a common dwelling, but a habitation of Deity, which the Lord pitches and not man.

Upon this principle, the pillars and the house, temple, dwelling, or habitation, become identical and inseparable. But obvious as this may be to the enlightened, we propose to make it equally so to others; and to unfold the significancy and beauty of the phrase in the remarks which follow.

The idea of a *pillar* being a *house of Deity* is traceable to the conception of Jacob, who, doubtless, initiated it under the inspiration of Deity. The history of its origination is told in Gen. 28, as follows. Isaac called Jacob into his presence, and told him to go to Padanaram, and select for himself a wife there, from Laban's daughters. On his departure he blessed him saying,

"Ail-Shaddai bless thee, 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 Elohim gave to Abraham."

On his way thither, Jacob came to a certain place where he passed the night, making his pillow of the stones. While asleep, the vision of the Ladder appeared to him. This ladder seemed to connect the earth and heaven; and by it ascended and descended upon him angels, or messengers of Elohim. Above the ladder stood Yahweh, known to Jacob by the name Ail-Shaddai, Who said to him,

"I am Yahweh Elohim of Abraham thy father, and Elohim of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy Seed.

"And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west and to the east, and to the north and the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in thee, and in thy Seed."

"And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places where thou goest, and I will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done what I have spoken to thee of."

The Gospel of the Kingdom having been announced to Jacob, as it had been before to Abraham (Gal. 3:8), he awoke, and under the vivid impression of what he had seen and heard, took the Stone upon which his head rested, and set it up for a pillar—a monumental pillar—and poured oil upon the top of it.

This was the nearest approach he could make to the matter of the vision. The stone resting upon the earth and pointing upwards might represent the ladder; and the oil poured on the top of it, the Spirit, or Deity, who stood above it. Thus, the Stone was converted into a *pillar* or monument, which, to the mind of Jacob, would suggest the promise he had heard in his dream. His recollection of this promise would be the monumental inscription of this Pillar of Stone. But when he awoke in a typical resurrection, he exclaimed,

"Verily, Yahweh is in this place, and I knew it not!"

And he was afraid, and said,

"How awful is this place! This is nothing else but a house of Elohim, and this a gate of the heavens!"

Hence, that this idea might be perpetuated, he said,

"Yahweh shall be to me for Elohim, and this Stone which I have set for a pillar shall be a House of Elohim."

Jacob's stone pillar, then, was typical of a House of Elohim to be set up after he awakes from his sleep of centuries. When he awakes, he will find himself in an awful time and place, the gate of heaven opened, and the house of Elohim in manifestation, but he, nevertheless, without dismay. What he saw in vision he will then see in fact—

"Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man"

—John 1:51.

But there is a sense in which Jacob's pillar of the stone exists as a house of Elohim even now, and in intimate connection with the House he will see when he awakes from his present know-nothing state. Paul presents to us this sense in saying, that—

"A House of Deity is an ecclesia of living Deity, a Pillar and habitation (**hedraioma**, from **hedra**—a habitation of gods) of the truth"—1 Tim. 2:15.

This pillar and habitation is—

". . . built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Anointed being chief-corner"—Eph. 2:20.

As a monumental pillar, *the inscription upon it is "the exceeding great and precious promises" believed by each saint*, or "living stone," of which the pillar is composed—"promises" concerning the Kingdom and Name made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as narrated by Moses. This Pillar was anointed on the top of it on the Day of Pentecost, when the Spirit was poured upon the apostles. That anointing was perpetuated in "*the testimony for Jesus*" which has reached even to us, and with which every true believer is anointed.

An ecclesia, however, is not only a pillar inscribed with the Truth, but is a *hedraioma* of the Truth. It is a material thing made up of "gods," as David styles them, or of "children of Deity," according to 1 John 3:2; Psa. 82:6. These are anointed with the Truth, and therefore they are a God-habitation, or *hedraioma*, of the Truth.

In regard to this word *Hedraioma*, it may be remarked here, that it occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, nor in any classical author. The word is derived from *hedra*, which signifies "a seat, habitation, especially of gods, a temple, altar, etc." Hence, the expressiveness of the word, and its peculiar and exclusive application to a habitation of the Truth constituted of gods, or children of Deity, who are, as represented in the Apocalypse, "the Altar," "the Temple," "the Holy City," or, as Paul expresses it, "an habitation of Deity by Spirit"—Eph. 2:22.

The ecclesia in the aggregate is *the Pillar of the Stone* to be placed in Zion, and a *hedraioma*, or House of Elohim, as Jacob termed the type he set up at Bethel. But while the saints collectively are an Elohal Pillar and House of the Truth, this house also contains *two classes* of pillars, and many individual pillars in each class. This is seen in type and antitype.

Typically, the two classes are represented in the Two Brazen Pillars in the Porch of Solomon's Temple, the one on the right hand being named Jachin, and that on the left, Boaz. These names were significative of the things represented by the pillars, which were of brass, 18 cubits (about 32 feet)

long in the shaft, which was 21 feet girth, and surmounted with a chapter 9 feet high. Here was loftiness and strength.

The chapters were ornamented with nets of checker-work, wreaths or *stephans*, or chain-work, pomegranates, and lily work, all of which were representative of things pertaining to the pillars. As a whole, they were styled *Yahkin* and *Boaz*, or in plain English, *He shall establish by strong ones*.

In Canticles, Solomon (who had much to do with lily work and pomegranates and fragrant and choice woods in the building of the Temple) makes the Bridegroom term the Bride "*the Lily*"; and speaking of herself, she says "I am his, feeding among lilies"; and, "a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valley." And in another part of this Song of Songs, the Bridegroom says of the saints forming collectively the Bride—

"A garden enclosed is my sister spouse; a spring locked up, a fountain sealed. Thy shoots are plants of Paradise, pomegranates with delicious fruits."

Moses styles Palestine "a land of *pomegranates*," so that they came to be used as a similitude for *those who shall inherit the land*. Pomegranates therefore constituted the hem of the typical robe of Aaron, being of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and alternating with golden bells. These plants of Paradise typifying the two classes of saints from Israel and the Gentiles, are concretely the *oz*, or "*strong ones*," by whom He, Yahweh, "*will establish*" the kingdom of David. They are, therefore, *Yahkin* and *Boaz*, the brazen pillars of the porch.

But while these pillars of fine brass represented "the Feet" of the Eternal Spirit, which in their progress are as "pillars of fire" glowing in a furnace (Rev. 1:15; 10:1; Eze. 43:7), there are other *representative pillars* which typified the *same agents in a different position*. Within the Tabernacle were "four pillars" upon which was suspended the Veil inwrought with Cherubim—Exo. 26:32. These pillars were of wood overlaid with gold. *Brass* pertained to the Porch and Court of the Priests; *Gold* to the Holy and Most Holy compartments of the Tabernacle. These four cherubic-veil pillars answer to the Four Living Ones of Rev. 4 and 5. These, who are the redeemed, have entered the Temple, "the smoke from the glory and power of the Deity" having altogether passed away—Rev. 15:8.

To be "a pillar in the dwelling of the Deity," is to be a constituent of these four cherubic-veil pillars, and an element of *Jachin* and *Boaz*, the diversity of metals having reference not to different classes of saints, but the same individuals in different states. As *brass*, they are glowing in the furnace of divine wrath,

". . . executing vengeance upon the nations and punishments upon the peoples, binding their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron."
—in short, "*executing upon them the judgment written*" in the time appointed for them to possess themselves of the Kingdom under the whole heaven—Psa. 149:7; Dan. 7.

As *brass*, they are "standing upon the sea of glass mingled with fire," and treading down the wicked as ashes under the soles of their feet—Rev. 15:1; Mal. 4:3. But as *gold*, they stand upon the sea, sounding their harps to the song of the victory they have achieved over the kingdoms and empires of the world.

The saints in the execution of judgment in the approaching "hour of judgment," are also typified by the *sixty pillars of brass*, pertaining to the court of the Tabernacle—Exo. 27:9-17. This dwelling is styled in Cant. 3:7, "His litter which is for Solomon," seen "ascending out of the wilderness as pillars of smoke." The Bride asks, "*Who is this?*" Her attendants say it is:

"His litter which is for Solomon himself. Sixty valiant men surround it, the stoutest heroes of Israel; every one of them grasping a sword, being expert in war; the Commander his sword upon his thigh without fear in nights."

This scene is introduced in Rev. 19:14. Here the Commander and his sixty heroes, or brazen pillars, are in battle array, and prepared to smite the nations, and to tread the winepress, without fear or apprehension of defeat.

In Exo. 24:4, the Twelve Tribes of Israel are typified by twelve pillars surrounding the altar. Jeremiah was made—

"A fortified city, and an **iron pillar**, and **brazen walls** against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land."

This represented an antagonism between him and the state; but as he was likened to iron and brass, he was thereby shown to be unconquerable. It is therefore added—

"And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee, saith Yahweh, to deliver thee"—Jer. 1:18-19.

