

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

Discretion Shall Preserve Thee

On a certain occasion, we were discussing our position of separateness with a brother, and he remarked that he had often wondered how close we could come to the affairs of the world without endangering our eternal salvation. Our feeling was that he was mentally viewing the object of thought from an unfortunate negative standpoint, and that it would be far better to use the apostolic perspective which is positive.

The negative position is that adopted by a class of people who are zealous in establishing organizations for the advancement of the social, moral and religious welfare of the human race. In following such a course, they attempt to form a joint association with God and the world by which they obligate themselves to fulfil duties toward each. Their obligations and practices, and their joint participation in social and religious affairs are so interwoven that it is almost impossible to distinguish between a professed Christian, and one who takes no part in church work.

This is one of the great evils of our time, and one that has made destructive inroads in the Household of Faith. Living in the world, but *keeping ourselves separate from its established social, political and other community institutions* is a difficult uphill work; but it is not impossible, or we would not be called upon to attempt it. It cannot be done through our own power; therefore assistance will be given us. This thought was expressed by Jesus, when he said—

"I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil"—Jn. 17:15.

Are we to understand from this that God will keep us from the evil without any effort on our part? By no means. It is prominently noticeable that each of the messages to the seven ecclesias, recorded in the Apocalypse, concludes with the words:

"To him that overcometh"

This word "overcometh" means "to gain the victory," or to overcome an antagonist in any contest. Jesus said, "I have overcome the world." This is the duty of every one who believes and obeys the Gospel. This is conclusively evident in what Jesus said to the ecclesia in Laodicea—

"To **him that overcometh** will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as **I also overcame**, and am set down with my Father in His throne"—Apoc. 3:21.

This obedience places us under obligation to the laws of God, and His beloved Son Jesus. Therefore, our highest duty is to maintain that relationship. This becomes explicitly manifest when we view our relationship to Christ from the positive apostolic perspective. Paul expresses it this way—

"Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"—Rom 12:2.

This shows us that instead of trying to see how close we can come to the border line, our efforts should be ordered in the opposite direction. Experience soon teaches us that if we remain too close, we will become influenced by its practices, and will be slowly and surely led away from the Truth through the attractive power of worldly affairs—*a power that should never be underestimated.*

In any attempt that we make to determine a victorious course, we should never overlook the stern lessons of the Law. The people of Israel were repeatedly warned against mixing with the people of other nations. The following is from Deut. 18:9—

"When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations."

Their failure to observe these divine instructions eventually brought about their downfall and dispersion among the surrounding nations. This is fully set forth in chapter 17 of Second Kings, of which the 14th verse is significant—

"Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God."

The age in which we live is grossly and brazenly immoral, and these conditions are increasing daily. *All its agency of procedure in the various departments of human activities is built upon the reasonings and impulses of the flesh*, and is plainly visible in its customs, conversations, amusements and literature. John says "if we love these things, the love of God is not in us."

Our heavenly Father is a jealous God, and He will not accept our service if it is divided between Him and the god of this world. Let us, therefore, give ourselves no rest until we be at peace with Him. To accomplish this, our thoughts and aspirations must be elevated to a spiritual plane that will bring us true happiness when we follow the course Paul prescribes:

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you"—Phil. 4:8-9.

We do not possess the Spirit as the apostles did, by which they were guided into all truth, and were able to speak with divine authority; but we have the *Word of the Spirit* in our possession which we can store up in our minds. If the Spirit Word dwells in our hearts and minds, it will be because the Truth is affectionately believed and obeyed. Having reached that stage in our walk in the Truth, we will have no desire to see how close we can come to the things of the world; but having our minds full of those things which are true, just, pure, lovely and of good report, we will do all in our power to make our calling and election sure.

—Editor

The Way of the Tree of Life

"Straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it"
—Matthew 7:14.

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

Religion is not coeval with the formation of man; neither had it any existence during his novitiate. Though it was instituted in the paradise, it was not for his observance there; for while he continued the *sinless* tenant of the garden, he stood in no need of the *healing* consolations it affords.

Until he ate of the forbidden fruit there was no breach of friendship, no misunderstanding, no alienation, between him and the Lord God. There needed not, therefore, any means or systems of means for the reconciliation of estranged parties.

But, as soon as the good understanding was interrupted by disobedience to the Eden law, sentence of condemnation to the dust was pronounced upon the offenders, and *means were instituted* to put them *at one again* with the Lord, that He might bring them back from the ground—no longer naked and ashamed of their condition, but clothed with glory and honor, incorruptibility and life, as a crown of righteousness that should never fade away.

These *instituted means* made up the WAY of LIFE, which Moses terms "*God's Way*" (Gen. 6:12). David styles it the "*Path of Life*" (Psa. 16:11), which the apostle, in quoting, renders "*the Ways of Life*" (Acts 2:28)—that is, the way leading to life in which a man must walk now, and the way into the Kingdom from the house of death.

In the beginning, God's Way was styled "The Way of the Tree of Life" (Gen. 3:24), which in the passage where it occurs must be taken literally, and then allegorically. In its literal sense, it was the path leading to the Tree in the midst of the Garden. But allegorically, it signified *the things to be believed and practised by those who desired to live for ever*.

To believe and do, is to walk in the "Way which leadeth unto Life." Until the crucifixion the Way was marked out, first by the patriarchal arrangement of things, and secondly, by the Mosaic law—all of which pointed to the *Shiloh*. But when Jesus appeared, he announced, saying—

"I AM THE WAY, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh to the Father but by me"
(John 14:6).

Whosoever would attain to life must believe the Truth concerning Jesus and the Kingdom, which is the Most Holy Place. Hence it is written (Heb. 10:19-20)—

"We have boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a **New and Living Way**, which he hath consecrated for us, through **the Veil**, that is to say, his flesh."

The old Way was but typical of the New, but both are purely matter of revelation. Nothing is left to conjecture. Man may *corrupt* the Way of the Lord, but he cannot *improve* it; and as surely as he attempts to adapt it to circumstances, he converts it into "the Way which leadeth to Destruction," which is both broad and easy to walk in, being in perfect harmony with the lusts and thinking of the flesh.

While men consider that there is a want of harmony between them and divine wisdom and power, and admit they deserve divine wrath, they do not understand that, *as offenders, they have no right to institute the means of reconciliation*.

They act upon the principle that God has left it to *them* to worship Him according to the dictates of their own reason. Hence the world is full of modes of worship as diversified as the thoughts of sinful flesh. The notion that men may invent religious services, and that the divine pleasure can be appeased by human contrivances, are fallacies which are characteristic of false religion, wherever they are found.

Men have no right to invent religions or modes of worship. In the breach between God and man, it is *God's* prerogative alone to prescribe the conditions of amity and peace.

This view of the case precludes entirely the idea of appeasing the wrath of God by human ingenuity. God needs not to be appeased by man. *He is already reconciled to the world*, which He has always loved—

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

The fact of a divine religion being instituted is *proof* of the love He bears the human race. He seeks to appease men by His goodness, which invites them to repentance (Rom. 2:4). His love is manifested in all that He has done for the world. He has sought to enlighten it, and to exalt it to a participation in the divine nature by the ameliorating influences of the Truth. He has sent messengers to it with their lives in their hands, ready to lay them down in the divine work of beseeching mankind to be reconciled to God.

God has long since proclaimed the conditions of peace, which He is waiting to ratify in every case where they are accepted. This proclamation is styled "*the Word of Reconciliation*" which, saith the apostle, "God hath committed unto us" (2 Cor. 5:19).

The Word of Reconciliation hath been committed to no man, or set of men, *now living*. It was committed to the apostles and their divinely inspired co-laborers, and to them only, so that they could say, in the words of one of them—

"We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (I John 4:6).

And they were perfectly justified in saying so, for Jesus said to them (Matt. 10:20)—

"It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

Therefore he said in another place—

"He that heareth you heareth me; and he that heareth me heareth Him that sent me."

The Word of Reconciliation, then, was committed to the apostles, whom God appointed as His ambassadors to the world. And, be it observed, that *their ambassadorial character did not rest upon assumption*, like that of their pretended successors. God attested them, as He had done His Son before them.

Their credentials were in the miracles which accompanied their word. They produced the *signs of their apostleship*, and multitudes acknowledged them, as Nicodemus did their Lord, saying (John 3:2)—

"We know thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles thou doest, except God be with him."

They would not have been received as ambassadors of Heaven if God had not attested them by His power; but being so attested, they were *prepared*, and did present themselves at Satan's court—that is, before Caesar—to invite the world to be at peace with Him.

The church was associated with the apostles in the ministry of reconciliation. By "the church" I mean, not that multiform thing called "the church" by the world in these times, but that one, undivided body of disciples collected together by the personal labors of the apostles and evangelists, and all who, through subsequent generations, should believe and practise *the same Truth*.

