

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.

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

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CHRIST IS COMING AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

EDITORIAL

Walking With God

"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another"—1 John 1: 7

The natural method of locomotion is accomplished by the use of our feet, and is generally expressed by the word "walk." The fundamental meaning of the word is "to proceed by steps." It is, however, of wide comprehension, for the dictionary before me gives 40 diverse meanings, which include both literal and figurative usage.

The definition we are particularly interested in for the present is, "*To conduct oneself in a particular manner, or pursue an orderly course.*" This treatment of the word is used extensively in the Scripture of Truth where we will find many profound phrases employed by the prophets and apostles. One of the foremost examples is found in Gen. 5:24, where Moses informs us that—

"Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."

It is important to note that the import of the word rendered walked is "to go on habitually." The same word is used in Gen. 6:9, with respect to Noah. In the eleventh chapter of the letter to the Hebrews, the apostle gives us invaluable assistance towards a definite understanding of the phrase "walked with God." When speaking of the righteous life of Enoch, he says, "that he *pleased* God." And that, because of Noah's action in constructing the ark (v. 7)—

"He condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

In view of the unparalleled divine honor bestowed upon these two men, it is extremely notable that Paul inserts a scriptural definition of faith at this point—

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

The possessor of "a full assurance of faith" looks back into the past, and ponders the things which have been revealed by the prophets and apostles. He finds the evidence so convincing that he becomes fully persuaded of its truth. With this "full assurance of hope" stirred up in his heart, he looks to the future. As he does so, he considers the great and precious promises that form the basis of the Gospel. Knowing that God is able to perform that which He has promised, he anticipates—with all confidence—their literal fulfilment.

An individual possessing a faith "which worketh by love" finds that his *life is transformed* because he "walks with God." As he continues this mind-clearing form of walking, his disposition changes, and a character is formed that will lead to perfection; not in this life, but in the age to come.

Walking with God is a general term; but some of the inspired writers use highly specific phrases which set before us the qualifications that are essential to bring us into fellowship with the Father and Son, and therefore one with another.

We are all aware that salvation is *conditional*. This fact is brought before us in an impressive manner by the beloved apostle John, when he informs us that "God is light" and,

"If we WALK IN THE LIGHT, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

It should be carefully noted that the cleansing from all sin is conditional upon *walking in the light*. It is plain that John is not speaking of literal light; but rather in the sense expressed by the Psalmist, when he said,

"The entrance of Thy word giveth light."

Therefore, he could say in another place,

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

It is "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ" in which we are to walk; for he is the "Sun of Righteousness", "the true light, that lightens every man"—

"For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"—2 Cor. 4:6.

There is another form of walking which we are to have no part in. John calls it "walking *in darkness*" and Paul speaks of it as "walking *after the flesh*." But Jesus gives it serious emphasis in his last message, when he speaks of his apocalypse—

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he WALK NAKED, and they see his shame"—Rev. 16:15.

Keeping our garments is by no means a reference to our ordinary clothing. In Rev. 3:4, Jesus speaks of "a few names who have not defiled their garments," and in Rev. 19:8, he speaks of those "arrayed in fine linen," and explains that the fine linen "is the righteousness of saints," and Paul refers to it as "the righteousness of the Faith." Now Jesus says if they do not keep this garment, they will *walk naked*.

Therefore, to walk naked is to walk out of harmony with the Truth, and if we walk out of harmony with the Truth, we walk in darkness. Now, says Jesus (John 12:35)—

"Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth."

This was the state into which the ecclesia at Laodicea had drifted, with the result that Jesus threatened to spue them out of his mouth. They had become strong financially, and felt that they needed nothing, or in plain words, they were *self-satisfied*. But from the divine viewpoint, Jesus reminded them that they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. Then he pleaded and said—

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see"—Rev. 3:18.

They had not watched and kept their garments and, therefore had ceased to walk in the light. They wanted to *widen* the strait gate, and *broaden* the narrow way. By doing this, they would become respectable in the eyes of the world; but it led them into darkness.

The divine standards by which we may attain unto the blessedness of those who watch and keep their garments are high and lofty, but exacting and rigorous. To be able to "walk with God" we must walk in the path in which Jesus walked. If we do, we will be able to say with the Psalmist—

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"—Ps. 27:1. —Editor.

The Way of Cain

"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?"

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

The allegorical signification of the sentence upon the Serpent kindled the first scintillation of hope in the human heart of the appearance of One who should deliver the world from all its ills, and advance it to a higher state. The promise of such a personage, and of such a consummation, was the nucleus of that "faith," which is the—

"Assured expectation of things hoped for, and the conviction of things unseen" (Heb. 11:1).

The belief, and spiritualizing influence, of this hope, became the ground of acceptance with God in the earliest times. *Faith in this promise* was established as the principle of classification among the sons of Adam. Belief in what He promises is belief in God; and its influence upon "the fleshly tablet of the heart" is most deifying in its effect, making the subject of it "a partaker of the divine nature."

Atheism in its scriptural import is not the denial of God's existence. None but a fool would say, "There is no God" (Psa. 14:1). It is worse than this. It is to believe that He exists, and yet to treat Him as a liar. To do this, is not to believe His promises; and he that is faithless of these, is "without God"—*atheoi*—"an atheist in the world" (Ep. 2:12).