James, Peter and John were also pillars in the *hedraioma*, with the rest, as the twelve pillars of Moses around the altar, and the future rulers of the pillar-tribes—Gal. 2:9; Matt. 19:28.

From these premises, then, we perceive quite an array of pillars pertaining to the House, or Kingdom, of Elohim. They are *Wisdom's pillars*. They are being "hewn out." The work of hewing is not yet complete; but when the work is finished, and the pillars are all set up, or *established*, in their proper places, they will then constitute "her Seven Pillars." It will then be said:

"Wisdom hath builded her house, and she hath hewn out her seven pillars"—Prov. 9:1. —the wisdom that was with Yahweh "before the earth was" and called by John "*the Word that was Deity*." Wisdom's house is the House of the Deity, Who is "the Builder of all things," commonly styled "the Kingdom of God." Those who are to possess this are the "*pillars of the earth*" which in Psa. 75:4, the Spirit in Asaph says, "*I have established*." This testimony is worthy of particular attention in connection with the promise to the Philadelphians—

"When I take the congregation I, by righteous ones (**maisharim**) will judge. The earth and all its inhabitants are dissolved; **I have fixed its pillars**."

In this we are pointed to the time when "the Great Congregation" of Israel, consisting of its Twelve Pillars, shall be taken possession of by the Deity, Who says He will judge "by righteous ones"; that is, by Messiah and his Brethren, the Saints, who then constitute the Deity in corporeal manifestation—"pillars in the Temple of my Deity."

The idea of the Deity ruling the habitable in or by others was announced by Paul to the Athenian Areopagus. He called upon this body to abandon the idols and embrace the true Deity—

". . . because He had appointed a Day (of a thousand years) in which he will judge the habitable in justice in a man whom He hath ordained, having offered assurance to all, having raised him from among the dead."

Deity in Man the future ruler of the nations; and that man the Spirit-Man of Multitude, symbolized in Rev. 1:13. This is a grand idea—a multitudinous Spirit-Man, every individual member of which will have been either raised from among the dead like Jesus; or transformed, like Enoch and Elijah.

This is the "One Body the Ecclesia," which is the Pillar-house of Elohim; the Christ, This is the Seed of Abraham, or the Christ, that rules the world for a thousand years—a Christ, or Anointed

Body, consisting of Jesus and the Saints, every one of whom is "a Pillar;" and collectively, "the Temple of Deity" from which "he shall not at all go away out more."

But before this post-resurrectional state can be attained, "the earth and all its habitants" must be "dissolved." Its constitution, as symbolized by the beasts of Daniel and John, must be abolished. This is the work of Jachin and Boaz in the Porch, which, as we have seen, typify *Omnipotence in the saints in the execution of judgment.*

When they shall have become "victors," they will pass from the brazen into the golden state. They will then be fixed, or established, as the golden pillars of the earth under its millennial constitution. Once a pillar in the House of wisdom in the golden state, he will "not at all go away out more."

To perceive the force of these words we must remember that "the Temple of Deity" exists in two states—the present, and the future. Paul, addressing the saints in Corinth (who were as we are, of the present, or flesh and blood, state) says to them—

"Ye are a building of Deity—a Temple of Deity, and the Spirit of the Deity dwells in you."

But they have all "gone away out" of "the tabernacle in which they groaned being burdened"—2 Cor. 5:4; "the earthly house of the tabernacle," formerly the Temple of Deity in Corinth, is all "dissolved;" and its constituents are all sleeping in the dust of the earth unconscious of every thing. There they lie awaiting the action of the power which shall raise them from the dead; and constitute them—

"A Building, a House not made with hands, an Aion-House in the heavens."
—when they shall become pillars in this house where they will continue fixed. Death will affect them no more, and consequently, being then immortal they will "not at all go away out more."

1957 Texas Fraternal Gathering

God willing, the Texas Fraternal Gathering for 1957 will be held on the Christadelphian camp grounds near Hye, beginning at 9:00 A.M. Monday, July 29, and closing at noon Sunday, Aug. 4.

The usual procedure calls for three lectures each day, Monday through Saturday, at 11:00 A.M., 3:00 P.M. and 8:00 P.M., the final service being on Sunday morning, at 11:00. Classes are arranged for the children throughout the week, and a period for reading and discussing the Bible lessons finds a place in the daily routine.

Ample facilities have been erected on the grounds for serving three meals each day to those present at the Gathering.

All the brothers and sisters who possibly can are urged to be with us for this week of rejoicing together in the hope of our calling. It is an occasion that is devoted wholly to the work of unifying, upbuilding and strengthening the body of Christ as they endeavor to be a people prepared for the Lord when he comes.

If you plan to come, or desire advance arrangements in the way of accommodations for your stay, please write to: —bro. E. W. Banta, 7009 Sherman St., Houston 11, Texas

Bible Questions Answered

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

If God hears prayer, why is it that many times we pray sincerely for His help in a matter and do not get it?

The question of answer to prayer has to be judged very widely. We are liable to confine our view to our own feelings and likes as to what is desirable. That this is a mistake, reason will tell us when we consider that we had no existence a short time back, and that we are only items in a vast system which Eternal Wisdom is developing for its own ends. The Eternal Power that produced us must necessarily be more related to the problem than the desires of creatures so small and erring as we.

The children of Israel, in their passage through the wilderness, wept in their tents at the monotony of their food. God was displeased at their murmurings. Even Moses was angry, because the people knew they were in the hand of God in the peculiar situation they occupied, and ought, upon the evidence, to have *resigned themselves absolutely* to any experience He saw fit to put them through.

Moses afterwards told them that God had fed them with manna and suffered them to hunger with the object of teaching them humility and wisdom, that He might "*do them good at their latter end.*"

When, therefore, we pray that our distresses may be ended—(that foolish children may become wise; that difficulties in our circumstances may be straightened out; that the darkness all around us may be dispelled)—we should always qualify our prayers with a recognition of the possibility that *the wisdom of God may require the continuance, for a time, of the thing we are asking to be delivered from.*

Paul earnestly besought the Lord thrice that he might be delivered from the thorn in the flesh inflicted upon him. But his prayer was not granted. He was informed the thorn was necessary. How did he take it? His action is an example for us—

"Wherefore I will take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, persecutions, distresses for Christ's sake."

If, therefore, our prayers are not granted, we must conclude that their denial is part of our needed preparation for a place in that glad morning when "sorrow and mourning will flee away."

"I reckon" (says Paul) "that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

We must train ourselves to take this view. "Sufferings" are needful. The redeemed, *without exception*, "come out of great tribulation." The tribulation will differ in different cases and different times: but tribulation is tribulation and is needful for the moral objects in view. It is "grievous," as Paul allows, but if because it is grievous, we ask it to be taken away, and it is not taken away, shall we say our prayers are not answered? John gives us the key to the subject:

"This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything **according: to His will**, He heareth us."

If we know this, then—

"We know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

—for we could never wish God to give us anything that was not according to His will. Even Christ has given us an example in this. He prayed earnestly to be spared his terrible ordeal—

"Nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done."

Look backward to the time when you had no being: and forward to the endless ages of joyful glory for which God is preparing you: and you will be enabled to endure the sufferings from which He does not see fit to deliver you though you earnestly ask Him, knowing in that case that they are part of the process of preparation, the necessity for which, you will one day see clearly.

* * *

"Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"—Matt. 28:19.

A correspondent objects to the use of "Father, Son and Holy Spirit." The reasons are not good. No construction we may put upon the action of the apostles afterwards, must be allowed to displace the instructions of Christ under which they acted. He told them (Matt. 28:19) to baptize believers—

". . . in (into) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

What Christ told the apostles to do, no believer will deny the apostles did. We are not furnished with the form of words employed by them in the act of immersing those who believed. This is a matter of little importance. It is the *understanding of what is being done* and not the sound that issues from the lips of any performer in it, that determines the character of the act.

The spoken words should, of course, be in harmony with that understanding. That understanding is expressed in the formula prescribed by Jesus in the words quoted, which is the formula in use among his brethren, and it is expressed in the form our correspondent refers to, when that form is understood.

"The Name of the Lord Jesus" *is* the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; for who is the Lord Jesus?—*the Father manifested in the Son by the Holy Spirit.* He is therefore the impersonation of the formula which he prescribed.

But why should he prescribe in the baptismal formula the elements of the mystery of godliness, instead of the simple person in which the mystery was revealed? Because that in all things, *the Father might be glorified.* The formula keeps the relation of things in view which might otherwise be lost sight of. The Son can do nothing of himself except as the Father empowers him (John 5:19).

If the person of the Lord Jesus merely were expressed, the Father's supremacy might in time be hid from view. In the days of his flesh, Jesus repudiated a compliment leading to this. When saluted as, "Good Master" (which he was), by one who only saw in him a wonderful man after the flesh, he said—

"Why callest thou ME good? There is none good but One, that is God."