To this "*One Body*," energized by the "*One Spirit*," and perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (1 Cor. 1:10), and styled "THE BRIDE"—is committed the work of making known "the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10) as contained in the Word, and of inviting the world to become reconciled to God (Rev. 22:17).

No member of this body is exempt from the obligation of co-operating in this work. It is the duty and privilege of every one in his own sphere to endeavor to turn men to righteousness, for there is no distinction of 'clergy' and 'laity' in God's family.

In the days of the apostles things were very different from what they are now. There were many congregations, or churches, but they were all *one flock*, or "denomination," and men endowed with spiritual gifts were their rulers. But even these were not distinguished from their brethren as "clergy" or priests, but as *ministers* or servants.

Well knowing the presumption, pride, and arrogance of the flesh, the Spirit commanded them especially to feed the flock, and not to fleece it; to oversee it willingly and of a ready mind, but not for the sake of compensation; and to be examples to the flock, and not to lord it over *the heritages* (I Pet. 5:2-3).

The word "clergy," as the title of an order, is assumed by men who have no right to it. It is a word which comes from the Greek *kleros*, a lot or portion, and is applied by the apostle in the text quoted to a single congregation of disciples, so that when he speaks of all the congregations of the flock, he styles them "the heritages"—*ton kleron*.

But, in after years, the ministers of the heritages, or clergies, disregarded the commandment and set themselves up as lords of the heritages, which they fleeced, and oppressed for lucre's sake. They even made the clergies of God believe that they were nothing more than mere "commoners"; while they themselves, the usurpers of the believers' rights, were God's peculiar lot, or portion, as the tribe of Levi were among the Israelites; and the distinction was then set up of "clergy" and "laity," from *hoi laoi*—"the multitude"!

But the distinction belongs to the apostasy, and not to God's oppressed and scattered sheep. When "clergy" get in among them, it is as—

"Grievous wolves, not sparing the flock, but speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them"
—for their own worldly gain (Acts 20:29-30). They have nothing to do with the Word of reconciliation except to pervert it, and to bring it into disrepute.

The principles of the apostasy, and indeed of all false religion, are such as result from the thinking of the flesh when left to its own communings. This is illustrated in the case of Adam and Eve, who sought to cover sin by their own device:

"They sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons."

Their shame was covered, indeed; but their consciences were not healed. But it was the best they could do in their ignorance. But they were as yet unacquainted with the great principle that *without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sin* (Heb. 9:22). They were not aware of

this necessity, for it had not been revealed; neither did they understand that, as offenders, they were not permitted to devise their covering.

They had everything to learn as to the ground of reconciliation with God. They had no idea of *religion*, for hitherto they had needed none. It yet remained to be revealed as *the divinely appointed means* of healing the breach which sin had made between God and man.

Having, then, been made subject to evil, and consigned to the bondage of a perishing state, the Lord God repudiated their fig-leaf invention, and "appointed coats of skins" for their covering. *In this testimony there is much expressed in a few words.* To appoint coats of skins implies a command for the sacrifice of animals whose skins were converted to this purpose. It also implies that Adam was the priest on the occasion, who presented himself before the Lord with the mediatorial blood.

When the sacrifice was accepted, the offence was *provisionally* remitted, for the Scripture saith that it is not possible for the blood of animals to take away sins (Heb. 10:4). It was impossible because *sin was to be condemned in sinful flesh.* This required the death of man, for the animals had not sinned; so that if the whole animal world, save man, had been made an offering, sin would still have been uncondemned in his nature.

Besides the necessity of a human sacrifice, God deemed it equally necessary that *the victim should be free from personal transgression*, and that when he had suffered he should rise from the dead, so as to be a "living sacrifice."

If the death of a transgressor would have sufficed, then Adam and Eve might have been put to death at once, and raised to life again. But this was not according to the divine wisdom. The great principle to be compassed was *the condemnation of sin in sinful flesh, innocent of actual transgression.*

This principle necessitated the manifestation of one who should be born of woman, but not of the *will* of man. Such an one would be the Seed of the Woman, made of her substance, with Him for his Father Who, by His overshadowing Spirit, should cause her to conceive. He would be the Son of God by *origination*, and Son of Man by *descent*, or birth of sinful flesh.

Now, it is not to be supposed that Adam and Eve did not understand this. God doubtless explained it to them, for they had none to teach them but Him, and without His instruction they would not have known what they should believe. It was from them that Abel derived the knowledge which was the foundation of his faith, to which God testified in the acceptance of the firstling of his flock and the fat thereof.

Adam and his wife had faith, or God would not have accepted the sacrifices with whose skins they were clothed, for it was as true then as it is now that—

"Without Faith it is impossible to please God."

Faith, then, in the Seed of the Woman—first as a sacrifice for sin, wounded to death by his enemies, and afterwards the destroyer of the sin-power, in connection with the sacrifices of animals as representative of the bruising of his heel—was the ground of their acceptance with the Lord God.

It was the Way of Life. If they walked with God in this way, they would be as pleasing to Him as Enoch afterwards was, who was translated about 57 years after Adam's death. It was the "Way" which was corrupted by the antediluvians, and although the sacrifices have been interrupted, the faith and hope which gained celebrity and commendation to Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and a cloud of other witnesses, comprehended substantially the same things, but less in detail than in that Faith which was preached by the apostles as the Gospel of the Kingdom and Name of Christ, for the justification of all who should believe.

The things believed by Abel as compared with the Faith on Pentecost, were as the acorn to the oak. The Gospel of the Kingdom *in the Name of Jesus* was the revelation in full of the things communicated in the beginning, and afterwards more considerably amplified in the promises made to the fathers of the people of Israel.

When the saints are all gathered into the Kingdom, they will not find themselves in an unexpected situation. They will all be there by virtue of BELIEVING THE SAME THINGS; though some, contemporary with the later history of the world, will have had the advantage of more abounding testimony. Their sins will all have been covered upon the same principle—by the raiment of righteousness derived from the Sacrifice, by faith in whose blood they had been cleansed.

Bible Questions Answered

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

*“Cornelius was a Gentile, yet his prayer was heard (Acts 10:4, 31).
When did the Deity begin to shut His ear to prayers from such?”*

Cornelius was not a Gentile pure and simple. He was a Roman centurion who had discarded the pagan mythology of Rome for the God of Israel, among Whose people he was stationed, as shown by his prayer to Him; and who had identified himself closely with the Jews, as indicated in his "much alms" to them. For such, there was provision under the Law:

"When a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover of the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it, and he shall be as one that is born in the land" (Exo. 12:48-49; Num. 9:14).

This class of appreciative stranger to which Cornelius belonged, is thus addressed in Isaiah 56:3-7—

"Neither let the son of the stranger that hath joined himself to the Lord speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from His people . . . I will bring them to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer."

Devout Gentiles, who cast away the gods of the heathen and "joined themselves to the Lord," were known as "proselytes" (Acts 2:10) and were allowed to worship at Jerusalem, as in the case of the eunuch to whom Philip preached the Word (Acts 8:27). A court in the Temple was provided for them, and known as "the court of the Gentiles."

The "proselytes of the gate," as they were called, were recognized worshippers. They approached God in the *only way open to the Gentiles at that time*. God never has shut His ear against those who come to Him in the way appointed. But *a wider gate was opened* when Peter was commissioned to announce, in connection with the case of Cornelius, the abolition of "the middle wall of partition;" and the free admission of the Gentiles, upon the terms then disclosed, as—

". . . fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ by the Gospel" (Eph. 3:6).

All Gentiles are at liberty to partake of "the promise in Christ *by the Gospel*," but *in no other way*. Such as are inclined to take "heart of grace" from the case of Cornelius must remember that *Cornelius was in the right way, so far as it was possible for a Gentile to be*. Therefore, his prayers were heard and the way of life opened to him by an angel.

* * *

"Shortly I must put off this my Tabernacle" (2 Pet. 1:14).

Peter says he must "put off this tabernacle," and Paul, that the "inward man was renewed daily, though the outward man perished." These forms of speech taken together are held to sanction the popular notion of a righteous man leaving his body when he dies; but the sanction is all on the surface, and only there in appearance.

Literally, in death, it is the body that casts out the soul, and not the soul that puts off the body. So long as the body is tenanted by the soul, the soul remains. It never occurs that a soul suddenly quits a healthy body, nor can it by an act of will quit a diseased body. *The body is master of the situation*; not until its functions are suspended is the soul at liberty to depart.

Hence, Peter's words cannot be understood in the strict sense required to make them useful to the orthodox believer. Peter's statement that the Lord Jesus had "shown him" the event referred to, leads at once to the channel of a correct understanding of the matter. John 21:18-19, disclosed that he showed him—

" . . . by what death he should glorify God."