In the beginning, this kind of atheism soon manifested itself in the family of Adam. Cain, who was conceived in sin, true to his paternity, was as faithless of God's Word as the Serpent; while Abel believed on God. Hence Paul says—

"By faith Abel offered unto God a fuller sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh"
(Heb. 11: 4).

This is an important intimation, importing that *no religious services are acceptable to God which are not predicated on the belief of His promises*; for—

"Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6).

This was, therefore, the ground of Cain's reprobation—

"The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering but unto Cain and his offering He had not respect."

This made Cain fierce and sullen. He refused to "bring of the firstlings of the flock, and of the fat thereof." He did not believe in its necessity, *having no faith in the remission of sins by the shedding of sacrificial blood* (Heb. 9:22, 10:4-14), nor in the fulfilment of God's promise concerning him who — being "bruised in the heel," or slain as Abel's accepted lamb — should arise, and "bruise the Serpent's head," in destroying the works of sin (1 John 3:8).

This is what Cain did not believe; and his faithlessness expressed itself in neglecting to walk in "the way of the Lord." Nevertheless, he continued "a *professor* of religion," for "he brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord." But the Lord paid no respect to him or his offering; because, in neglecting the *sacrifice*, he had set up his judgment against God; and in being faithless had in effect treated God as a liar; for, saith the Scripture (1 John 5:10)—

"He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar."

But Cain's sullen anger against God could only wound himself. His refusal to obey Him could not injure the Most High. He insulted God with his "will-worship and voluntary humility" (Col. 2:18-23), and convicted himself as an evil-doer. Self-condemned and impotent, he vented his rage against his brother, whom God respected and had accepted. He was wroth against him (1 John 3:12-15)—

"Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

He was now a murderer in principle; and with this fratricidal feeling rankling in his heart, brought his gift to the altar (Matt. 5:22-24). But God, Who "discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12), called him to account for his lowering aspect, and anger against his brother—

"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, a sin-offering lieth at the door. And his hope shall be towards thee, and thou shalt rule over him" (Gen. 4:7-8).
—or *have the excellency as the first-born* and progenitor of the Seed.

But Cain was a genuine "seed of the Serpent." The thinking of the flesh, called by Adam "the Serpent," was strong within him. He talked with Abel, who, doubtless, pleaded for the things repudiated by Cain. But Cain's reasonings were perverse; well-doing was not at all to his taste; so that having no faith in the promise, he preferred to follow his own waywardness; and being determined to rid himself of his brother's expostulations, he mingled his blood with the dust of the ground.

Thus was slain by a brother's hand the protomartyr of the faith. A righteous man, respected and beloved of God. His only offence was that, in believing the promises of God and doing well, his brother was reproved. The fleshly mind hates righteousness, and those who practise it; so that between the two parties the truth and righteousness of God lie as an apple of discord.

Abel was the first of Eve's sons of whom honorable mention is made on account of "the obedience of faith." As Cain was of the evil one by *transgression*; so Abel was of God by the *obedience* of faith, which evinced that "God's seed remained in him." Hence, though both of them were born of Eve according to the flesh, *their spiritual paternity was as opposite as light and darkness*. Cain was a man of sin; and Abel an accepted son of God.

In these characters, they stood at the head of two divisions of their father's family; and proximately represented the *Seed of the Serpent*, and the *Seed of the Woman*. Cain bruised his brother's heel; but God appointed a substitute for Abel in the person of Seth, by whom Cain's headship was bruised, and his posterity superseded in the earth. Eve, says Moses—

"Bare a son, and called his name Seth: for, said she, God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew."

She had many other sons, but none of them are mentioned except Cain, Abel and Seth. When, therefore, we are informed that Seth was "appointed instead of Abel," and trace the posterity of Seth terminating through a certain line in Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God; we are taught that Cain lost his excellency by sin, and was therefore set aside; and Abel provisionally appointed to be the progenitor of the Seed who is to bruise the Serpent's headship over the world.

But, Abel having been bruised in the heel, it became necessary, in order to carry out the divine purpose, and to answer allegorically the indications of the sentence upon the Serpent, to appoint another son of Eve in the place of Abel.

According to this arrangement, *Abel* became the type of Jesus, wounded in the heel; but whose sprinkled blood speaks better things than Abel's, which cried only for vengeance; while *Seth* typifies

Jesus in his reappearance among the sons of men to bruise sin under foot, and to exterminate in the course of his reign the Serpent's seed from the earth.

Notwithstanding his crime, Cain was permitted to live. But the seed of evil-doers never gets renown. Sooner or later their deeds of villainy consign them to reprobation. God hid His face from Cain, and exiled him from the settlements in Eden. He wandered still further to the east, "and dwelt in the land of Nod." There he found a city and called it Enoch.

His offspring multiplied, and found out many inventions. They became wandering tribes, dwelling in tents and tending cattle; others of them musicians, and artificers in brass and iron. Their women were beautiful, and as the descendants of Cain, untrained in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, were vain in their imaginations, and demoralizing in their associations.

Seth's descendants in the direct line ended in Noah and Japheth at the time of the flood. His posterity, in this and the collateral branches, multiplied considerably; but for a time constituted a separate community from the progeny of Cain. During the lifetime of Enos, son of Seth—

"They began to call themselves by the Name of the Lord."
—or "*sons of God*"; while the faithless and corrupt worshippers of the land of Nod were simply styled "*men*."