We may be sure that this zeal for the Name of the Father continues, and that we do well to help him (so far as it is permitted puny mortals in such a matter) to hold high the honor of the Father's Name by immersing believers into the Name—

". . . of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

* * *

What is meant when God said to the prophet Ezekiel, "Thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb"
(Eze. 24:27)?

The explanation of this is to be found in the earlier part of Ezekiel's prophecy. God, in calling him to be a prophet, informed him He was sending him to a rebellious nation, who would not listen to

him (see chs. 2 and 3), and that as a way of giving emphasis to the messages he would have to deliver, he must "go shut himself up in his house," and *not speak, except when the Spirit should speak to him.*

This would have been very difficult for Ezekiel by merely natural power. Therefore God would enable him:

"I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth that thou shalt be dumb and shalt not be to them a reprover: for they are a rebellious house. But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God" (3:24-27).

This state of things was to last till the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Ezekiel was thus to be a sign—a striking sign certainly—a man subject to supernatural dumbness from which he was released only during the temporary intervals of inspiration. When Jerusalem should fall, Ezekiel would return to the normal state (24:27).

Ezekiel was not a resident of Jerusalem, but a dweller among the captives who had been removed at an earlier period to the river of Chebar (1:50). Consequently, he was indebted to report for information of the fall of the city. This information he received on the fifth day of the tenth month of the twelfth year of the Chebar captivity, by the arrival of one that had escaped from the doomed city. But the Spirit of God marked the event before the arrival of the fugitive:

"The hand of the Lord was upon me in the evening before he that was escaped came, and had opened my mouth . . . that I was no more dumb."

* * *

"Why have we not the Holy Spirit given to us now, as in the days of the apostles?"

The Holy Spirit was given in the days of the apostles as a divine witness to the truth of their testimony to the resurrection of Christ (see John 15:26-27; Acts 5:32; Heb. 2:4; Mark 16:20). The apostles were the "witnesses" to that fact (Acts 2:32; 3:15; 6:32; 10:39; 13:31), and the Holy Spirit confirmed their testimony so that men might have a basis for faith.

No such purpose could be served now, for there are no witnesses' testimony for the Spirit to confirm. There is only the *written* testimony of the apostles which has already been abundantly confirmed.

No doubt it would be a powerful confirmer of faith if God gave the Holy Spirit to believers now as He did in the days of the apostles; but we must remember that God condescends to such special displays of power only at great turning points when it is necessary to show His endorsement of events for the confidence of subsequent generations. *Faith is the great thing He aims to produce.* The constant exhibition of His power would be "sight" not faith. The time will come for this, but that will only be when a sufficient number of Adam's race has been influenced by faith to become obedient.

"Without faith, it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 6:6).

He grants so much confirmation of the testimony *as is necessary to enable men to have faith* in the thing testified in sufficient numbers for His purpose. Beyond this, we might desire—but cannot expect—Him to go.

* * *

Engagement to the Alien

A brother would not be "justified in engaging himself to a Christian young lady who is looking into the Truth," unless she had actually come to a decision in its favor, and made up her mind to yield the necessary submission in baptism. Your question presupposes that you recognize marriage

with the unbeliever to be unlawful. If so, *you must recognize promise as EQUALLY unlawful*, for the promise of a son of God is binding. Wait till she decides. "Looking into the Truth" as a rule leads to its acceptance, but it is *not certain*, and where would you be if after you had given your promise, she should decide against the Truth? In a false and embarrassing position that would create difficulties for yourself and everybody else.

* * *

It may astonish an orthodox believer that "God" in 2 Sam. 24:1 should be identical with "Satan" in 1 Chron. 21:1. That such should be the fact may well suggest that the orthodox "Satan" and the *Bible* "Satan" cannot be the same. Understand that God can become an adversary to a man, and the surprising identity is explained.

Continue in Prayer

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God"—Phil. 4:6.

The daily prayers of true Christadelphians will be patterned after the model Jesus gave his disciples in Matt. 6:9-13—commonly known as the Lord's Prayer. These verses are probably more widely quoted than any other in the Bible—yet with so little understanding. Let us endeavor to get the depth and beauty of the words Jesus spoke on this occasion.

Five verses: this would be considered a short prayer—yet, *how much it embraces!* We are instructed in the previous verses of this chapter not to make long prayers, nor use vain repetitions; not to recite long prayers to be heard of the brethren, but to humbly and fervently petition God alone.

There are seven petitions in this model prayer—seven, the number of completeness and perfection. The first three have to do exclusively with God—

"Thy Name be hallowed . . . Thy Kingdom come . . . Thy will be done."

Here is God's great purpose defined in three short petitions. And they occur in a descending scale—from Himself down to the manifestation of Himself in His Kingdom, and from His Kingdom to the entire subjection of its subjects, or the complete doing of His will.

These three things are the earnest and foremost desire, the live vision of every true saint, the things seen afar off of which we are fully persuaded. The remaining 4 petitions have to do with ourselves—what God can do for us as His dear children:

"Give us our daily bread . . . Forgive us our debts . . . Lead us not into temptation . . . Deliver us from evil."

These latter petitions occur in the ascending scale—from natural need to spiritual guidance to an entrance into the kingdom. Now let us consider the wording of the prayer—

"After this manner, therefore, pray ye: Our Father . . . Abba, Father . . ."

Because of his perfect obedience unto death, we are privileged as the brethren of Christ to call upon God as "*Our Father*"—

"Having received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."
As beloved children, Christ includes us in himself—

". . . that ye might receive the adoption of sons. And because we are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

The great truth of this unspeakable gift is experienced in increasing degree as we repeatedly draw nigh to Him. What vast mercy is extended in Christ's instruction to the disciples to call upon God as their Father in heaven, Whom they were to glorify because of an intimate knowledge of Him from Whom they were to expect every good and perfect gift—Who knew even before they asked what things they had need of!

Through Christ, He is made more than the Father of all living creatures, the Author and Preserver of all existence. He has become a personal heavenly Father, having begotten us by a lively hope in Christ!

Through this great mercy in Christ, the Creator and Sustainer of all things has condescended to look upon us (who were once alienated from Him, without hope in the world); ready to receive us and reconcile us unto Himself when repentance is shown and sins forsaken. As soon as true repentance is shown, and we return to God in faith and prayer, we know we will be forgiven in Christ, by a kindly Father—not as an Avenger—

"For He hath not rewarded us according to our iniquities, nor dealt with us after our sins . . . for if He should mark iniquity, who should stand?" (Psa. 103:10; 130:3).

"Our Father, which art in heaven"

So are the words in the King James Version. "Which" may apply to either persons or things, and lacks the personal aspect that is found in the Diaglott rendering:

“Our Father, THOU in heaven.”

As we use the word "*Father*," we express a relationship that we have all known and felt from our infancy. But in calling God "*Our Father, Thou in heaven*," we contrast Him with our natural fathers, who knew how to give us good things upon earth, and so our minds are lifted up to heaven, where He dwells in power, majesty and glory in supreme excellence.

These words throw a warmth over the whole prayer, introducing the suppliant believer as the beloved child of God, who trustingly entreats with child-like trust and confidence. Now we come to the first petition—

"Hallowed be Thy Name"

Set apart—held in reverence—regarded and treated as Holy— is THY NAME. Or, Let Thy Name be sanctified—held in honor. The Diaglott rendering is, "Reverend is Thy Name." We remember the meaning of "reverence": profound respect mingled with love and awe. This is how we are to consider His great Name which is so high above every other Name. The second petition is—

"Thy kingdom come"

Hasten Thy purpose, that Thy covenants may be fulfilled—

"O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him, and to them that keep His commandments."

We know that God will set up His kingdom here on earth at the appointed time, and we are *showing Him our desire toward it*, asking Him to set it up quickly; for we know that until it is set up, sin will reign. And so we are looking for the time longingly when God's Name will be hallowed in the

earth—that man at last may receive of His blessings that will then come down like showers to water the earth. The third petition is—

“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”

We are to pray unceasingly for that time when all the inhabitants of the earth will do the will of God universally, cheerfully, constantly, perfectly, harmoniously and without weariness. All hearts will be united as one to the overflowing of praise and thanksgiving to God.

We are told that we must *understand what the will of the Lord is*, both concerning our duty now as we submit ourselves to the law of Christ, and also the ultimate purpose of bringing all the world into subjection to the will of God.

Now, the fourth petition—

"Give us this day our daily bread"

What a lot of meaning in these simple words! Luke has it—

"Give us day by day, our daily bread."

The Diaglott is clearer and more to the point—

"Give us this day our necessary food."