"Putting off the tabernacle" is a figurative description of this event, and an appropriate description of death in whatsoever form it may be encountered. All that constitutes our individuality dwells in the body of our humiliation, within which it is generated by the wonderful processes at work; but the destiny of the saint is to have "this corruptible" "clothed upon" with a subduing energy that will change it from flesh and blood into spirit nature (Phil. 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:53; 2 Cor. 5:4). Therefore, it is to him but a tabernacle, or place of temporary stay. He—

" . . . waits for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body."

To some there will be no interval between the present tabernacle-state and the "glory to be revealed." Being contemporary with the coming of the Lord, they do not taste of death. They put not off the tabernacle, but pass without a break from "this corruptible" state to the incorruptible and immortal, a change effected upon them while living (1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:15). To Peter, however, it has been revealed that he should see death, and in view of this and of the near approach of the event, he reminds them of the fact as a reason for his anxiety to put them in remembrance.

As to the "inward man," which Paul said, in his case, was renewed day by day, while the outward man was perishing, we recognize it as that "new man" which is begotten in the heart by the incorruptible seed of the Word (1 Pet. 1:23), and renewed in knowledge (Col. 3:10). This new man, or state of mind, is "inward." It exists in the mind in which it has been developed by the Word, and *it is in the experience of every son of God that this new man may grow stronger while the natural man is falling into decay*. But this does not involve the conclusion that it is a something that can consciously exist when death has laid the natural man in the dust.

* * *

"The Mammon of Unrighteousness"

The "mammon of unrighteousness" is a New Testament synonym for riches, because riches are usually acquired by, or employed in, unrighteousness. The *only* way it can be turned into a friend, as Jesus exhorts (Luke 16:9) is the use prescribed by Paul in writing to Timothy—

"Charge them that are rich in this world . . . that they do good, be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come" (1 Tim 6:18).

"That when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Christ means to say that as men cannot in the nature of things retain the wealth they have—seeing they are bound to part company when death comes—the course of wisdom is to *so use them* that when the day of reckoning

comes, everlasting results may come from them instead of results of destruction, which are the usual results, for as he says—

"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God!"

* * *

"*She Shall Be Saved in Child-bearing*"—I Tim, 2:15

There is a "the" before "child-bearing" in the Greek that will help matters a little. It is a *particular* child-bearing that is in view. Read what goes before, and you will see that the subject Paul is speaking of is woman's position now *as determined by what happened in Eden*—

"Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

Nevertheless . . ."

—(and then come the words above). The idea is that, though woman brought sin into the world, yet she will not be excluded from the deliverance to be wrought out in (or by) the bearing of a particular child for its taking away—which child was to be *her* seed and not the man's seed—"the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head." But even her being saved in or by this child-bearing was to be contingent on her continuance "in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety" (see finish of verse).

"To the Unknown God"

"*This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent*"—John 17:3.

We see Paul (Acts 16:9) in vision in company with a man of Macedonia. The man is asking him to come over into Europe and help them. This representation would be of the class of people whom God was calling from the vast humanity of the most developed part of the Roman Empire. They were the sons and daughters of God who humbly recognized that they needed help, were not ashamed to ask for assistance and were receptive to the power of conviction impressed by the Spirit's teaching.

The help which was sought was to overcome the power of sin, to give them a hope which none of the gods of Greece and Rome could afford. Those who came under the representation of the man seeking assistance were sincere and godly, *willing to endure hardship and persecution for the Word of God*. Such expressions as the following tell of the class represented—

"That attended to the things spoken by Paul (Acts 16:14).

"They received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so; therefore many of them believed" (Acts 17:11).

This readiness to accept Paul's teaching did not deter them from being associated with his sufferings and persecutions. They were called from all walks of life, and yet were willing to suffer shame for the Name of Jesus. The first one was—

"A seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God" (Acts 16:14).

How did this woman know God? We cannot tell. In some way, like Cornelius, she had been convinced of the Creator of heaven and earth being above all the idols which were associated with Greek culture or pagan superstition.

A prison keeper—whose heart was convicted by the teaching of Paul and Silas, the sincerity of their faith under tribulation, the display of the Divine power—believed in a man who had been condemned to prison, and was willing and rejoiced to be included in his company, bringing him into

his own house. Paul had been charged with teaching things not lawful to be received by Romans—an untrue charge, yet one calculated to bring reproach upon teacher and hearer alike.

He had not known God, but—like Paul—he has been impressed suddenly and startlingly, with the truth of the words of Paul, that a God Who could answer prayer and songs of praise in so impressive a manner was to be revered and adored above all gods. It was no idle confession of knowing God. His actions spoke of true repentance and a real knowledge of Him.

“He took Paul and Silas the same hour of the night and washed their stripes" (Acts 16:33).

Again at Thessalonica, the devout and those that feared God, braved the stigma of association with one branded with having:

"Turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6).

These were the ones represented by the man of Macedonia, who separated themselves from the synagogue of the Jews and consorted with Paul and Silas, together with the devout Greeks and honorable women of the city.

When we read that at Berea they were "more noble" in that they received Paul's word and searched the Scriptures, we understand it to refer to the synagogue of the Jews. The body of Jews of Berea were more receptive to the spirit of the Word of God than the synagogue of the Jews at Thessalonica, not that the Berean believers were superior to the Thessalonian believers.

The persecuting Jews who sought to suppress the Word of God, were the very means by which God was spreading the knowledge of Himself far and wide. As Gamaliel had said—

“Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel and work be of men it will come to naught. But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God" (Acts 5:38-39).

Thus we find Paul alone in Athens, the cultural center of the ancient world, surrounded by the idolatrous devotions of the most cosmopolitan city of a universal empire. Here was a city "wholly given to idolatry," worshipping in darkness and ignorance a multitude of gods, entirely oblivious of the real Father of all. All their philosophy, their learning, their worldly wisdom, were unable to unlock the secret of the Creator of all—

"The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

How many times have we been impressed with the darkness resting upon the hearts of the men of the world, who have been instructed in the "arts and sciences," but are completely unable to comprehend the existence of God as taught in the Word:

"For ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (1 Cor. 1:26).

We do not find the Apostle seeking to assemble and preach to the great of the city, but rather in the market place and among the synagogues of the Jews and devout persons.

Upon hearing of the teachings of the Apostle he was taken to the elevated place above the city called "Mars Hill," the *hill of Ares*, the Greek god of war, and there was asked to explain to them the doctrine of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Notice the apostle's approach as he stands before the learned.

He tells them they are "too superstitious." The more modern versions render this phrase, "very religious." The framers of these versions have accepted the philosophy of Athens and Mars Hill more than the clarion voice of Paul to this august assembly. The Greek here signifies "to be in fear or dread of evil daemons or spirits." The translators have endeavored to give a note of respectability to the heathen gods of Athens and place them on a level with the Creator. Their theories have come from the Greek philosophers and not from the Word of Truth.

"Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."

This was basic as a means of salvation. Without a knowledge of God and His Son, there is no possibility of salvation—

"This is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

When Paul was at Athens this was the theme of his remarks, and it laid the basis for his declaration of God and Jesus as the means of salvation before the highest court of human learning. What then did the Apostle declare unto the Athenians? He expounded seven fundamental truths concerning God—seven facts in direct opposition to the reasoning of the philosophers—

1. *God made the world.*

Fundamental is this truth, yet how impossible for the learned to come to this knowledge with all their speculation. How important it is that we keep this truth clearly before our minds. Perhaps with our rush and hurry we incline to accept the fact without much thought or consideration. Is it possible, with our strivings in an age of constant building, expansion and human creation that God is lost from view and we fail to see the Hand of God around us? The edifices of Athens alike with the present prowess of man are man-glorifying and God-dishonoring. Association with God in prayer continually will dispel such a frame of mind and will bring unto us the realities of the Creator and the ephemeral nature of man's earthly towers.

2. *He is Lord of heaven and earth.*

No blind chance or goddess of fates ruling a world without wisdom in a fickle manner, or in a capricious mode, but a wise and benevolent Creator, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to a knowledge of Him. His purpose is—

"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Hab. 2:14).

Do we concede by our thoughts, our actions and our intentions that He is Lord of heaven and earth? Are our deeds framed with God in the forefront? Do we wait for the overruling of His providence in our lives? "*If the Lord will, we shall do this or that,*" should impress us constantly that we are under His care. How can we be *God's* servants if we are forever pleasing *ourselves*? Christ said (John 8:29)—

"I do always those things which please the Father."

It is essential that we do the same in all our ways. If we fail in this respect, we do not know God, regardless how much we profess to. Before the Master at the judgment seat many will say:

"Lord have we not, in thy Name, done many wonderful works?"
But he will reply (Matt. 7:22-23)—

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

They will stand there aghast, unable to believe their ears. How essential then for us to know God in the fullest sense now!