The Sethites and the Cainites stood related to one another as the *Church of God* and the *World*; or, as the Woman and the Serpent. So long as the sons of God maintained their integrity, and walked in "the way of the Tree of Life," the two communities had no religious associations, or family intercourse.

The time, however, arrived when the middle wall of partition was about to be laid low by a general apostasy. *A spirit of liberalism had arisen among the sons and daughters of Seth, the result of an expiring faith, which predisposed them to a fraternity, or mixed community, with the Cainites; who, like their father, were religionists of a wilful stamp.*

The Serpent's seed enjoyed themselves in those days as they do now. They were men of the flesh, grovelling in their tastes, habits and pursuits; and devoted to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life. Their religion sanctified what pleased them best; and doubtless afforded a fair specimen of the same sort of thing in all later ages.

It is probable that the precepts and example of the sons of God had considerably modified the original impiety of the Cainites, so as to bring things to a similar state as that observable in our day. Sects, between whom there were no more dealings in their beginning than between the Jews and Samaritans, are now so liberal that they agree to be silent upon all controversial topics for which they once contended to the death, and recognise one another as brethren in Christ!

Thus, if they ever had the Truth, they have suppressed it by a tacit compromise, and have become highly respectable, and singularly amiable and polite; so that they "have need of nothing," but to enjoy the good things of the world within their reach.

The serpents had become so harmless, and even pious, under the influence abroad, and were withal so fair to look upon, and so enchanting in their ways, that the Sethites took them into their bosoms, and cherished them with the affection of their own flesh. "They saw," says Moses—

"That the daughters of men were fair; and they took wives of all they chose" (Gen. 6:2).

This was a fatal step. "Can a man take fire in his bosom and not be burned?" The sons of God corrupted themselves in marrying the daughters of Cain. Instead of bringing *them* over to "the Way of the Tree of Life," *they* were beguiled into "the Way of Cain" (Jude 11). For sons of God to marry

daughters of Belial is to jeopardize their fidelity to God. *This practice has ever been fruitful of apostasy.*

Balaam was well aware of this; and knew that the only way to bring a curse upon Israel was to involve them in transgression; he therefore taught Balak, the King of Moab, to tempt them with the fair daughters of his people, as the readiest way of beguiling them into the worship of their idols; which would cause God to hate them, and so facilitate their conquest by the Moabites. The policy succeeded but too well for the honor and happiness of Israel. Moses says—

"They began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab."

The consequence of this licentiousness was that the women invited Israel into the sacrifices of their gods; they did eat and bow down to them. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-Peor (Num. 25:1-2). The anger of the Lord was kindled against them; so that He slew 24,000 of them.

After the same example, the union of the Sethites and Cainites was productive of the worst results. The offspring of this union were "mighty men of renown," whose wickedness "was great in the earth"; for "every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5).

Their apostasy, however, was not perfected without remonstrance on the part of God. There was one eminent man of whom it was testified, that "he pleased God." He "walked with God" in the Way of the Tree of Life for three hundred years after the birth of Methuselah. His name was Enoch. The spirit of prophecy was in him; and the gigantic wickedness of the antediluvians aroused him to reprove their iniquity. Animated by the hope of the promise concerning the woman's Seed, he prophesied of the serpents of his own and future times, saying—

"Behold, the Lord cometh with myriads of his saints, to dispense justice towards all, and to convict all that are ungodly among them of their ungodly deeds which they have impiously committed; and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

But his expostulation was unheeded; and God graciously "translated him that he should not see death" (Heb. 11:5), thus rewarding him for his constancy, and giving the faithful a notable illustration and earnest of "the recompense of the reward," and the certainty of the punishment of the world.

Things went on from bad to worse; for—

"All flesh had corrupted His Way upon the earth: and the earth was filled with violence"
(Gen. 6: 11-12).

Before, however, things had come to the worst, the Lord made another effort to reclaim the antediluvians. He had resolved to put an end to the wickedness of man upon the earth; for, said He (Gen. 6:3)—

"My Spirit shall not always strive with him, because he is but flesh."

This intimates a limit to His forbearance; that it should have an end, but not immediately; for it is added—

"Yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years."

Four hundred and eighty years before the announcement of this determination, a son was born to Lamech, the grandson of Enoch, whom he named Noah; that is, *Comfort*, saying (Gen. 5:29)—

"This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed."

This was the hope of those who remained faithful of the sons of Seth. They labored in hope of translation into a rest from their labors, when the curse should be removed from the earth. In process of time, Noah was "warned of God of things not seen as yet." Noah believed them; and "God, by His Spirit" in him "went and preached to the spirits (now) in prison"—that is, to the antediluvians "who were disobedient in the days of Noah." He warned them of the coming flood, which would "destroy them from the earth" and proved to them his own conviction of its certainty by—

"Preparing an ark for the safety of his own house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11:7).

But his faith, thus made perfect by his works, made no salutary impression upon his contemporaries (Matt. 24:38)—

"They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not till the flood came, and took them all away."
—leaving only eight persons of the sons of Seth alive.

Thus was the mingled seed of Seth and Cain exterminated from the earth. Cain's race became utterly extinct, and those only of Seth remained, who were upright in their generations, and who walked with God. The distinction of seeds was temporarily suspended. The generation of vipers was extinct, but *sin in the flesh survived*—a principle destined in after times to produce the most hideous and terrible results.