Having sought first the Kingdom of God, we may expect these needful things to be added to us. First, let us consider the word "*bread*;" for that is what we are to ask for. It is known as the staff of life. Bread is the principal part of the things which are needful for the body, and is often put for the whole. By the use of this word, we are taught to ask *only for the things that are NECESSARY*, and we are told that *only food and raiment* are necessary (1 Tim. 6:8).

Since God knows our needs, let us trust Him to give us according to His wisdom and His purpose in us. And let us try to realize how much we depend upon Him for it, at the same time realizing that what we receive is as a gift from Him and not something He owes us. Our thanks should go up to Him continually, as we determine to use what He gives to His service and His glory.

We are taught to ask for it *daily*, thus keeping in the forefront our dependence upon Him. Israel could gather only so much manna *each day*—the amount regulated by God. We are instructed to be moderate and content with what He gives us— to trust Him from day to day. Asking for tomorrow's bread would not show trust in God nor belief in the principle of seeking first the Kingdom of God, that all these things may be added unto us.

Another thought in connection with this might be the integrity that a brother must maintain in pursuit of his daily bread. He could not be a slacker on his job; for he knows that all he does must be done *as unto God and not unto man*. How otherwise could we ask the Father, "Give us our daily bread"?

The fifth petition—

"Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"

This could be an exhortation in itself. While we are continually seeking from our heavenly Father so many and so great blessings, we must not forget that we are *deserving of none*.

Man forfeited his claim by sin, and we are deserving only of death. Because of the work of God in Christ, there is forgiveness with Him. And therefore we are taught to pray continually for forgiveness, that we may be without spot and blameless before Him in love, *reflecting His forgiveness toward any who trespass against us*.

We pray, not only that our past sins be blotted out of His Book, but that our renewed offences in thought, word or deed—omission and commission—in our connection with God and man, be forgiven, and our lives and hearts be purged and cleansed of all that is defiling. By being taught to ask for forgiveness every time we pray, we are reminded to exercise constant watchfulness, continual self-examination, repeated humbling, increasing faith and hope in God's mercy for Christ's sake.

Thus patience and longsuffering is drawn out; forgiveness of others is hastened, because we urge our Father to forgive us *on these grounds*—"even as we forgive our debtors." True repentance and earnest faith always produce this disposition to forgive others and to forgive their sins. The sixth petition:

"Lead us not into temptation"

—requires a close examination to get the full meaning. He who honestly seeks, and has the assurance of forgiveness of past sins, will strive eagerly to avoid committing these acts again. But we know that when we would do good, evil is present, and that trials come upon us with certainty, as they have upon all the faithful in the past. But we know too, that we will not be tried beyond what we are able to bear, and that with every temptation there will be a means of avoiding the consequence by trusting in Him to deliver us.

The Diaglott gives, "Abandon us not to trial." If we were abandoned—left to our own—we would be lost. We are tempted by our own lusts. But through God we can overcome.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation make a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it."

This is probably what Jesus had in mind when he told his disciples to alert themselves, and pray that they enter not into temptation. The meaning must have escaped Peter because, under the stress of the moment, he fell by denying his Master.

The seventh and last petition—

"Deliver us from evil"

—really takes in all the other six because it recognizes that only the Father can deliver us from our natural state through the especially provided channel. He only can guide and direct our steps; for it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. He is our salvation, and our part is subjection to His direction in implicit faith.

"For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen."

He who taught us to pray testifieth these things, saying—

"Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

—C.W.B.

Out of Egypt Have I Called My Son

"Let favor be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness"—Isaiah 26:10

PART NINE

Although there is no mention of the removal of the plague of lice, which all the spells and incantations of the court magicians were unable to initiate or remedy, and which they were compelled to acknowledge was *"the finger of God,"* yet there is little doubt it had been done prior to Pharaoh's

visit to the *sacred* waters of the Nile—a fact suggestive that such visit was in acknowledgment of the deliverance supposedly granted to him by, and in honor of, the imaginary gods of those waters.

4: A GRIEVOUS SWARM OF FLIES

And the Lord, Who knoweth the hearts of all men, made that visit the occasion of a warning to Pharaoh of a more terrible visitation in case of further resistance on his part to the divine request that he should let Israel go. Hence Moses was instructed to meet him, and to renew that request, and say—

"If thou wilt not let My people go, behold, I will send **swarms of flies** upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses; and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are." (Exo. 8:21).

And as if to place the fact of *divine intervention* beyond all question, Moses was directed to call Pharaoh's attention to a very striking feature which the Lord was about to introduce as evidence of that fact, in that He would *sever* between Israel in the land of Goshen, and the Egyptians in all the rest of the land of Egypt, so that *no swarms should be in the land of Goshen*—

"TO THE END thou may know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth."

All this, however, proved of no avail: wherefore—

"The Lord did so: and there came a grievous swarm of flies into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt; the land was corrupted (destroyed) by reason of the swarm of flies" (Exo. 8:24).

The intolerance and severity of this *fourth* plague, and the momentary conviction that Moses and Aaron were somehow identified with it, is to be gathered from the fact that Pharaoh hurriedly called for these servants of God and said to them—

"Go ye, sacrifice to your God **in the land.**"

But since this concession was neither practical nor in accordance with the request, it was objected to by Moses that in sacrificing to God before the eyes of the Egyptians, Israel would be incurring their anger, as the act would be interpreted by them as blasphemy and revilement of their gods, and the Egyptians would stone them. Moses therefore proposed to go—

"Three days journey into the wilderness."
—to which Pharaoh consented. "Only," said he—

"Ye shall not go very far away. **Entreat for me.**"

Moses' answer was courageous and dignified, and contained a warning against the danger to Pharaoh of *dealing deceitfully* in not letting the people go to sacrifice, and promised to intreat.

"And the Lord did according to the word of Moses, and He removed the swarm of flies . . . **there remained not one.**"

With this respite, however, came hardness of heart, for "he would not let the people go" (Exo. 8:20, 32). We are reminded by this constant perversity on the part of Pharaoh of a scriptural principle which surely finds illustration in him—

"Let favor be showed to the wicked yet he will not learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:10).

But without any attempt at excuse for such conduct on the part of Pharaoh, yet in judging of it we must take into account his surroundings as well as the stubbornness and haughtiness of spirit which naturally belonged to him—qualifications necessary to the situation; and also the *divine point of view*, from which we may understand that any wavering on his part in the direction of yielding to pressure, until the divine purpose for which he had been *raised up* had been accomplished, would be providentially dissipated, so as to allow of the development and permanent establishment of that basis of reference and appeal to Israel so constantly resorted to by God in succeeding ages.

Pharaoh was, doubtless, also greatly influenced by the magicians of his court, whose greatest object seems to have been to dissuade him from entertaining the doctrine so frequently forced upon his attention by Moses and Aaron, that the God of Israel was the *only living and true God*, although even they themselves had been compelled to admit the *supernaturalness* of one event at least with which Moses and Aaron were identified.

In the case of this plague of flies, might they not have argued before Pharaoh the fact of similar occurrences in the East, (owing, in great measure, to the neglect of cleanliness), and suggested such might be the explanation of the recent visitation?

Again, they would doubtless influence him by appealing to the loftiness of his position, and the degradation of him yielding to the request of men who sought the diminution of his power and glory, if not the ruin of his empire. But, be this as it may, the purpose of God was being served in the stubbornness of Pharaoh, from whatever cause (though unknown to him).

5: MURRAIN ON ALL CATTLE IN THE FIELD

The momentary relief which he deceitfully obtained was, however, but the prelude to that scene of devastation and death which constituted the *fifth* plague. Moses was again directed—

"Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let My people go that they may serve Me. For if thou refuse . . . the hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle **which is in the field**, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep; there shall be a grievous murrain.

"And the Lord shall sever between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt: and there shall nothing die of all that is the children's of Israel" (Exo. 9:1-4).

This message met with no better result than any previous—

"And the Lord did that thing on the morrow, and **all the cattle of Egypt died.**"

It is worthy of note that the statement that "All the cattle of Egypt died" (whereas subsequent plagues show the existence of cattle in Egypt) is made the butt of the unbeliever in the Mosaic narrative; and he thinks that he sees in the statement evidence of the unreliability of the narrative, and scornfully demands to know *where the cattle came from that are said to have been subject to succeeding plagues*.

One feels tempted to say that an objection of this kind reveals either the grossest inattention on the part of the objector, or the wilful perversion of a plainly-stated fact. The reader will no doubt have noticed that the narrative specifically limits the operation of the plague to the cattle *in the field* at the time of its visitation; and that, therefore, the statement that—

"All the cattle of Egypt died."

—is governed by that which limits the operation. The greatest sufferers, therefore, by the plague were those who unheeded the warning and left their cattle "*in the field*," where they all died; whereas of Israel's cattle in Goshen *there died not one* (9:1-7).