3. *God dwells not in temples made with hands.*

The ruins on Mars Hill today bear mute testimony to the persuasion of the Greeks that costly edifices were the habitation of their deities, but they were only vanity and but for a moment. The spires of churches adorned with riches and wealth extracted from the purses of the needy today by those who buy and sell the souls of men, are a continuance of the same heathen theories:

"The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him" (John 4:23).

Our bodies are the Temple of the living God. This is not just a group of nice sounding words. *It is a basic fact which we must get well into our minds.* Let us be conscious of the presence of God and that He is guiding our steps if we will permit Him to do so. But He will only come and make His abode with us if we keep the Temple clean and habitable for His presence.

"Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you."

Do we comprehend the greatness of the honor which has been conferred on us, that the Creator of the vast universe should condescend to dwell closely and intimately with us every day, every hour, every moment? The promise is there. *Let us rise to a perception of this glorious state of living,* and present our bodies to His glorification. What have we to fear if God is so intimate with us? It is only our carnal fleshly reasoning which keeps us from stepping up to the Divine plane of really living, even in this mortal state. We must cleanse ourselves therefore from every weight and human encumbrance, and rise to newness of life. If we fail to do so, we fail to know God.

4. *"Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything."*

As Creator and Sustainer of all things, God is the Possessor of all. He is not dependent upon the offerings of mankind. Once again the pride of man and his unguided efforts draw away from ascription of glory unto God. A constant and diligent effort must be made in every department of our activities to remain humble and to realize we are servants and not masters, that we are working for God and that the work required is not that which is done by literal hands and literal offerings or devotions, as was so clearly on display in the Babel of gods on the heights over Athens.

This has also a more personal application to our own lives in the service of God. It is primarily for this intent that the events at Athens were recorded. Historically, Paul's visit meant nothing. There were but a handful who accepted the Spirit-Word from that thoughtless multitude. The spiritual value for us lies in our *close scrutiny of why we do things in the Truth.* Our assembly week by week must be more than a mere compliance with the command—

"Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together."

It must be because we *love* to be doing the will of God. Are the commandments the delight of our hearts? Do we study to perform them all the day long? Do we weigh our actions in the light of what is right? Is there a consciousness of error and a humble silent prayer for forgiveness as we frequently fail?

Do we desire to excel in the work of the Lord only to have the pre-eminence? The worship of God in this last sense is an abomination unto Him. There is a grave danger in this department of God's work, that we may feel we are worshipping the Creator while actually it may be self-worship. The basis of all we do must be as unto God and through Jesus Christ. We cannot do anything by ourselves.

It is only by the power which God gives that anything can be accomplished. Thus whatever we do is performed by God working through us (John 15:5).

"He that abideth in me and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for **without me ye can do nothing.**"

Christ had just stated that he is the true Vine, and that his followers are the branches. The branches do not supply food to the root, but the root to the branches. The branches are dependent on the root. In like manner we depend upon God for all our accomplishments; God needs nothing from us.

If God dwells with us and works His will through us as a medium, then we shall know God in great measure. There must however be a conscious recognition of this fact and a wholehearted giving over of self to His will. In this sense Jesus said:

"I know my sheep and am known of mine" (John 10:14).

5. *"God giveth to all life and breath and all things."*

This declaration by the Apostle was in direct opposition to the structure of Greek mythology. Their belief in Zeus and his subordinate deities, and Prometheus, the maker of man, was a manifest token of their ignorance of the ways of God. Greek idolatries were the inventions of the darkness of the human mind during those ages which Paul said (v. 30)—

"God winked at"—or overlooked—"but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."—that is, to change their hearts and minds, and seek after the real source of life.

Once again the lesson applies to us. God giveth all things, life and breath. The first century believers came closest to the true Divine economy when it was recorded—

"Neither said any of them that ought of the things he possessed was his own" (Acts 4:32).

This Divine condition was marred by the expression—

"But a certain man named Ananias sold a possession and kept back part of the price" (Acts 5:1).

We must always bear in mind the reality of the truth that even the breath we breathe comes from God, and that we are sustained from moment to moment by His free spirit.

"For in Him we live and move and have our being" (v. 28).

These daily blessings of life, rising to the light of each new day, strength to carry through, food and clothing, shelter and protection, are all the ministrations of a wise and loving Father.

"He sendeth the rain on the just and on the unjust."

In the matter of returning worship unto God for all He has done, David stated (1 Chron. 29:14)—

"Who am I, or what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come from Thee—and of Thine Own have we given Thee."

"All this store that we have prepared to build Thee an house for Thine holy Name cometh of Thine hand and is all Thine Own" (1 Chron. 29:16).

But, as in all God's ways, there is wisdom and depth. The giving of all these blessings is, as Paul declared at Athens—

"That men might seek the Lord if haply they might feel after Him, though He be not far from every one of us."

That is, that they might *know* Him and *understand* Him. The usual thing is to accept all His blessings without thought of what they are designed to lead unto. Should we not comprehend the higher values contained in the Divine provision? Should we not observe—in the bread we eat—the *bread of life*, the Son of God? It is written—

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).

Temporal life God has agreed to provide for, if we seek first His Kingdom. He may not provide in the way we think He should provide, but He will take care of us as He sees best.

The Master lived according to this principle and thus lived by every word which God had spoken. By this it is possible for all men to know God. It was this mode of living which Paul was showing to the Athenians, when he preached the death and resurrection of Christ. *This is all comprehended in the crucifixion of the flesh to rise to newness of life in God's service.* Philip completely missed the point when he asked—

"Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us" (John 14:8).

Christ had said:

"If ye had known me ye would have known my Father also."

Again he replied (v. 9)—

"Have I been so long with you and yet hast thou not known me?"

They should have known the Father by having observed the way he lived and served God, leaving us an example of how we can know God also. Christ told the Pharisees that they did not know God nor him; if they had considered the works he did they would have known who His Father was.

Jeremiah, the prophet, expressed the Divine mind when he said to Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah—

"Your father, Josiah, judged the cause of the poor and needy, then it was well with him: was not this to know Me? saith the Lord" (Jer. 22:16).

This is the root of the matter—*concern for those who need help*, those who are humble and the weak of the earth. This short sentence speaks more of the real man Josiah than all the words that he kept the Passover, restored the Temple and found the Book of the Law. He knew God because he took care of the poor and needy. This is the meat of the Law of Moses and the law of Christ. They each reveal a knowledge of God. John adds his voice in 1 John 2:3—

"We **know that we know him**—if we keep his commandments."

This is the assurance we receive, and gives confidence that God is with us. It is the avenue not only to life and breath and all things now, but in the eternal sense. John also said that if we claim that we know God and do not do His commandments, we do not speak the truth. Paul told Titus that the Cretians professed to know God, but *denied Him by their works* (1:16).

Therefore knowing God is not just a casual mention of His Name. It is a way of life. It speaks of God being in us in the fullest sense—of our *patterning our lives toward His ultimate purpose of glorifying the earth.*

By the apostolic action of service to God, the rulers of the Jews took notice that the disciples "had been with Jesus." *Can the world see the same in us, or do we seek to hide it from the world?* God gives us life and strength and all things. Let us pass them on to others as we have opportunity. They are God-given for this very purpose. We dare not keep them in a napkin.

And now Paul comes to the nature of man.

6. "*And God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth*" (v. 26).

He states our relationship to Adam, to sin and to death, focalizing the necessity of salvation from this condition by seeking to know God and His purpose of judging mankind in righteousness by Jesus Christ; having witnessed to this fact by raising the Savior from the dead (v. 31), or as he later told the Corinthians:

"In Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

The responsibility of transgression and sin is thus directly placed on man. Again the Apostle took sharp issue with the Greeks, whose doctrine of the Furies causing men to sin, bringing evil and sickness, and wickedness and punishing man, darkened a knowledge of God. *The doctrine is still perpetuated in the personal devil theory.*

Clearly understood, the words of Paul show the necessity of humility and confession of our position as sinners and the only avenue to life being in Jesus whom we have met to remember.

The Apostle *associates the Savior with those whom he came to save*—a doctrine foreign to Greek mythology, to the churches of today, and even to those who in recent years that among brethren taught another Jesus than Paul knew (v. 31)—

"God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness **by that man** whom He hath ordained.

"Of one blood all nations of men" includes the Master, born of a woman, of the seed of David and of Adam. Our remembrance of him week by week in the appointed way and with desire and love, will keep our minds focussed on the antitypical significance of Paul's words.

God's purpose is yet to have all nations of men to be blessed through the blood of Jesus, the blood of the everlasting covenant. Then shall the other aspects of Paul's address at Athens be brought into their highest and broadest manifestation. For of that glorious age, Jeremiah wrote—

"They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother saying, Know the Lord: for **they shall all know Me**, from the least to the greatest!" (Jer. 31:34).