Having Obtained Redemption

"God, sending His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh"

—Rom. 8:3

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

The sacrificial blood was applied to everything—Aaron and his sons included (see Lev. 8:14-15; 23-24). An atonement had to be made by the shedding and the sprinkling of blood for and upon them all (Lev. 16:33). As Paul says (Heb. 9:22):

"Almost all things by the Law are purged with blood."

Now all these things were declared to be "*patterns of things in the heavens,*" which it is admitted on all hands converge upon and have their substance in Christ. There must, therefore, be a sense in which Christ (the antitypical Aaron, the antitypical altar, the antitypical mercy-seat, the antitypical everything), must not only have been sanctified by the action of the antitypical oil of the Holy Spirit, but *purged by the antitypical blood of his own sacrifice.*

This conclusion is supposed to be weakened by the statement of Lev. 16:16, that the atonement for the holy place, altar, etc., was to be made—

"Because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins."

That is, it is argued from this, that the holy things would have had no uncleanness in themselves apart from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

This must be granted, but it must also be recognized that because the children of Israel were sinful and polluted, *the holy things were reckoned as having contracted defilement in having been fabricated by them and through remaining in their midst.*

This cannot be denied on a full survey of the testimony. They were ceremonially unclean, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and *had to be cleansed* by the holy oil and the sacrificial blood before they were acceptable in the Mosaic service.

Now, this is part of the Mosaic figure. *There must be an antitype to it.* What was it? The holy things, we know, in brief, are Christ. He must, therefore, have been the subject of a *personal cleansing* in the process by which he opened the way of sanctification for his people.

If the *typical* holy things contracted defilement from connection with a sinful congregation, were not the *antitypical* (Christ) holy things in a similar state, through derivation on his mother's side from a sinful race? If not, how came they to need purging with his own "better sacrifice"? (Heb. 9:23).

Great difficulty is experienced by various classes of thinkers in receiving this view. Needless so, it would seem. There is first the *express declaration* that the matter stands so—

"It was therefore necessary that the pattern of things in the heavens should be purified with these (Mosaic sacrifices); but the heavenly things themselves with better things than these" (Heb. 9:23).

"It was of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer" (8:3).

"By reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins" (5:3).

"By his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (**for us** is an addition inconsistent with the middle voice of the verb employed, which imports a thing done **by one to one's own self**) (9:12).

There was next the *necessity* that it should be so. The word "necessity," it will be perceived, occurs frequently in the course of Paul's argument. The necessity arises from the position in which men stood as regards the law of sin and death, and the position in which the Lord stood as their Redeemer from this position. The position of men was that they were under condemnation to die because of sin, and that not their own sin, in the first instance, but ancestral sin at the beginning.

The forgiveness of personal offences is the prominent feature of the apostolic proclamation, because personal offences are the greater barrier. Nevertheless, *men are mortal because of sin, quite independently of their own transgressions.* Their redemption from this position is a work of mercy and forgiveness, yet a work to be effected in harmony with the righteousness of God, that He might be just while justifying those believing in the Redeemer. It is so declared (Rom. 3:26).

It was not to be done by setting aside the law of sin and death, but by *righteously nullifying it in one who should obtain this redemption in his own right*, and who should be authorized to offer to other men a partnership in his right, subject to required conditions (of their conformity to which, he should be appointed sole judge).

How to effect this blending and poising of apparently opposing principles and differing requirements—mercy and justice; forgiveness and righteousness; goodness and severity—would have been impossible for human wisdom. It has not been impossible with God, to Whom all things are possible. We see the perfect adjustment of all the apparently incompatible elements of the problem in His work in Christ,

"Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30).

We have only to receive the simple facts testified in the case to reach the end of all difficulty. With immortal soulism and eternal torments, the solution is impossible. With the doctrine of human mortality, it is otherwise.

We see Jesus born of a woman, and therefore a partaker of the identical nature condemned to death in Eden. We see him a member of imperfect human society, subject to toil and weakness,

dishonor and sorrow, poverty and hatred and all the other evils that have resulted from the advent of sin upon the earth. We see him *down in the evil which he was sent to cure*; not outside of it, not untouched by it, but *IN IT*, to put it away.

"He was **made perfect** through suffering" (Heb. 2:10).
—but he was not perfect till he was through it. He was *saved from death* (5:7), but not until he died. He *obtained redemption* (Heb. 9:12), but not till his own blood was shed.

That statement that he did these things "for us" has blinded many to the fact that he did them "for himself" first—without which, he could not have done them for us, for it was *by doing them for himself that he did them for us*.

He did them for us *only as we may become part of him*, in merging our individualities in him by taking part in his death, and putting on his Name and sharing his life afterwards. He is, as it were, a new center of healthy life, in which we must become incorporate before we can be saved.

The antitype of the cleansing of the holy things with blood is manifest when we look at Christ as he now is, and contrast him with what he was. He was a mortal man: he is now immortal. He was a sorrowful man; he is now "full of joy with Thy (the Father's) countenance." He was an Adamic body of death, corruptible, and unclean; he is now a spiritual body, incorruptible, pure and holy.

What lies between the one state and the other? *His own death and resurrection*. Therefore, by these, he has been purified, and no one else has been so purified as yet. Any one else delivered will be delivered by him, as the result of what he did *in himself*.