6: BOILS WITH BLAINS UPON MAN AND BEAST

The *sixth* plague appears to have followed without the usual warning. And Moses and Aaron were instructed to take handfuls of "*ashes of the furnace*," and sprinkle them upwards towards heaven, in the sight of Pharaoh. And they became small dust in all the land of Egypt, and a *boil* breaking forth with blains upon man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt.

The magicians are specially mentioned as not being able to stand before Moses because of the boils (9:8-12). There is probably a reason for the prominence given to the magicians in this connection. We have in mind Paul's allusion to *Jannes and Jambres*, the magicians who, he says, withstood Moses. And he compares their conduct in that respect with some who in his day resisted the Truth, of whom he said "their folly should be manifest unto all, as was that of Jannes and Jambres" (2 Tim. 3).

It is, therefore, not unreasonable to infer from this that these men mentioned of Paul by name were actually *the magicians affected by this plague*; and the inference (strengthened by the fact that nothing more is heard of the magicians in subsequent plagues) is that they perished in this plague, and that thus was their folly made manifest.

It is also deserving of note that the very *ashes* used in the infliction of this plague were in all probability those of the "furnaces" or brick-kilns at which the children of Israel were made to serve with rigor. How appropriate was such a use when contemplated from the standpoint of their sufferings, and how strengthening to their conviction of the divine character of the mission of Moses!

7: FIRE MINGLED WITH HAIL, VERY GRIEVOUS

The prelude to the *seventh* plague greatly emphasizes the *purpose of God* in all these transactions. The demand of Jehovah that Pharaoh should let His people go was couched in very solemn terms in case of refusal. "For," said He—

"I will at this time send all My plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; **that thou mayest know that there is none like Me in all the earth.**

"For now I will stretch out Mine hand that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and **thou shalt be cut off from the earth.**

"And in very deed FOR THIS CAUSE HAVE I RAISED THEE UP, for to show in thee MY POWER, and that MY NAME may be declared throughout all the earth."

Warning of the plague was then given to Pharaoh so that he might send his servants to gather his cattle that were in the fields that they might be preserved. By some the warning was heeded, but by other it was utterly disregarded.

"And the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground . . . So there was hail, and fire mingled with hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation" (Exo. 9:23).

And every herb of the field, and every tree of the field, the barley then in the ear, and the flax then balled, or risen in the stalk, were smitten, as also the cattle and herdmen that had not been removed to any place of safety. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail.

Pharaoh, alarmed at this unexampled tempest, sent for Moses and Aaron, and confessed that he had sinned, and that the Lord was righteous, and that he and his people were wicked. He also requested Moses to entreat the Lord—

". . . that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer."

Thus appalled in the presence of the raging elements, he was, *apparently*, humble and submissive; but Moses knew that it would pass away with the storm which had produced it. Nevertheless, Moses interceded with the Lord for him, and the thunder and hail ceased. And when Pharaoh saw this (Exo. 9-34-35)—

"He sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants . . . neither would he let the children of Israel go."

This unparalleled stubbornness of Pharaoh in the presence of such overwhelming evidence of power and wisdom brought to bear upon him for the accomplishment of the purpose so frequently expressed, suggests to us a wonderful contrast between the Pharaoh of *Joseph's* day (then also divinely directed in the channel of God's purpose), and this Pharaoh of *Moses' day*.

In the case of the *former*, the interpretation of a dream supernaturally impressed upon his sensorium sufficed to work in him the conviction that Joseph's ability to accomplish a task which the wise men by whom he was surrounded were unable to do, was evidential of the presence of the Spirit of God in Joseph.

But the infinitely greater cogency of the successive appeals to reason presented in these palpable evidences of the hand of God in the scourges with which Moses and Aaron were identified (and preceded as they were by prediction and minute detail both as to times and events), utterly failed to effect any lasting conviction in the *latter* Pharaoh that the power openly manifested before his eyes was none other than the power of God.

But in the use to which this obstinacy of human nature was divinely subordinated, the children of God, enlightened by His Truth, will discover infinite wisdom and goodness and, perhaps, the only effectual remedy (in conjunction with the selection of the seed of Abraham) for the prevention of the then threatened universal apostasy of the whole surviving race of Adam which had been divinely preserved for the evolution of that grandest and noblest of all schemes which is being silently and surely worked out—*the filling of the whole earth with the praise and glory of God.*

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

London Fraternal Gathering **Friday, April 19 — Orange Hall. 388 Clarence St.**

Another year has come and gone, and if our Lord will, we plan to have our Annual Gathering on Friday, April 19, 1957. We extend to each one a hearty invitation to join with us, that our minds and hearts may be enlarged by the ministration to our spiritual needs that will be granted to us through the use of God's revealed Truth. The program has a very timely subject—

WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

1. The Present State of the World a Fulfilment of Christ's Prophecy.
2. The Increase of Unbelief, and Its Effect Upon Unfaithful Servants.
3. The Morning Cometh! Blessed Is He That Watcheth!
4. **THE RESURRECTION:** Christ the Firstfruits; Afterwards They That Are Christ's at His Coming.

Come and join with us. Please advise us early of your plans, and with the help of our Heavenly Father we will take care of your daily necessities while with us.

The London Berean Christadelphian Ecclesia,
by bro. W. D. Gwalchmai, 173 Devonshire Ave., London, Ont. Can.

"Who Is a Chosen Man?"

(Jeremiah 49:19)

"That I may see the good of Thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation, that I may glory with Thine inheritance"—Psa. 106:5

The nation of Israel is often spoken of in Scripture as "**God's** chosen nation," or people, as in 1 Chr. 16:13—

"O ye seed of Israel, His servant; ye children of Jacob, His **Chosen Ones**."

And Psa. 105:6—"O ye seed of Abraham, His **Chosen**."

In this latter passage the RSV also renders it "Chosen *Ones*," indicating that the original is plural. Evidently, then, it refers not only to Abraham but also to Israel as a nation. We read again in Isa. 43:20-21 (RSV)—

"To give drink to My **Chosen People**, the people whom I formed for Myself that they might declare My praise."

"Chosen" here is from the Hebrew *bachir*, meaning "tried ones." Another form of the same Hebrew word is in Prov. 22:1,

"A good name is rather to be **chosen** than great riches."

Here the Hebrew *bachar* means "after testing." Our English word "proved" is also translated from this same Hebrew, as—

"I proved (**bachan**) thee at the waters of Meribah" (Ps. 81:7).

In Gen. 42:15 Joseph tells his brethren—

"Hereby ye shall be proved (**bachan: tested, tried**)."

And in Psa. 17:3 we find the same meaning—

"Thou hast proved (**bachan**) mine heart."

Coming back to the word "chosen," we find in Mark 13:20—

"For the **elect's** sake whom He hath **chosen**."

We learn by reference to a lexicon that "elect" and "chosen" here are from the same root. The Diaglott has, literally—

"The chosen ones whom He hath chosen."

Correspondingly, the word "elect" as found in Isa. 42:1, 45:4, 65:9-22, has been translated from the Hebrew *bachir* which (as before stated) is also translated "chosen."

When the word "elect" occurs in the New Testament (as in Matt. 24:22 and Luke 13:20) it is from the Greek *eklektos*, meaning "choice, or chosen." Matt. 12:18 reads—

"Behold My servant whom I have chosen."

This, we are told (v. 17), is quoted from the prophet Isaiah (42:1), which reads "*Mine Elect*" (instead of "Chosen").

In considering why Israel could be spoken of as "tested" or "tried," we find Israel figuratively termed a *vine* in Psa. 80—

"Thou hast brought a Vine out of Egypt: Thou hast cast out the heathen (nations) and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. "The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea (Mediterranean), and her branches unto the river (Jordan)"—vs. 8-11.

God had not chosen this vine at random. He had first tried Abraham, and he had proved faithful; afterward Isaac and Jacob. After this their descendants were providentially brought into Egypt (the iron furnace) and afflicted, and then in order to test, or prove, them to be His *Chosen*, He with a mighty hand delivered them, and smote their oppressors. This was the real testing process which ultimated in a remnant of the tried multitude being "planted" in the land of Israel, where they "took deep root," or flourished. We discern from the enquiry—

"Why hast Thou broken down her hedges so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?" (Psa. 80:12).

—that after being planted in the promised land they did not meet the testing, and when *proven* were found not the *Chosen*. Was then God's graciousness and kindness to become abortive? Surely not. But what can be the meaning of God's oft repeated declarations that "*Israel is My Chosen*," as in Isa. 41:9-10?—

"Thou whom I have chosen from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art My servant; I have chosen thee and not cast thee away. Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God.

"I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness."

The answer to all this is found in the declarations concerning Israel as found in the New Testament Scriptures. Paul, the inspired apostle to the Gentiles, very clearly explains it in the 9th, 10th and 11th chs. of his letter to the Romans. After discussing the subject at much length in chs. 9 and 10, he then asks—

"Hath God cast away His people?" (Rom. 11:1).