It is comprehended not by just a casual acquaintance, even in that age. It is *personal and inward*—

"I will put My laws **into their mind**, and write them **in their hearts**"
(Jer. 31:33; Heb. 8:10-11).

These things are only possible by the Divine control of the universe and the arrangement and appointment of nations.

7. "*God hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation*" (v. 26).

No capricious whims, dependent upon the moods of the gods, but an unchanging purpose, bounded by limited and appointed times for human rule. We should rejoice in the knowledge God has afforded us of these things, realizing—as we see the fulfilment of His Word—the truth of what Paul

said to the Athenians. Confidence in a happy issue from present world events, and all the trials and tribulations akin to our mortal sojourn, is only engendered by *knowing God in our hearts and our deeds* (Psa. 9:19).

"They that know Thy Name will put their trust in Thee."

We are instructed that Moses "knew God face to face." Is it not possible that this comprehended a full understanding of the Creator's purpose, and the right disposition to perform His Will? Is it not possible that this is that unto which we have been called? We know God now as through a glass darkly. But the obscurity will pass as we grow in knowledge of Divine requirements, as we assume the attributes of Jesus in everything we do. We then are changed from glory to glory as we reach up toward the mark of perfection. This is absolutely essential if we seek to attain to that portrayed by Moses.

When we stand before the Master he must see some likeness of himself in us. Otherwise he cannot say he knows us. Unto those in whom he sees a family resemblance, he will say,

"Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."
—E.H.

Prophet, Priest, and King

During the past 2000 years, many great men have played important parts in the affairs of the world. But none have exercised such a prodigious and enlightening influence upon the human race as the one known as Jesus Christ. It matters not where we look—into religion, politics, the arts or literature—we see a far-reaching change since the days when Jesus walked throughout the land of Judea.

When he appeared upon the scene, the Jews, although living in the land of Israel, were subject to the power of the Roman Empire. A few years after his crucifixion, the nation was punished for rejecting him. The city of Jerusalem was destroyed, and the people were scattered among the nations. In this condition they have remained for almost 1950 years. But during the first World War, their land was freed from the Turk, and opened up for colonization under the protection of Britain.

When Jesus appeared, the whole Gentile world was in a state of idolatry. The results of his teaching were so wide-spread, and so lasting that, within three centuries most of the pagan temples were either converted into churches for Christian use, or were removed and replaced by buildings designed for that purpose. Other pronounced effects of the work of Jesus are that wars have been fought, kingdoms have been overturned, and—sadly—countless thousands of people have been put to death.

The whole civilized world has become so permeated with the traditional reverence for the name of Jesus, that it is impossible to determine where his influence begins or ends. This is particularly true of the English speaking nations, where the influence of his moral precepts is reflected widely, though distortedly, in our educational systems, and the literature of our day. The vast distribution of the Bible, during the past century, has caused the name of Jesus to become virtually a household word in all parts of the civilized world.

Most people seem to think that if we are born in what is considered a "Christian" land, we are qualified to be called "Christians." But this is altogether wrong, for you will find that most of the existing knowledge of Jesus is extremely shallow, and is greatly corrupted with erroneous views with respect to his teaching, and also his mission. Even the various religious leaders do not agree as to who he was, or why he appeared.

Therefore, is it not reasonable that if we would have a true conception of the Anointed Jesus, we must lay aside any notions that we may have learned since childhood, and turn to the Bible with an unbiased mind and search the Scriptures in a persistent, determined effort to find out just what they do teach about him.

If we will do this, we will find predictions concerning Jesus that were given long before his birth. In the New Testament we will find a record of his sayings, and the things he did. And not only so, but we will discover many promises of what he will do in the future. The record is sufficiently complete so that the knowledge obtained will make one wise unto salvation.

But this knowledge cannot be obtained by a single reading of the Bible, or an occasional attendance at a meeting where the Truth is taught. There must be a *continual daily application of the mind to that which is written*, if we are to have even a modest share of success.

Religious leaders call upon the people to "Hope in Jesus," to "Trust in Jesus," or to "Take him as their personal Savior;" but little, if anything, is ever said about "*Knowing* Jesus." But it is essential that we do know him, for he has said—

"This is life eternal, to **know** Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent"—John 17:3.

To *know* God and Jesus, is not simply to be aware of their existence, but to *know the attributes and purposes of God, and the nature, character and mission of Jesus*.

The vital importance of knowledge is revealed in many places in the Bible. Here is one from the prophet Hosea—

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee—4:6.

But there is one in the Psalms even stronger—

"Man that is in honor, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish"—49:20.
Coming to the New Testament, we have this from Paul—

"We do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be **filled with the knowledge of His will** in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;
"That you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and **increasing in the knowledge of God**"—Col. 1:9-10.

It is amazing to talk to professed Christians and see how superficial their knowledge is of God and Jesus. Therefore let us look into the Bible that we may learn of him. First, let us examine his *Name*. "Jesus" is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua, and means *a savior*. The angel, addressing Joseph, said:

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins"—Matt. 1:21.

The word "Christ" is not a name. It is a Greek word transferred into the English language, and means "Anointed." *Jesus Christ*, therefore, means "The Anointed Jesus." The anointing of Jesus took place when he was 30 years of age, at the time he was baptized by John. Of this, said Peter—

"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power"—Acts 10:38.

This was a three-fold anointing. Like Elisha, he was anointed to be a prophet; like Aaron, he was anointed to be a priest; and like David, he was anointed to be a king. They were anointed with oil, but Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit. They were types, but Jesus was the anti-type.

That Jesus was to fulfil these three offices, was clearly foretold by Moses and the prophets, as we shall see. The New Testament confirms all of these predictions. Therefore, to truly know Jesus in the Bible sense, we must know what he taught as a *Prophet*. We must understand the sacrifice he offered as a *Priest*, and the ruling he will exercise as a *King*.

Strange, is it not, that in the churches of Christendom we hear nothing of these things? Especially in evangelical, or revival meetings, where all we hear is, "Jesus saves. Give your heart to Jesus, and take him for your personal Savior." They quote Paul's words in Acts 16:31—

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Unfortunately, however, they tell us nothing about *what we are expected to believe*. They do not follow Paul's example. If they did, they would do as Paul did in Rome and other places:

"And when they had appointed him a day; there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the **Kingdom of God**, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening"—Acts 28:23.

JESUS AS A PROPHET

When the people in his own neighborhood would not believe him, Jesus declared (John 4:44) that—

"A prophet hath no honor in his own country."
Therefore he departed and went into Galilee.

That the Messiah should appear to Israel as a prophet was predicted very early in their history. Through Moses, God said:

"I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.
"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him"—Deut. 18:18-19.

They were not left in doubt as to the character of this prophet. He was to be *like Moses*, and would therefore fulfil similar functions. Moses was a prophet, a mediator, a lawgiver, and a ruler, or king. Being like unto Moses, Jesus must fulfil all these. That he is the only one in whom this expectation can be realized, is proven by Peter in Acts 3:20-24—

"He shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.
"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed.
"Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that followed after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."

With these words in mind, let us follow the New Testament record briefly. On the occasion of one of his miracles, we read—

"And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God had visited His people"—Luke 7:16.
John records, at the beginning of his testimony—

"Philip findeth Nathanael, and said unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth"—John 1:45.

After his resurrection, on the way to Emmaus, he met two of the disciples, who said unto him (Luke 24:19)—

"Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?"

"And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people.

The greatest example of Jesus as a prophet is found in Luke 21 in what is known as the "Mount Olivet Prophecy." In this chapter, Jesus outlines the future from the day he was speaking, until he comes the second time, when he will assume the power of a king. He tells the disciples of the persecutions that would come upon them. The days of vengeance were rapidly approaching when the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed, and the people would be led away captive into all nations.

From that day forth Jerusalem would be under the power of the Gentiles; *but not forever*—only until their times should be fulfilled. He spoke of the signs that would indicate the time of his return to the earth, and pressed upon their attention the vital necessity of watching for him, saying—

"Watch therefore, and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man"—Luke 21:36.

During the days of his ministry, Jesus performed many miracles—wonderful works that were far beyond the power of men to do. The object of this was, of course, to prove that he was what he claimed to be, and that he was the one of whom Moses and the prophets had written. Those who listened attentively, and observed narrowly, were "astonished at his teaching" (Matt. 7:28, etc); even some of the officers of the chief priests admitted:

"NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN" (John 7:46).

That it is essential we know *what Jesus taught*, and understand the *purpose of his mission*, is evident by what he said—

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak"—John 12:48-49.

Therefore, to reject Jesus' teaching is to disbelieve God, for—

"He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar"—1 John 5:10.

How, then, can anyone expect to find favor with God if he denies Him, or if he *pays no attention* to the words Jesus spoke?