If there was one injunction of the Law more strenuous than another, it was that *contact with death in any form, however remote or indirect, was defiling*. Even to touch a bone made a man unclean: or to be touched by a man unclean from such a cause had the same effect. We have the perfect antitype in the Lord born of a death-bound woman, and therefore made subject to death: it was—

"That he, by the grace of God, might taste death for every man."
—but he was first to taste, in the process of redemption from it. He was a "body prepared" for the work: prepared as to its power to evolve sinlessness of character, but prepared also as to subjection to that death which it was designed to abolish (2 Tim. 1:10). In him were combined the antitypical "holy things" requiring atonement—

"Because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel and because of their transgressions in all their sins."

The reverence for Christ commands respect which leads some men to consider him immaculate in all senses and in no need to offer for himself, but it is not "according to knowledge." It is not consistent with the Divine objects in God—

". . . sending forth His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh."

All these objects blend together, but they are separable. One of them was to "condemn sin in the flesh," as Paul says (Rom. 8:3). The stumblings that have taken place over this expression are doubtless due to that other truth, that Christ did no sin, and in this sense was the "Lamb of God without spot."

But the stumblings do not get rid of the expression as affirming a truth. Some would explain it as meaning the *moral* condemnation of sin by Christ during his life. This cannot be the meaning in view of the statement with which it is conjoined that what was done was "what the Law could *not do*." The Law condemned sin so thoroughly in the moral sense that it is called "the ministration of condemnation."

Then some have suggested that it means the flesh of the sacrificial animals. This is precluded by the intimation that Christ was sent "in the likeness of sinful flesh" *for the accomplishment of the work in question*—the condemnation of sin in the flesh.

This is, in fact, the reliable clue to the meaning. That he was sent "in the likeness of sinful flesh" for the accomplishment of the work shows that it was a work to be done *in* him. Some try to get away from this conclusion (and this is the popular habit) by seizing on the word "likeness" and contending that this means not the *same*, but only *like*. This contention is precluded by the use of the same term as to his manhood—

"He was made in the likeness of men."

He was really a man, in being in the likeness of men: and he was really sinful flesh, in being in "the likeness of sinful flesh." Paul, in Heb. 2:15-17, declared the likeness to have been in the sense of *sameness*—

"Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, it became him likewise to take part of the same."

The statement remains in its undiminished force that—

"God sent His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for (as an offering for) sin condemned sin in the flesh."

It is, in fact, a complete and coherent statement of what was accomplished in the death of Christ, and a perfect explanation of the reason why he first came in the flesh, and of the reason why John the apostle insisted so strenuously on the maintenance of the doctrine that he has so come in the flesh. Possessing sinful flesh was no sin to him, who kept it under perfect control, and—

". . . did always those things that pleased the Father."

At the same time, *being the sinful flesh derived from the condemned transgressors of Eden, it admitted of sin being publicly condemned in him*, without any collision with the claims of his personal righteousness, which were to be met by an immediate and glorious resurrection.

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

"Israel Shall Do Valiantly"

"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!"—Numbers 24:5

As Balak and Balaam looked down upon the plains of Moab from the top of Peor, they could see below them, spread out in orderly array over the land, the encampment of Israel, *God's firstborn nation*—

"Abiding in their tents, according to their tribes."

How much these two men could have learned had their eyes been open to understand the full import of those realities and the types presented to their eyes in the plain below!

Let us take up our position with them on Mt. Peor, and see if what meets our eyes below strikes up chords of associations in our minds that will lead us to behold the wondrous things that God hath wrought.

"From the top of the rocks I see him; and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."

There below us in the plain we can see a miniature representation or parable of God's finished purpose with Israel, as He has declared it by the mouth of His prophets since the days of Abraham.

The beauty and symmetry of the camp, presenting a foursquare arrangement, three tribes on each side, with a smaller square in the center, in the midst of which stood the Sanctuary, and on the four sides of this inner square, at some distance from the court of the Tabernacle, stood the tents of the Levites, those of Moses, Aaron and his sons being on the east, facing the entrance to the court: all reflecting divine wisdom and order.

Coming from the very midst of the camp, we would see smoke arising from the brazen altar, before the tabernacle, as the continual burnt offering was wholly consumed, in token of God's acceptance of the dedicated worship and service of His people, as evidenced also by the pillar of the cloud over the sanctuary.

What Balak and Balaam saw from Peor was an earnest of greater things to come, as revealed to John in Patmos—

"He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem . . . having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious . . .

"And the city lieth four-square . . . the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal"
(Apoc. 21:10-16).

It was to this end that God put a word in Balaam's mouth, instead of the curse that would bring him great reward:

"I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

"And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly."

As we come down from the height of Mt. Peor into the plain to get a closer view of the encampment, we notice that the outlying boundaries of this great city of tents are well defined as to limits, so that we are aware just when we pass within its confines.

Our line of march from east to west along the corridor, or passageway separating the tribes, will lead us straight into the center of the inner square from where the column of smoke arises from off the altar.

As we pass from "without the camp" to the manifestation of God's presence in the center, we will be impressed by the changes in the appearance and attitudes of the people we see along the way, a condition of life among the people attributable to their relations to the divine presence in the midst of the camp.