—which indeed some declare He *has* done; he answers however:

"God forbid—or, By no means!—God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew."

And then citing the incident in which Elias seemed to fear that all Israel was turned aside to wickedness, he continues to elaborate how that a *remnant* was faithful, and that pointed to a remnant being "even so at this present time" (v. 5). A "remnant" would be found among those who had been "broken off" nationally—see vs. 17-28 which sum up what he has stated.

"Even so at this present time also there is a remnant according to the ELECTION of grace" (v. 5).

Here again the Greek word is a form of *eklektos*, being *ekloge*, which has the meaning of "choice." This usage of the phrase "election of grace" enables us to discern exactly where we may look for the true Remnant, whether among Jews or Gentiles, remembering Jesus' words—

"If ye were Abraham's **children** ye would do the **works of Abraham**" (John 8:39).

Also remembering Paul's figurative exposition of the two women in Gal. 4. The true Israel—who are the *elect*, the *chosen*, the *proved*—are they to whom all the prophecies refer as the Israel who will "not be cast off."

We see this revealed also in the comparison of Christ with Israel, in the sense of being the "son brought out of Egypt." The prophecy found in Hos. 11:1—

"When Israel was a child then I loved him and called My Son out of Egypt."
—*seems* to be fulfilled in the nation's being delivered from Egyptian bondage. However, the inspired writer tells us in Matt. 2:14-15 that the departure of Joseph and Mary taking Jesus with them into Egypt, was to fulfil the prophecy that—

"Out of Egypt have I called My Son."

The true Son of God, the nucleus of true Israel, must be seen as the deeper meaning of the prophecy. And just as Jesus was individually the "Temple of God" when he said—

"Destroy this Temple and I will rear it up in three days."
—so the corporate and multitudinous Body of Christ are the Living Temple in which God dwells—

"What agreement hath the Temple of God with idols? For ye are the Temple of the Living God, as God hath said,
"I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be My people"
(2 Cor. 6:16).

So also as Jesus was brought OUT of Egypt, the multitudinous Son of God, or Body of Christ, will be brought out of Egyptian darkness and the furnace of affliction and trial by the loving hand of their Father Who has called them and, as we have seen, *chosen* or *elected* them by the testing, purging, *proving* which He considers necessary for all His true sons and daughters. This is in harmony with the teaching concerning chastisement as given in Heb. 12:6-8—

"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons, for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?

"But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, ye are bastards (illegitimate children), and not sons."

To such as these, who endure chastening, the words apply—

"Ye seed of Abraham His (chosen) servants, ye children of Jacob His CHOSEN ONES."

We have seen that the very meaning of the word *elect* in Hebrew is *choice* or *chosen*, and this *chosen* implied "after testing," as can be easily verified. It does seem reasonable to take this as applying to natural Israel, yet we must not forget that natural Israel was "broken off" for their *unbelief* (Rom. 11:17, 20), hence, after testing, were proven not the true "Israel of God," though God still has a purpose in and through them.

The natural is, however, the basis of the spiritual; hence we know that Israel being brought out of Egypt was in a sense and in type the bringing out of God's Son, as witnessed by God's words to Pharaoh—

"Israel is My Son, even My firstborn" (Exo. 4:22-23).

In the infinite knowledge of the Great Creator, Who knows the end from the very beginning, as revealed in the wonderful types and shadows employed in the Mosaic dispensation, there is a depth and breadth in some of the prophecies uttered by the prophets in whom the Spirit of God dwelt that God evidently did not intend the casual reader to discern, for—

"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter"
(Prov. 25:2).

Coming then to the consideration of who are—or what is the nation which can really be said to be—God's people in the *ultimate* sense, which is the *scriptural* sense, the clue can be found in such Scriptures as these (Heb. 4:9)—

"There remaineth therefore a Rest for the People of God."

"Ye are a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People (RSV: God's Own People)"

—1 Pet. 2:9.

This is the "blessed People" that "know the joyful sound" and who "walk in the light of God's countenance" to whom David ascribes blessedness in Psa. 89. How truly beautiful are these ancient prophecies when connected with the apostolic explanation of the "Nation" taken out of many peoples, like Israel of old, except they will prove faithful, whereas Israel was not!

However we must heed the warning that we only stand by faith and must not boast, lest we also be broken off when the true Remnant is delivered. There will be unutterable joy and gladness when that glorious assemblage, clothed in strength and beauty inconceivable, will shout and sing, as it is said—

"Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart" (Psa. 32:11).

—when Jesus "takes the kingdom and the throne and makes his ransomed Bride his own."

When Jacob's name was changed to Israel (when he had power with the angel and could be said to be a "prince" with God, rather than a mere supplanter or usurper—Gen. 32), this new name *Israel* pointed forward to the time when the true "Israel of God" will be ruling over the nations. This signification is seen from the meaning of Israel—*ruling with God*. What else is this but the corporate Body of Christ ruling in that promised "Rest" or Kingdom where (Isa. 32:1)—

"A King shall reign in righteousness, and PRINCES shall rule in judgment."

This PRINCE, or *chief ruler*, is Christ, the Prince-Priest of Ezekiel and the Prince of Daniel who will—

"... make his children Princes in all the earth" (Psa. 45:16).

This is—that tried, tested, faithful and true cloud of witnesses who will sing with strong immortal voices that glad song of redemption as depicted by John in the vision on Patmos—

"And they (the Elect, Chosen Israel) sang a new song, saying,

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

(Rev. 5: 9-10). —H.A.S.

Every Man Perfect in Christ Jesus

"*Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering WITH JOYFULNESS*"—Col. 1:11

Colosse was a city in western Asia Minor, the present Turkey. It was quite near the city of Laodicea and the rest of the 7 ecclesias of the Revelation. No mention is made of it in Paul's travels, though it is very likely he visited there.

Paul's epistle to them was, like most of his epistles, written from prison. Paul's concern was never for himself or his own circumstances. For the Gospel's sake he gave up everything. He had no family, no home, no permanent employment. His life was a weary and continual pilgrimage.

This epistle's great theme is *the supreme position of Christ in the purpose of God*—the necessity in all things of being *with him and in him*. This basic truth is presented as a bulwark against being led aside by crochets and invented forms of self-righteousness and self-discipline which ministered to pride, and do not get to the root of the problem of *overcoming the flesh*.

It teaches that true holiness is both beautiful and practical, cleansing and purifying and ennobling every aspect of life, but that there is no value or virtue, but rather harm, in performing self-imposed regulations that God has not required.

The epistle is addressed (1:2) to the—

"**Saints** and faithful brethren in Christ at Colosse."

Most versions render this—

"To the **holy** and faithful brethren."

There *is* such a class of people. There *must be* such a class—holy and faithful—completely different from the world in all they say and do—men and women of heavenly beauty and godliness, sealed with the living seal of Christ in their character for all the world to see.

"*Grace be unto you*"—"grace" means kindness, favor, blessing, mercy, goodness. "*And peace*"—calm, relaxed tranquillity, confident in the assurance that "ALL things work together for good"—that God never slumbers, and that nothing happens or can happen that He does not control.

"We give thanks unto God for you" (v.3).

Paul's heart was always full of thanksgiving—thankful for the revelation of the great divine purpose—thankful that he was called to play a part in it—thankful for the holy and faithful brethren throughout the world who had been separated from the world and were united with him in God's great purpose.

"Praying **always** for you."

All men of God give much time to prayer—not just on specific occasions, but a continual attitude—a continual maintaining contact. All study of the Word and all work in the Truth should be done in the spiritual atmosphere of prayer—all should be done in the spirit of active, living communion with God.

Consider how many brethren and sisters were within the circle of Paul's attention and care! Yet he could truthfully say to *all* that he prayed *always* for them—not just general, impersonal prayers for them as a group, but loving and personal prayers for each one. We must pattern ourselves after Paul in this respect, keeping all the brethren and sisters in memory, contemplating them one by one in loving and prayerful regard.

"Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and your love to all the saints" (v.4).

This is a *special love*. We are commanded to love all men—that is, to look with compassion and benevolence upon them and to do them good, even in return for evil. But the love of the *saints* is a *special* love.

How do we know who *are* the saints?—the *holy* ones? — whom we should love in this special way? Paul says of some who were called brethren that they—

". . . walked as enemies of the cross of Christ, **minding earthly things**" (Phil. 3:18).

It is not ours to judge, but our deepest love is drawn out to those alone whose hearts are wholly centered on the things of God. Love to the saints means being truly affectionate toward them and interested in them, desiring and enjoying their company. John warns against a "love" that is just in word.

". . . for the hope" (v. 5).

That is, "*because* of The Hope," as most versions render it. Love to the saints must be mutually founded on the One Hope, and the Hope must lead to love of the saints, if this hope is not a barren, lifeless one within us.

"The Hope which is laid up for you in heaven."

He says later in the epistle—as he exhorts them to keep their minds on heavenly things—

“Ye are **dead** and your life is **hid with Christ** in God."