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

Every Man Perfect in Christ Jesus **PART TWO — COLOSSIANS 1:13-23**

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness"—Colos. 1:13.

Do we realize the greatness of this deliverance?—the terrible reality of this relentless power of darkness and of sin and of death? We take our salvation far too much for granted, and often act as if

we were doing God a favor by serving Him. We unconsciously take a self-commending attitude regarding our work in the Truth, as if *we* have done something for *God!*

Jesus said, when they came in the night to seize him—

"This is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Sin and evil, darkness and death, triumphed for a moment in the schemes of the flesh against the spirit. But in his patience and submission he led captivity captive. Paul said to the Romans:

"Ye were the slaves of sin."

And Jesus said—

"Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin."

Let us keep that thought before our minds. Pleasing the flesh—self-will (which is sin, for "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin") is not freedom but slavery. God has in Christ given us the key to freedom from this servitude of death. Regardless of how great a blessing may be, and of how thankful we are at the first, the natural way of the flesh is, like Israel, to soon take it for granted, and—in the very presence of divine glory—to squabble over petty things and complain of minor inconveniences.

"And hath translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son."

This passage is relied on heavily by those who teach that believers at present constitute the Kingdom of God, and who deny the true Gospel of the Kingdom. But this requires that we ignore all the plain teachings concerning the establishment of the Kingdom as a worldwide dominion at Christ's return, and the fact that those who inherit it must be immortal.

The word here rendered "translated" is the same as "put out" or "removed" in the passages—

Luke 16:4—"When I am **put out** of the stewardship."

Acts 13:22—"When God had **removed** Saul."

And the word rendered "into" is often translated *for* or *unto*, so the thought here is that God has taken the believers *out* of the dominion of darkness *for*, or *unto*, the coming eternal Kingdom of His Son, as Paul says to Timothy, using a very similar expression (2 Tim. 4:18)—

"The Lord shall preserve me **unto** (same word) His glorious Kingdom."

* * *

"In whom we have redemption through his blood (v.14).

Paul is about to speak, in the next few verses, of the supreme position of Jesus in all the works and purpose of God. It is by him, and by him alone, that we have redemption from the power of death and darkness. He is our only gateway to life.

And that redemption is "through his (shed) blood." Greater love hath no man than this. *We are not, and dare not be, ordinary people.* We have been purchased and redeemed by a treasure of inestimable value and preciousness—the perfect life-offering of God's beloved and only begotten son—willingly and lovingly suffered, even to the crudest, most shameful of deaths.

These are among the things we must ever keep before our minds. *All we do must be in solemn and gracious harmony with these great truths of our redemption and separation from the world.* True joy is divine, but there is no place for folly.

"Even the forgiveness of sins (v.14).

Forgiveness is a beautiful thing, when it is an eager and loving forgiveness, anxious for reconciliation, as the Parable of the Prodigal Son shows God's forgiveness to be.

God is strongly *desirous* of forgiving us. He has provided this beautiful way of forgiveness, and pleads with us to accept it. What could He do more? What condescension in One so infinitely high and self-sufficient! With what eagerness we should strive to comply with the terms of His reconciliation!

"Who is the image of the invisible God" (v.15).

We are led here to the threshold of a subject of great holiness, where we must tread with reverence and reserve. We are told just as much as is sufficient for us—that in the love and wisdom of the Creator man was made in the image of God—that Jesus Christ is His only begotten Son, and that it is His glorious purpose to develop a divine family for Himself from the redeemed of all ages.

"The firstborn of every creature" (v.15).

One of the principle purposes of this epistle is to establish the foundation of the pre-eminence of Christ—to bring him plainly to the forefront—to show the vital importance of being *in* him and *holding fast to him*.

There are various dangers the apostle warns them about— philosophy and vain deceit—the keeping of days—self-made regulations of men, well-intentioned indeed, but useless as far as the development of true godliness is concerned. It is very satisfying to create our own regulations of conduct and to glorify ourselves for keeping them, but we are not going deep enough. We are catering to pride, rather than overcoming it.

The only hope is a complete submergence into Christ—a complete emptying and denying of self—a carefulness to learn *his* simple, inner way of righteousness, and to be "*found in him*," resting wholly upon him, freely confessing our insignificance and hopelessness without him. In his beautiful parable of the vine, he said to all who would follow him—

"Without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

A sense of personal achievement, whether in natural or spiritual things, is apt to blind us to the deep truth of that statement. We must get a true perspective of ourselves, and of mankind in general. There have been great men in the past—we do not mean the petty potsherds of the earth: the Napoleons, the Washingtons, the Caesars: but such men as Moses, Abraham and Paul—truly great men in a divine, eternal sense.

But they were nothing compared to Christ. Casting themselves upon God, they were empowered to do a great work each in their day, but all the meaning and value of their work depended upon Christ alone.

Any straying away from him—any assertion of our own individuality—any self-reliance—any pride or dependence upon self—and we are lost.

"The firstborn of every creature" (v.15).

This is made clear in v. 18: "*The beginning, the firstborn from the dead.*" Christ is the firstborn of the Sons of God taken from among men, the beginning, the foundation stone upon which all is built, the forerunner, the Head of the Body; first and chief in every respect.

"By him were all things created" (v.16).

The RV and Diaglott have this "*in him*"—all the eternal purpose is built upon and contained *in him*.

"Whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities, or powers."

What are these? Paul speaks of them as *visible and invisible*. In heaven and in earth—all powers, all rulerships, all dominion and authority focuses in him. He is saying more emphatically what Jesus himself said after his resurrection (Matt. 28:18)—

"All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

For this end was he born. To this end was all arranged from the beginning. We have heard theories even among some who know the Truth, about there being other worlds, and other processes of salvation going on, outside of Christ, but Paul here shows him to be, under the Father, *supreme in heaven and earth*.

"He is before all things, and by him all things consist" (v.17).

Literally, as in the NAR, "in him all things hold together." This defines his supremacy very vividly—the whole framework of the divine purpose—the whole eternal building is held up, and held together, by him.

"He is the Head of the Body, the Ecclesia" (v.18).

The Ecclesia is a body having many members. The members have been scattered in all parts of the world, and in all generations, but they are all one in Christ. In him there is a oneness to their lives, wherever and whenever they have lived. This oneness knits them together in a love whose depth the world cannot comprehend. V. 19—

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."

It pleased God to manifest Himself in and through the Son in every aspect of the divine nature and character—

"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Jesus said (John 8:29)—

"I do always those things that please the Father."

How simple, and yet how profound, was his way of life! —the ruling principle of his conduct—

"Not my will, but Thine, be done."

Paul said: "He pleased not himself." For a few brief years he *pleased not himself*, but gave every moment of his life to pleasing the Father—and now he hath a Name above every name. How simple, and yet how profound! What a simple formula of eternal success, and yet what prayer and self-control to carry it through!

The relationship of the Father and Son—the love, the unity, the victory, the glory—is the perfect example of the Father's great purpose with men.

"Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him He reconciled all things to Himself" (v. 20).

It is good to be continually reminded of the blood of the cross, and how it was needed to bring peace between God and man—how in all things God must be exalted, His righteousness manifested, His holiness declared.

God having through Christ laid the foundation of holiness, He purposed through him to reconcile all things to Himself—to develop a state of things, all radiating from Christ, in which all will be in beautiful and eternal harmony.

"You that were some time alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works" (v. 21).

The natural man, however good and well-meaning, is in this category. To the Ephesians Paul says that the natural man is alienated from God by ignorance, blindness and darkened understanding. What the world calls good is *not* good. Only true, enlightened harmony with God is good—all else is evil.

Man must face these facts of his natural state and seek to be delivered from the darkness of ignorance and wickedness into the light of knowledge and obedience.

Paul says in v. 22 that Jesus had reconciled them to God—

"In the body of his flesh, through death."

He reminds them of the great price paid—*the one way to life that was opened with such sorrow and pain, and yet such glory and joy.*

"To present you holy, and unblamable, and unreprouvable in His sight" (v. 22).

The apostle tells us here that it is Christ's purpose and work to present the redeemed unto God "*holy and unblamable and unreprouvable.*" It is his work and purpose to develop a group of people in this condition of holiness and perfection.

To the Ephesians the apostle says similarly that it was Jesus' purpose to present his Bride "*holy and without blemish, spot or wrinkle.*" And in v. 28 here he speaks of his own work—

"That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

Now what we are concerned with is: *What does this "holiness" and "blamelessness" and "spotlessness" and "perfection" mean as far as we are concerned? What does it entail? What is expected of us? What is required, and what is possible?*

These are practical questions, and we should face them as such. We should face these things in their literal import, regardless of how we may find ourselves to compare with them. Then we should set ourselves the full time task of approaching as close as we can to them, never underestimating the mighty power that He has promised will work in us just *as long as we faithfully do our part.*

Beyond that, everything rests upon God's compassion and mercy. But **LET US AT LEAST RECOGNIZE WHAT WE ARE TO AIM AT AND STRIVE FOR**, and the continuous effort and study that is expected.