We are struck with pity, at the first people we see, before we cross the limits of the camp. The unclean, the sinners, the lepers and the strangers, mourning their outcast and forlorn condition, apart from the fellowship of God and His people.

But as we cross the line into the camp, all is changed. The very ground is clean, and well kept, the children are joyfully playing around the well-ordered tents, while the faces of the men and women reflect confidence and well being, as all eyes are directed from time to time toward the pillar of the cloud that hovers continually over the tabernacle, a constant reminder that (Psa. 121:4)—

"He that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep."

About two miles farther westward, we arrive at the tents of the priests, where the activity and manner of those we see reveal a still more intimate relationship to the presence and glory of God at His meeting place with them in the Tabernacle.

From here we can see the Tabernacle itself, rising above the white linen walls of the court which surrounded it. As we gaze upon this symbolism of God's future dwelling among Israel, we are reminded God's words to Ezekiel—

"Son of man, the place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever"—Eze. 43:7. —E.W.B.

By Thy Sword Shalt Thou Live

"Who will bring me into the strong city? Who will lead me into Edom?"—Psa. 60:9

PART TWO

When Jacob returned to Canaan from Padan-Aram, we recall Esau met him with 400 men, much to the dismay of Jacob. But Esau met him with friendship, yet apparently with distrust, as is evident from his desire to leave part of his troop with Jacob (Gen. 33:12-16).

In Gen. 36 we are given a genealogy of the descendants of Esau as they developed through the centuries into a kingdom and dominion *beyond the Dead Sea*, away from the land of the blessing. The old animosity and principle of living by the sword appears as the people of God's choice prepare to enter the land of promise after the wilderness wanderings. God said to them (Deut. 2:4-7)—

"Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau . . . Meddle not with them . . .

"Ye shall buy meat of them, and water of them . . . For the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand."

Israel's request for passage through their land was met with characteristic hostility. Esau said—

"Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee **WITH THE SWORD**" (Num. 20:18).

"Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand. Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him" (vs. 20-21).

We see the character of the flesh asserting itself; no concern for Israel's oppression at the hand of Egypt and their wilderness wandering for 40 years, no respect for the fact that their common father was Isaac. Note the parallel between Isaac's words and those of Edom—

"By thy sword shalt thou live."

"I will come out against thee with the sword."

This is the distinction between the seed of the serpent and the true seed of Abraham, the seed of the woman. The one lived by the sword of the flesh, the other by the sword of the Spirit. The weapons of the latter are not carnal, they live only by the guidance and protection of God. This protection can only be obtained by trust in the Creator. All else shall perish as the Master told Peter in the Garden of Gethsemane—

"Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:52-53).

Association with the will of God can only come by constant daily application of the principle of suffering evil upon ourselves as did the Master. When we suffer we must not threaten; when we are reviled, we must not revile others again, but we must commit our ways unto Him that doeth righteously in all His ways.

If we live by the sword of retaliation we associate ourselves with the sword of Esau, who was a profane person. If we are guided by the sword of the Spirit, we shall live in the sense of the blessing of Jacob—

"God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." (Gen. 27:28-29).

The faithful have always confessed that any real blessings come from the Creator and cannot be attained by any personal efforts in a natural way by man himself. Those things which are obtained by man's unguided efforts shall take unto themselves wings and vanish away. Those who strive with the potsherd for the possession of worldly things shall have them all taken away (Matt. 26:52)—

"They that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

This method of *living by the sword* can be a very subtle thing, and we must be on our guard against it in our lives. We can be guilty of it in a hundred different ways every day. The flesh is prone to wander in this respect by *speaking evil of people, imputing motives, and answering back in kind*. It seeks to elevate itself at the expense of another's reputation, and thus seeking to climb up over the fall of others.

Though claiming to live by the Spirit of God, *are we really living by the sword of the flesh?* If we are, Christ's words apply as equally to us as they did unto Peter when he used the literal weapon to defend his Master.

This thought appears to have an especial force for us also. Peter was endeavoring to serve his Leader as a good soldier, when the Master spoke those words to him. Christ, our elder brother, will not be defended by force of arms. God was and still is able to command more than 12 legions of angels for our assistance in the work as it suits His purpose. Like the servant of the prophet in Israel, all we have to do is to open the eyes of our understanding and see that the hills are full of the angels that encamp around those who put their trust in Him.

We must realize that the tents or tabernacles of Edom are always "consulting together with one consent." That is, the workings of the adversary are constantly against the Spirit-man, as Edom was opposed to Israel in the past. The righteous will not retaliate, but will rest their case with the Creator in patience (Psa. 83:5-18)—

"They have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against Thee:
"The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.
"Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish:
"That men may know that Thou, Whose Name alone is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth."

We note the reason for vengeance is not for personal gratification on the wicked, but *that God may be glorified*.

The natural characteristics of Edom are later illustrated by the prophets (Eze. 35:2-5)—

"Behold, O mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out Mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate.

"Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by **the force of the sword** in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end."

Such has been the attitude of these people against God's witnesses the Jews, all through the centuries, and will so continue until God takes a personal hand to fight for His people as in the day of battle. Amos 1:11 confirms this and impresses the Divine direction of the words of Isaac years before, "By thy sword shalt thou live"—

"For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever."