Our hearts and interests must be centered in heaven, for Christ is there and we are part of him. We have died to our natural selves, and to all things connected with present, passing things of the world.

"Whereof ye have heard before in the **Word** of the **Truth** of the **Gospel**."

Here is the solid foundation of all—the Gospel of the Kingdom—the promise of God to Abraham—to Israel—to David—the return of Christ to sweep away all the present evils and sorrows of the world, and to establish universal peace and righteousness, to judge the responsible living and dead, to reward his servants with eternal life with him, and to begin the millennial reign that will bring all the earth to eternal oneness with God: "the *Word of the Truth of the Gospel*."

"Which is come unto you and **bringeth forth fruit**" (v. 6).

The Gospel *must bring forth fruit* in us—the fruit of the Spirit—the characteristics of godliness. He emphasizes this very strongly, later in the epistle.

"Since the **day** ye heard of it, and knew—experienced—the grace of God in Truth."

The Gospel had begun to work on their hearts and develop fruit from the first day they heard it—this is a wonderful thing—a great mystery of godliness—it is the *powerful, living*, spiritual seed sown in the heart.

"As ye learned of Epaphras, our dear fellow servant."

It would seem from this that Epaphras had been the one who had brought the truth to the Colossians. He was at this time with Paul in Rome, and it would be from him that Paul learned of the Colossians' circumstances and problems. Paul's commendation here would confirm the teachings of Epaphras and strengthen his hand in resisting the errors Paul later mentions.

"Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit" (v. 8).

The Spirit is the surrounding and bonding and guiding influence. Love *in the Spirit* is love founded upon mutual affection and understanding in spiritual things.

"For this cause also we do not cease to pray for you" (v. 9).

What does prayer for others accomplish? Does not the salvation of each depend upon their *own* record? And would God's care of His Own children be any less if Paul did not continually pray

for them? Do we need other intercession than Christ? Does God have to be urged and reminded to look after his children?—it may be asked.

The mystery of the power of prayer is very wonderful and very real. We must seek to comprehend it. The natural mind cannot comprehend the things of the Spirit of God.

"Pray for one another . . . The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

It is the gracious will of our Father that we be "*workers together with Him*" in this respect. He assures us that the earnest prayers of those who please Him *do* carry great weight on behalf of others. It is His will that the Body should be one interdependent whole.

Do we exercise this great power and privilege as much as we should? Paul, amid all the pressure of daily things, felt a continual sense of responsibility to pray for the blessing of his brethren. We **MUST** feel the same urgent sense of mutual responsibility. And there is another important consideration—we must labor, too, to be among that well-pleasing class whose prayers alone *are* effective with God.

"That we might be **filled** with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (v. 9).

How do *we* compare in this matter? Are we just drifting through life from day to day, absorbed in our daily tasks and problems and desires, like all the rest of the perishing world, or are we consciously filled with these thoughts and *daily getting closer to this ideal?*

Life or death depends upon what we are filled with—what we fill our minds with most of the time—upon the consistency and earnestness of our search for spiritual understanding.

"**Filled** with the **knowledge** of His will."

A well-founded knowledge seems to have been the great need of the Colossians. Paul fears that they may be carried away with fanciful theories and crotchets, not having a broad, balanced picture of the Truth as it is in Jesus.

The word "knowledge" here is *epi-gnosis*. *Gnosis* is knowledge. *Epi-gnosis* is thorough, or full, knowledge. The Diaglott gives "*exact knowledge*."

The Truth is a lifelong study. To please our Father, our knowledge of what He has revealed must be *detailed and accurate*. There are no short cuts. Learning more and more of the depth and meaning of His Word must be the consuming purpose of our life. We have time for no side issues.

"That ye might **walk worthy** of the Lord."

We note the significant connection between an *exact knowledge* and a *walking worthy*. Paul makes it clear that we cannot walk in a manner the Lord considers worthy without a continual application to the broadening and deepening of our knowledge of Him and what He has revealed.

". . . unto all pleasing."

This is the only place in the Bible this word appears. It means *to make amends, to seek the favor of another*. It was generally used in a bad sense to indicate a crawling self-abasement to another (just like the word "ptochos"—*poor*—which Jesus uses in the expression "poor in spirit"), but in a good sense it means fervent devotion—straining every effort and intensely desiring to be approved and accepted.

"Being fruitful in every good work."

A constant, active life of good works for Christ's sake. Not necessarily anything special, nothing great and spectacular, but in our everyday life and common activity. Everything we do—every word we say—even every thought—is either a *good* work or a *bad* one, according to whether we are consciously trying to please God and obey His commands, or just pleasing ourselves.

"Increasing in the knowledge of God."

Increasing—developing. This is the great purpose of life—*learning, growing, improving*, in every aspect of godliness and spiritual understanding. Can we not, in looking back, see how stupid and blind we have been in so many ways? But it is so hard to discern our *present* stupidity and blindness, yet we know it is there. We must *continually advance* — seeing our own selves more clearly—seeing the mind of God more clearly—realizing how great our darkness and how marvellous the divine light.

Our knowledge is so limited—our ignorance is so great—at best we see but through a glass darkly. But still, growing in the things of God—painfully slow and creeping as it is—is the greatest and most important experience of life. It is a lifelong process, at different stages in different people, and who are we to judge the final result? These thoughts should engender great reverence and great humility. V. 11—

"Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power."

Actually it is the same word both times—"empowered with all power according to the ruling or dominion of His glory.

This is what our prayers are for—that *God work in us and empower us to overcome*. Of ourselves we can do nothing. We must recognize the utter evil and foolishness of our nature, our own complete powerlessness to overcome the motions of the flesh—anger, pride, impatience, selfishness, self-pity, fear, desire, greed, despondency, unhappiness. All overcoming is of God.

"Unto all patience and longsuffering **with joyfulness**."

This is what the man of God is to be strengthened unto. *These things are the heart of the Truth*. These are the things that mark the true children of God. These are the things by which we must examine ourselves to "see whether we be in the Faith."

Patience, in Scripture, is far more than just cold, stoical resignation to the inevitable. It is an active, living, cheerful, persistence in goodness regardless of any contrary circumstances.

Longsuffering must be the basis of all our dealings with others. In the great mercy of God we can be forgiven many things—mistakes, and failures, and blunders in the darkness, but unless—by persistently seeking the power of God—we are strengthened and enlightened in the way of kindness and longsuffering toward all, we shall never stand approved before Him. *Whoever lacks longsuffering is not a godly character, whatever his works and beliefs may be.*

With patience and longsuffering most problems can be solved. Without patience and longsuffering there is no point in even trying to solve anything else, because not only is the task almost hopeless, but even if it succeeds it is but a dead and barren triumph—an intellectual victory but a spiritual failure.

Any manifestation of impatience, or rudeness, or unkindness, or bitterness in any discussion on God's Way of Truth immediately reveals the whole thing as but fleshly contention—for these spiritual characteristics that Paul specifies here are the *basic principles of the Truth*.

Peter says (2:1:8-9) that he that lacketh these things—patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness and love—is *blind, barren and unfruitful* in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ—that is, the knowledge of Jesus Christ is in him a barren tree; it is like the talent hid in a napkin that will serve only to condemn its blind possessor.

But we have not even come to the most important part of Paul's thought—"with joyfulness." That is the most wonderful and unearthly part of all. *No one is living the Truth whose basic frame of mind is not a deep and thankful joyfulness.* Here again we can well "examine ourselves whether we be in the Faith."

This does not mean there will not be sadness and grief, for the Great Example himself was pre-eminently a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. This present mortal pilgrimage is in so many ways a vale of tears. But through all the passing sadness there runs the deep joyfulness of the eternal purpose. Though many things we cannot understand, we know God is wisdom and love, and if we faithfully serve Him, all will be well at last.

"Giving thanks unto the Father."

Do we find ourselves carried away by this overwhelming sense of thankfulness for all the goodness of God? This again is *part of the essential character of the true saint in Christ Jesus.*

It is this intense thankfulness—the humble recognition of the infinite, unmerited goodness and mercy and kindness of God toward us, that warms and softens us and makes us gentle and compassionate to others.

We are all under the dominion of sin—all in the pit of darkness and corruption: and God—from the great height of His unapproachable holiness—has looked down in mercy upon us. We have all been forgiven 10,000 talents—what are the few pence we have against each other, that we should dare be harsh and unkind?

"Who hath made us meet" (v.12).

"Meet" means fit or qualified. *It is God who makes His children fit for His Kingdom.* It is God that works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Our simple part is to draw nigh unto Him in love and prayer and reverent study of His Word, and to submit in joyful thankfulness to that divine willing and doing within us.

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

HE IS "ALTOGETHER LOVELY"

In the Captain of Salvation, the conditions of love exist in their fulness. Presented to us as the object of supreme attachment — attachment to whom is the indispensable condition of discipleship — we have in him, as Paul expresses it—

"All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3).