In ch. 3 Paul speaks specifically of many of the distinguishing marks of the state he describes as "holy and blameless"—marks by which we can measure ourselves. Among the requirements Paul lists are—

- Fixing the heart on heavenly things;
- Not setting our interests on any present things;
- Putting to death the evil tendencies & reactions of the flesh;
- Mercy, kindness, humbleness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, forgiveness, love;
- Allowing the peace of God to rule the heart;
- Allowing the Word of Christ to dwell within us in all wisdom;

Every word and deed done in the Name of Jesus and in thanksgiving to God;
The speech always pure, and sober, and gracious;
Walking always in wisdom—"Wisdom excelleth folly as light excelleth darkness."

These are some of the elements of the holiness of which the apostle speaks.

"If ye continue in the Faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel" (v. 23).

To be moved away from the hope of the Gospel does not just mean to *openly* leave the Truth. There are other equally disastrous, and far more subtle, ways we can be "moved away."

Other interests can take more and more of our attention—interests that may be perfectly legitimate and necessary *up to a point*—as our daily bread, or our family, or our home.

Or we can gradually get our knowledge of the Truth unbalanced and distorted by being absorbed by certain aspects to the extent of their becoming crotchets. It is so easy and so natural to just keep going around and around on the same subject or two, instead of truly *studying the Scriptures as a whole*, and developing knowledge of the whole Truth on a broad front.

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

Out of Egypt Have I Called My Son **PART TEN**

The reader's attention is now asked particularly to the prelude to the eighth of these wonderful plague-signs. He will therein perceive that Moses is addressed as the representative of the nation of Israel; and that the words spoken to him were of a binding nature upon that people in their future relation to their divine Creator, Preserver, and Deliverer. Moses was instructed once more to—

"Go in unto Pharaoh: for (saith the Lord) I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these My signs before him.

"And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am the Lord."

The words thus addressed through Moses to Israel are both confirmatory and indicative of approaching deliverance, and especially so when viewed in their connection with the accompanying warning to Pharaoh in these ominous words—

"How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before Me?"

He was then informed that if he still refused to let Israel go that a grievous swarm of destructive locusts should invade the coasts of Egypt and cover the face of the earth so that the Egyptians would not be able to see the earth; and that the locusts should eat up the residue of that which remained from the hail, and should eat every tree of the field, and fill the houses of all the Egyptians.

The announcement of this threatened devastation, coupled with the effects of the previous plagues, from which they were suffering intensely, filled the Egyptians with alarm, and they approached Pharaoh, saying—

"How long shall this man be a snare unto us? Let the men go that they may serve the Lord their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?"

Upon this appeal, Pharaoh recalled Moses and Aaron, saying—

"Go ye, serve the Lord your God: but who are they that shall go?"

Moses then laid the whole facts of the case before Pharaoh—

"We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds . . . for we must hold a feast unto the Lord."

This proposal was vehemently opposed by Pharaoh, who warned Moses that evil was before him. Nevertheless, he was willing that the *men* of Israel should go and serve the Lord as desired. And Moses and Aaron were driven from his presence.

A few remarks on this will not be out of place here, for this is one of the grounds of objection raised by the sceptic who imputes *deception* to God in His dealings with Pharaoh.

The groundlessness of such a charge will be seen at once on reference to the original demand made by Jehovah through Moses for the liberation of Israel. He claimed them as His people, His own national son, even His firstborn nation.

Of course, it was not to be expected that Pharaoh would be able to discern in these phrases the purpose of God with Israel; neither would he perceive that purpose in the means adopted to convince him of the divine claim to the people who had been developed in accordance with that purpose in Egypt.

But all this is beside the mark, so far as Pharaoh himself was concerned. When he came to the throne the people became the subjects of his rule and authority, as they had been for centuries previously to his predecessors in power.

He would, therefore, naturally consider that any claim made to them was of an unlawful character, and would resist it to the uttermost. This was the situation when that claim was made by the God of Israel through Moses in these words:

"Thus saith the Lord, Israel is My son, even My firstborn; and I say unto thee, let My son go, that he may serve Me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn" (4:22-23).

The issue was clear: the God of Israel versus the King of Egypt. *All that was done in the matter was upon these lines*; and the man must be blind indeed, who, in face of all the evidence adduced in the signs and wonders by which that claim was supported, could arrive at such a conclusion as that we are considering—a conclusion which would be impossible if the sublimely beautiful and all-engrossing topic of God's purpose with the earth and man were understood.

The driving out of Moses and Aaron from the presence of Pharaoh was the signal of approaching judgment. There was no parleying; for the east wind brought upon all the land of Egypt the threatened plague of locusts which devastated the country, and under the grievousness of which the lofty and proud-hearted monarch was temporarily humbled. But when the cause was removed in carrying away the locusts, so that—

"There remained not one in all the coasts of Egypt."
—notwithstanding the murmuring voices raised against him by a suffering community, he again refused to hearken to the word of the Lord, and persisted in keeping Israel in bondage.

The ninth plague followed without the usual pre-announcement, and impenetrable darkness enveloped the land for three successive days, so that they were unable to see one another; neither did any rise from his place during its continuance:

"But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings."

Under this pressure Pharaoh again relented, and expressed willingness to let all Israelites, young and old, depart, the flocks and herds alone remaining. This would be to his mind some security as to their return.

The misconception of God's claim to Israel by Pharaoh was, in the hand of an all-wise and merciful God, made the salvation of Egypt, as it afforded the opportunity so wisely utilised, and so frequently expressed in the course of the negotiations for the deliverance of Israel, for the declaration of the *Name and power* of God throughout all the earth.

But these conditions being rejected, secured for Moses a summary dismissal from Pharaoh's presence with a warning to take heed to himself, and to see Pharaoh's face no more upon pain of death. The reply to this threat was couched in the dignified and significant words—

"Thou hast spoken well; I will see thy face again no more."

So were the negotiations abruptly terminated.

No further demand was presented to Pharaoh for the liberation of the people who were beloved for the fathers' sakes. The only thing that remained to be done was to apprise Pharaoh that God would now enforce the terms of the original claim in the death of all the firstborn of Egypt in the infliction of the tenth and final plague.

This Moses did under the instructions of the angel of the Lord before he left Pharaoh's presence in the strength and power divinely imparted to him. How little did Pharaoh know of the secret of Moses' courageous conduct! Had Pharaoh only been aware of *the presence of the angel of the Lord*, and permitted one glimpse of his countenance, or to hear a whisper from his lips, he would have shrunk from the contention.

But this was denied to him. The evidence submitted to him had been overwhelming and the negotiations sufficiently protracted to work the necessary conviction that the claim was divine, and therefore ought never to have been resisted.

Pharaoh was now under the direct control of the angel of the Lord. He had therefore to listen to the most solemn words that had ever before fallen upon his ears from the lips of man, and during which he was spell-bound by divine power.

What his thoughts were we can only imagine when he heard the fiat of the Almighty, that *all the firstborn of the land* of Egypt should die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh even unto the firstborn of the maidservant, and all the firstborn of beasts, while against any of the children of Israel not even a dog should move its tongue against man or beast, that he might know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel: and that all Pharaoh's servants should bow down themselves before Moses saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee. And, having thus delivered himself, Moses went out from Pharaoh (10:21-29; 11:5-8).

The words recorded in chap. 11:1-3 were addressed to Moses by the angel of the Lord concerning the necessary arrangements to be made with the children of Israel after the delivery of Moses' last message to Pharaoh, in preparation for their leaving Egypt at midnight on the 14th of Nisan or Abib (green ears).

There was also to be arranged the Feast of the Passover in commemoration of the Exodus then about to be inaugurated, the details whereof are to be found in ch. 12, to which we invite the reader's special attention.

The feast as lawfully celebrated by Israel in days long past is now suspended so far as concerns its *national* aspect; but will be incorporated in the law which shall yet go forth from Zion to all the world, and will be observed not only by Israel in "the world to come," but by all mankind, until the time shall arrive for the swallowing up of death in victory of the earth's population.

In its *individual* aspect it is "*Christ our Passover sacrificed for us,*" and celebrated in the gatherings of the saints of God every first day of the week until Christ shall come and bestow upon them the eternal life secured for them by his death upon the cross, and subsequent resurrection to life eternal, as typified in the beautiful way represented by the feast.

Moses having called together all the elders of Israel and instructed them in all matters relating to the exodus of the whole nation, both as to the time appointed, and the killing and eating of the passover lamb, and the sprinkling of its blood upon the posts of the houses of the children of Israel with a view to their exemption from death at the hands of the destroying angel, they went away and did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron. And at midnight of the fourteenth of the month Nisan or Abib, which was henceforward the *first month of the sacred year of Israel's redemption*—

"The Lord smote all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.