Remarkable it is, and an evident token of the truth and veracity of the Divine message, that we find Arab nations, whether pro-communist or pro-western, all united under the one slogan: "*Drive Israel into the sea and out of the land of Palestine.*"

"If it had not been the Lord Who was on our side, now may Israel say . . . They had swallowed us up alive, when their wrath was kindled against us; then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul."

All their history is a lesson of the blessings of the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth, or Divine direction and guiding. It is placed in our hand for us to realize that there is still a God Who doeth according to His will among the nations, and directs His children. Israel's preservation in recent years impresses yet again that God's words uttered so long ago, are as full of meaning now as when first spoken.

At present Israel is seeking for arms and defence by the sword. In the wisdom of God this is being withheld. She must dwell in the sense of the prophecy, "without walls and bars." The nation we know is swelled with pride at her successes of 1947 and again in 1956 against the Arabs and against Egypt. But her efforts will be as nothing in the day of Jacob's trouble.

But how natural that they should seek for help from Egyptian darkness and a broken reed, when the loving Father, their Creator and protector awaits their humble recognition of His mercies.

We say how natural, for Jacob is yet in bondage to the flesh, and is a type of the flesh which puts its trust in an arm of flesh. Yet Israel must come to recognize that they have not gotten the land by the sword, but that it was in the foreknowledge of God that they should have the land in these last days as a fulfilment of all that the prophets have spoken and as an harbinger to the faithful that the Kingdom is just about at hand, that the resurrection to eternal life is just about to take place.

Though outwardly Israel overcame the nations of Canaan by their efforts, it was only by the direct interposition of the hand of God that they were victorious, So David sang—

"Our fathers have told us . . . How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand . . . For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but Thy right hand and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favor unto them.

"For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me" (Psa. 44:1-5).

These lessons, real as they were to Israel, become a lesson to us on a different level. *We must see the allegory in our own lives if we are to be benefited by their preservation to our age.* They must

influence us for good and to wait day by day upon God's providence for us, knowing that His foreknowledge is far more discerning than our puny efforts to peer into the future and plan our own course.

Our efforts should be directed personally to overcoming that which is pictorialized by Esau, Edom and the Arabs, that is, *the flesh*; to judge ourselves now that when we stand before the righteous Judge, we may not be condemned with the wicked.

Then shall we enjoy the blessings of the Kingdom Age, not by our efforts, but by the mercies of our Heavenly Father, for it will only be by assistance from Him and His abundant pardon that we shall ever attain.

Obadiah prophesied of the destruction of Edom, and of her pride. Interesting; is the fact that the "*wise men of the flesh and the men of 'understanding' are singled out for punishment.*" "The wisdom of the world is foolishness with God." Obadiah 8—

"Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?"
But conversely we read (v. 21)—

"Saviors shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau, and the Kingdom shall be the Lord's."

But at present we have a work to do. We must overcome the strong city of the flesh. We must do this by the aid of God. In Psalm 60 we read of the works of God against Edom and the flesh in the future—

"Over Edom will I cast out My shoe."

A type of the subjection of all that Edom typified, of the removing of that natural condition spoken of by Isaac—

"When thou shalt have the dominion, thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck"
(Gen. 27:40).

"*Who shall lead me into the strong city, who will lead me into Edom?*" (Psa. 60:9). It is faith and trust in God and obedience in Him that will accomplish this. Then shall the faithful join in song with the redeemed in the Song of Moses and the Lamb—

"Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of Thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till Thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which Thou hast purchased.

"Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever" (Exo. 15:15-18). —F. H.

Out of Egypt Have I Called My Son

"*Thou hast found grace in My sight, and I know thee by name*"—Ex. 33:17

PART TWENTY-TWO

The vast encampment before Mount Sinai having become defiled by the setting up of an idol in the place of Jehovah, He withdrew from their midst by the removal of the Tabernacle without the camp.

"And Moses took the Tabernacle and pitched it without the camp, **afar off from the camp**, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation" (Exo. 33:7).

The reader will not, of course, suppose that this was the tabernacle which Moses was instructed to prepare according to the divine pattern given to him in the Mount, the construction of which had not even been commenced, neither the materials for it furnished.

The tabernacle which was removed by Moses was a temporary structure, and so called on account of God's holy presence therein; and in which was laid up before Him the pot of manna which He ordered to be kept for their generations (Ex. 16:32, 34)—as well as the testimony, or statutes, and judgments by which the people were regulated, previously to the giving of the Law from Mount Sinai.

By its removal from the midst of the camp a new gathering point was set up—

"And it came to pass that every one which sought the Lord went out unto the Tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp" (Exo. 33:7).

How divinely beautiful is the principle of truth to be apprehended in connection with this highly typical incident! The clear apprehension of it will greatly help us in the understanding of our present spiritual relationship.

In this separation there came to exist in Israel two hostile camps, as it were, to the one or other of which every Israelite stood related. They are respectively allegorical of the two collective seeds—the Seed of the Woman, and Seed of the Serpent (Gen. 3:15) or the children of the devil (John 8:38).

The true Seed of the woman, Jesus of Nazareth, who was God manifest in the flesh for the taking away of the sin of the world, "suffered *without the gate*," and his followers are exhorted (Heb. 13:13) to—

"Go forth to him without 'the camp, bearing his reproach."