He is the **Wisdom** of God manifested in an individual of our race. He is the **Power** of God, to whom is committed all power in heaven and in earth. He is the **Goodness** of God

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. 5:19).

Wisdom, power, excellence, goodness, and authority combine to make him altogether lovely, and this loveliness is made to shine with greater power into our hearts by the fact that he died for and gives life to us, but for which, we should never have risen above the level of the perishing races around.

We can love him without danger of recoil. No inferior manifestation on his part will ever cool our ardor or tire our preference. He is the focus of the covenanted goodness; the head of the body; the new creation; the spirit of the system; the life of the community. —**Bro. Roberts.**

Signs of The Times

In a recent issue of the New York Times the statement was made that "**World interest is now focused on Israel.**" It is strange that this little country, so small that it appears as but a tiny speck on the map of the world, with less than 2 million inhabitants, would or could be the center of world interest.

In conformity with divine prophecy, this is **just as it should be at this time.** For we are rapidly approaching that time when not only world interest will center there, but God will "gather all nations to Jerusalem to battle" (Zech. 14:2); when He will—

"Make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people; all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people be gathered together against it" (Zech. 12:3).

And so, while we should not overlook the significance of what the U. S., Russia, Britain, Egypt, the Arab countries and the rest of the nations are doing, let us not forget that, if it was not for what is happening in connection with Israel and the land promised to Abraham, the political upheavals, the scheming and the fighting would be of little significance. It would be just another sordid chapter in the history of sinful man who has bathed the earth in blood and tears for six thousand years.

By a strange turn of events, Israel has now become the key figure in the Middle-East, and having demonstrated that she is able to defend herself against any and all of the Arab nations if given equal military equipment. Her crushing defeat of the combined Egyptian and Arab nations in 1948 and the complete rout of the Egyptian armies last October astounded military experts and let the world know that this little country was now a force to reckon with in any settlement of the Mid-East trouble.

Israel's rise to power in the face of what many thought to be insurmountable difficulties, in such a short time, constitutes **the greatest and most momentous sign of the times.** For Israel's case stands unique and unprecedented in world history. It is the sign about which there can be no mistake that the time to restore the kingdom of Israel is near at hand. And lest we lose the tremendous significance of these things by constant repetition of the events, let us recount here some of the things which have occurred during the last 40 years.

The signing of the Balfour treaty in 1917 marked the beginning of an era which has seen a few struggling settlements in Palestine grow into a nation which can, and now does, affect the policies of the strongest nations on earth. For the Middle-East is the world's danger spot, and whatever Israel does vitally affects that entire area.

The consummation of the Balfour plan, while opening up Palestine for a Jewish homeland, did not bring peace. For it soon became evident that Jews and Arabs could not live in peace and agreement. Britain, having held a mandate over Palestine since World War I, tried every conceivable method for reconciling the warring factions, even to the extent of first limiting Jewish immigration, and then stopping it altogether.

Britain at last pulled out of Palestine altogether. It was the common belief then that this was the end of Zionism; that the Arab people would "push the Jews into the sea," as one commentator expressed it. Even the brethren were perplexed and dumbfounded at this unexpected, and, what appeared to be, disastrous turn of events.

But God's purposes are immutable, and our belief that Israel would not perish, that Zionism was not dead, that the time to favor Zion was at hand, was soon revived in a most startling manner by the formation of a JEWISH STATE; when a nation, considered by most of the world as having ceased forever, was reborn, to the amazement of all the world, and to the chagrin of the false prophets who had already read off Zionism as "a foolish Jewish dream."

And what do we see now? In 1948 when Israel became a state, there were about 870,000 Jews in the land held by Israel. Before the end of 1956 that number had doubled. **Nothing like it has ever happened in human history.** It would be like (as one Jewish writer expressed it) the United States accepting and caring for 75 million immigrants within a period of 8 years.

Another 100,000 immigrants are expected this year, and with the natural increase by births, the Jewish population of Israel is expected to reach 2 million in 1957, and it is predicted that 2½ million Jews will be living in Israel 5 years from now.

Herein is a marvellous thing. Brethren now living can recall when the migration of a few Jewish families to Palestine was news to Christadelphians. Today Israel's problem is not the lack of immigrants, but how to provide for the vast numbers of them.

Long-range plans are now being laid to give support to this increase in population. Since there seems to be no hope of acquiring more territory, Israel's leaders are now planning to develop more of the arid lands which they now hold. More desert lands are to be irrigated; rocky hillsides are to be made tillable and greater production is to be encouraged. As an example of this, 11 million cases of citrus fruits were produced last year. By 1959 newly-planted groves are expected to bring production of these fruits to more than double that amount.

The Jews, who for the most part, are an industrial people, are now embarking on a campaign to increase manufacturing and exports. Arab and Egyptian markets being practically eliminated because of the intense hatred for the Jews, Israel is now looking for another outlet for their expanding commerce.

That is the chief reason for their keen interest in keeping open the gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping that trade with the Orient and East Africa may be expanded.

Elath (ancient Eloth), on the gulf of Aqaba and at the southern tip of Israel, is now but a small port, but Israel's planners hope to make of it a great shipping center for the ships of all nations. It will be Israel's gateway to the Orient. History is now repeating itself, for it was from this port that Solomon's navy sailed in carrying on commerce with India, or Tarshish (1 Kgs. 9:26).

While many people attribute Israel's phenomenal success solely to their indomitable courage, their unconquerable spirit and their undying desire for a homeland of their own, we can exclaim—

"This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

The present troubled state of affairs in the Middle-East is so complicated and uncertain that it is hardly profitable to try to appraise it or predict its outcome. We can only watch and wait. Though Israel has been forced to vacate the Gaza strip and the Gulf of Aqaba area claimed by Egypt, opinion is quite general that they have won a diplomatic victory after all.

Under the present circumstances it would be considered an act of infamy for the UN to allow Egypt to resume border raids or prevent Israel's use of the gulf of Aqaba and the Suez canal. If they should thus betray Israel, the UN would stand condemned as a total failure, unable to cope with any situation where Russian objection is in the way. It is obvious that nothing has been settled so far. So

we must wait and see what is yet to be unfolded in this great drama which is leading the nations to Armageddon. —O.B.

Ecclesial News

DETROIT, Mich.—12954 St. Marys—Memorial 10 a.m.; Sunday School 11:30.

Several months have passed since we reported our activities in this manner; months filled with world events, keenly observed by those watchmen of Israel who are alive to the coming of the Bridegroom. Our proximity to the end of human rule makes the days and months most important. These days are crowded so full of stirring activities, and the current of the drama moving so quickly we are impressed with the watchman's words—

"The morning cometh and also the night" (Isa. 21:12).

The evidence of these world troubling events increases the responsibilities of the servants of God. Are we preparing for the momentous words: "The Lord has come"?

Since our last report we have had the fellowship and comfort of the following brethren and sisters around the table of the Lord: bro. & sis. J. Hill and sis. D. Gwalchmai Jr. (London, Ont); sis. Lucy Anderson (Buffalo); sis. Edith Cope (Hamilton); and bro. & sis. R. Carney (Houston).

It is encouraging to read of the activities in other parts of the earth through the columns of the Ecclesial News and also by personal correspondence. How necessary, in the eyes of the Creator, for the strengthening of the believers are those stirring epistles by the pen of the Apostles—

"To do good and to communicate (one to another) forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. 13:16).

During these months we have also been in company with our brethren and sisters at the gatherings at Texas and Toronto. Upon other occasions we have journeyed to London, Hamilton and Canton, to meet with our brethren and sisters there. We have been greatly encouraged by these assemblies together. The Father in mercy has provided loving companions on the way toward the Kingdom, to assist in holding up the hands of their fellow-laborers. Such labors performed in the service of the Creator and for His praise are in accord with the Lord's expressed will—

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me."

Fraternal love in Christ Jesus to all of the Household of faith.

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HYE, Texas

The regular quarterly meeting of the Texas ecclesias at Hye, was held on Feb. 3, and was well attended. The Bible study centered around the 2nd chapter of 1st Peter, in which the theme developed by the apostle urges devotion and consecration to the holy ways of God —

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul."

The exhortation was given by bro. Sommerville, on the subject: "The Signs of Christ's Coming."

"THE HEART OF THE WISE IS IN THE HOUSE OF MOURNING"

Most people feel solemnised in the presence of death: but most people **also go away and forget the lessons** that speak to them in that solemnity.

Nay, most people are **glad to get away**, and glad to forget, glad to rejoin the careless throng, glad to efface the sombreness in the occupations of pleasure, or in the laughter of the fool, that crackles like thorns under the pot. Herein is the difference between a wise man and a fool (Ecc. 7:4)—

"The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than for a man to hear the song of fools"
—Bro. Roberts

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