"And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

"And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go serve the Lord as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.

"And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men....

"And they (Israel) borrowed (R.V., asked) of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment.

"And the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent (R.V., let them have) unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians"

(13:28-36).

But now a word or two with our friends who decline to accept the narrative of these wonderful events as true. We would like to know upon what reasonable grounds (if any) your objection is founded. We submit that those records have a far greater claim upon your credence than those of any, and all, other compilations of historically collected and related facts, from every point of view which enables the judgment to discern between fact and fiction.

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

Signs of The Times

"*Be thou prepared, thou and all thy company, and be thou a guard unto them*"—Ezekiel 38.7.

As this article is being written, the stalemate which developed as a result of the U. N. action in taking over the Suez Canal and other disputed areas, still remains unresolved. Sec. Hammarskjold's conference with Nasser seems to have accomplished very little in the way of persuading the Egyptian dictator to change his policies concerning the Suez canal, the Gaza strip or Aqaba.

Though certain half-hearted promises, which to some might appear favorable, have been received from Nasser, it still remains a fact that everything which is to be done must be subject to the approval of Egypt.

Israel's "hopes and expectations" of a fair deal in Gaza and the gulf of Aqaba have not been realized. Though the UN moved in and took possession of the disputed areas, their tenure there, and their authority while there, still seems to be uncertain and still depends on what Nasser has to say about it.

The Israeli are asking the UN if they moved in to get Israel out or get the Egyptians back in. Their concern is understandable, for upon the very heels of the UN forces, Nasser sends in one of his generals with a company of government officials to re-establish Egyptian rule. Though no Egyptian troops have yet been sent into the Gaza strip, Nasser has indicated that he will send them in if he sees fit to do so.

While the U.S. and the UN representatives take the position that Israel is entitled to unrestrained use of the Suez canal and the gulf of Aqaba, and protection from border raids, yet no one seems to know how they would or could prevent Egypt from sending troops into Gaza or interfering with Israel's shipping.

A new complication has arisen in regard to the gulf of Aqaba. The territory of four nations borders on this gulf. Egypt on the west side and Saudi Arabia on the east extend almost the entire length of this narrow strip of water extending northward from the Red sea. Israel and Jordan barely touch the northern tip of the gulf where is the port of Elath which Israel hopes to develop into a large shipping point for trade with East African and Oriental countries.

Now comes Saudi Arabia and issues a declaration that Aqaba is a part of its "territorial waters" and that it would not agree to Israel having any right in the gulf. Near the southern entrance to the gulf is Sharm El Sheikh, occupied by the Israeli army during the recent Sinai campaign. An interesting sidelight on the situation is that Col. Solomon Goren, Israeli army chaplain, said, in the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from this port:

"Israel will one day return to Sharm El Sheikh, because it is the territory promised to Abraham."

How true, indeed!—but probably under entirely different circumstances from what the chaplain had in mind.

The perplexing and vexing situation in which Nasser is able to dictate terms to the whole world is unique in international affairs. His country is still one of "the basest of kingdoms," having one of the lowest standards of living in all the world, and is virtually bankrupt. He has just suffered one of the most humiliating defeats in the annals of warfare, at the hands of a little people with a population less than one-tenth that of Egypt. His rule and his economy must depend upon the help of other nations.

Yet strong combinations of nations dare not press sanctions against him or stir him up to acts of violence. While we fervently believe that the hand of God is "hardening the heart" of this modern Pharaoh for a purpose yet to be revealed, the present reason for this weak and vacillating attitude of the nations toward Nasser stems from two sources—the fact that there are enough Communist-controlled countries to prevent a two-thirds vote at UN in using drastic measures in dealing with him; and, second, **the fear of direct intervention by Russia** on the side of Nasser. It is fear of Russia, not Egypt, that dominates the scene.

The 38th chap, of Ezekiel clearly outlines the role which Gog, or Russia, is to play in the time of the end. As a great leader of nations it is said of him in v. 7—

"Be thou a guard unto them,"

In a sense we may now say that this is already being fulfilled, for it is now indisputable that no nation or combination of nations dares to lay a hand upon any country favored by Russia.

* * *

"MANY SHIPS"

"At the time of the end . . . the king of the north shall come against him . . . with many ships"—Dan. 11:40. For many years students of prophecy were perplexed as to how this prophecy would be fulfilled in view of the fact that Russia's navy was negligible, the weakest among the navies of all the great powers. Neither was there any indication that her naval strength was likely to increase at any time within the foreseeable future.

It was suggested that perhaps Russia's allies would furnish the ships. But the war fleets of other European nations were virtually wiped out or greatly diminished by the late World Wars. Then again, in recent years, it has been suggested that "air ships" was the answer.

All of which shows the futility of trying to determine in advance just how a prophecy is to be fulfilled. For, only a few weeks ago, "Jane's Fighting Ships" report shocked world naval quarters with the statement that **Russia is now SECOND strongest naval power in the world**, having taken the place of Britain as the world's second ranking naval power, exceeded only by the United States.

The details of this report, considered the most accurate and reliable of all reports on naval matters, is startling indeed. During the last few years Russia has built **more submarines, cruisers and destroyers than all the world combined**.

Within 10 years her cruiser strength has jumped from 8 to 30, and she now has twice as many destroyers as Britain. But the number of ships does not tell all the story. By far the greater portion of Russia's fighting ships has been built during the last 10 years, so in building this fighting fleet they have had all the lessons of the late war to guide them in bringing them up to modern standards of naval warfare. So there is no longer any mystery about the "many ships," which, along with the vast arsenal of other weapons of war, Russia is soon to throw into the conflict in which she will bid for world domination, but "comes to his end with none to help him."

* * *

"PUSHING AT HIM"

As was to be expected, British-U. S. relations are once more getting back to normal. It has been revealed that the British Isles are to be an arsenal for atomic weapons and guided missiles, the chief link in the "atomic ring" around Russia. The Soviet, sensing the ever tightening squeeze of this ring of military bases, has issued more warnings, this time to Western European nations against allowing these bases to be established within their borders.

How long will it be before the Russian Bear will decide the time to burst forth has come, initiating the last bid for Gentile world dominion, ending with the triumph of the Prince of Peace and the establishment of his Millennial reign of peace? —O.B.

Ecclesial News

CROYDON, Eng.—Ruskin House, Wellesley Road.—Memorial 11 a.m.

We feel very much alone, but not as lonely as some, as we number five, and are able to meet each week.

The signs of the times, particularly the affairs in the Middle East, mean so much to us, coupled with the industrial unrest, and continued demands for increased pay ("The sea and the waves roaring"). All show us how near we are to the end of the "time of the end."

If only we could convince some of those outside what these things really mean we should indeed be happy, but we find it increasingly difficult to get even superficial interest in the Truth.

However, we must hold fast and, while the Master tarries, we must encourage one another to look up and lift up our heads, knowing that "our redemption draweth nigh."

With love in the one faith to all,

—bro. A. A. Jeacock

* * *

HITCHIN, Herts., England

Sis. M. J. West, who is in isolation in Hitchin, is very grateful for the letters she has received, and wished her appreciation conveyed to the senders. Her address is: 153 Bedford Road, Hitchin, Herts., England.

* * *

HOUSTON, Texas—8008 Junius St.—S.S. 10 a.m.; Breaking of Bread 11; Public Lecture every 3rd Sunday 7:30 p.m.; Eureka Class Wed. 7:30 p.m.

Our Sunday School Program was held on Mar. 9, at which time the children exhibited interest and understanding of those things they had been taught in their classes.

The occasion was made more interesting and enjoyable by the presence of some from the Lampasas Sunday School.

Also, at the close of the program a tape was heard which was sent to us from Detroit, recorded for this occasion. While we listened to this recording of the Sunday School work being carried on there, we were encouraged to note how eagerly the young minds were laying hold on those important things that will mean so much toward shaping a character molded by the Word of God.

Bro. & sis. Wayne Wolfe visited with us on the weekend of Mar. 10. We were glad they came.

We now have with us bro. & sis. Sommerville from Lake Ariel, Pa. Bro. Sommerville spoke on Sunday evening, Mar. 17, on: "The Kingdom and Throne of David Soon to Be Restored."

This subject was first developed by a reference to the general promises God had made to the fathers of Israel in which all nations were to be blessed in them and their Seed, the Christ. This was later narrowed down to point out, not only the tribe, but also the family in Israel from whom the Seed would come that would rule the world of that day. To David God said—

"Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations" (Psa. 89:4).

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

It has been our pleasure and privilege to have bro. & sis. Sommerville with us several Sundays in the past two months. Bro. Sommerville has given us the word of exhortation.—Wayne Wolfe

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