In the pitching of the literal Tabernacle, or *dwelling-place of God*, without the camp, and the literal *going out unto it* of the true worshippers, was contained the figuration of "heavenly things." In believing the Truth as it is in Jesus, and being baptised into his death for the remission of sins, believers thus go forth mentally from the camp of the world, to the newly-pitched camp without the gate bearing his reproach, and are joined to the heavenly camp, which they themselves constitute.

This divine encampment is still in course of formation. Its symbolic number is 144,000; and its final completion, perfection, and incorporation will be the work of Christ at his coming to Mount Sinai, where he will gather unto and around him Israel's firstborns, with whom he will share the results of his victory over sin and death in the bestowal of that physical incorruption, and the honor, glory, and immortality of God's everlasting Kingdom; and from whence, this divine encampment will proceed to execute "the judgments written" against that other encampment, constituted of the enemies of God, to its final overthrow, and the establishment of the divine supremacy in all the earth, which will then be filled with glory to God, peace and good will.

The divine picture can be seen in all its beauty in the Word of eternal Truth. Look at it as it is there presented. It is no fancy of human imagination, but the veritable Truth of God.

To which of these camps do you belong? There is no neutral position. It is to one or other— which? Listen to the voice of mercy calling from the throne —

"To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart as in the day of provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness" (Heb. 3:78).
This is the standing invitation (1 Cor. 6:17-18) to—

"Come out from among them (the ungodly encampment) and be ye separate . . . and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord."

"He that hath ears 'to hear, let him hear."

For—

"Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."

The Son of God has stood in the breach. *Come therefore to him without the camp*; and when ye shall have borne his shame and reproach manfully in your wilderness sojourn, ye shall bear his glory and honor in the everlasting rest which remaineth for the people of God, at the end of the journey.

The Tabernacle having been pitched without the camp, Moses and Joshua went out unto it; and—

"All the people rose up and stood, every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses until he was gone into the Tabernacle" (Exo. 33:8).

And (vs. 9-11)—

"As he entered into the Tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended and stood at the door of the Tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses.

"And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the Tabernacle door; and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent door.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend. And he turned again into the camp.

"But Joshua . . . departed not out of the Tabernacle."

The reader will note the absence of Aaron from the scene, for God was angry with him for the part he had taken in the making and worship of the calf. The signal of God's presence—the cloudy pillar upon the Tabernacle—was visible to all the camp, but they saw no similitude, as Moses said:

"The Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire (from Mount Sinai); ye heard the voice of the words, but **saw no similitude**; only ye heard a voice" (Deut. 4:12).

But of *Moses* it is said—

"With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold" (Num. 12:8).

Moses did not behold Jehovah personally, for no man hath seen Him (John 1:18). Therefore in beholding the similitude of the Lord, he beheld the impersonation of Him in the angel of His presence, through whom He spake and acted. This is beautifully illustrated in the testimony (Exo. 23:20)—

"Behold I send an angel before thee . . . Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions; **for My Name is in him.**"

And to show that the presence of this angel was equivalent to His Own personal presence, He says (Exo. 23:22)—

"But if thou shalt indeed obey **his** voice, and do all that **I** speak, then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, etc."

This was the divine impersonation through whom Moses importuned Jehovah—

"Thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people; and Thou hast not let me know whom Thou wilt send with me . . .

"Now, therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thy way that I may know Thee, that I may find grace in Thy sight, and consider that this nation is Thy people.

"And He said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

"And he said unto Him, If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people upon the face of the earth.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that Thou hast spoken; for thou hast found grace in My sight, and I know thee by name" (Exo. 33:12-17).

In the expression, "*I know thee by name*," we have the recognition of Jehovah that the ways of Moses were pleasing to Him. The Spirit says of "him that overcometh"—

"I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels" (Rev. 3:5).

Therefore in the confession of the name of Moses, may we not discern the promise to him, as a citizen of the commonwealth of Israel, that the *New Name* of Incorruptibility, and life eternal, will be written upon him in the day when the jewels are made up?

Having, therefore, found grace in Jehovah's sight, he is encouraged to make another request, even to be permitted to see a special manifestation of the glory of Yahweh to be revealed in the day when that prophetic Name, specially revealed to him at the bush, should become apparent in the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—in Christ and his brethren, in whom Moses will be included (Exo. 33:19)—

"And the Lord said, I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee: and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy."

What "goodness" can be implied in this divine proclamation but that which God has purposed from the beginning? *And what could be the proclamation of the Yahweh-Name to Moses, but the signal manifestation and assurance to him of the graciousness and mercy involved in the development of that Name from the Adamic race as initiated in the Lord Jesus Christ?*

But the purposed manifestation to Moses, was to be of a limited character, as indicated by the words—

"Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me and live: there is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock; and it shall come to pass, while My glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock and will cover thee with My hand, and thou shalt see My back parts: but My face shall not be seen" (Exo. 33:20-23).

The children of God will discern in this divine enactment before Moses a representation of their own position, which is so beautifully defined by Paul saying,

"We all with open face beholding as in a glass (mirror) the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory (as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ) to glory (to be revealed in us) even as by the Spirit of the Lord (the Lord the Spirit)"—2 Cor. 3:18.

The "clift in the rock" into which Moses was put, doubtless represented *the rock Christ Jesus, cleft for us*, into which we are permitted to enter that we may behold the glory of the Lord veiled in the flesh of His Son, which we see by faith; and in the hope of being permitted, by-and-by; to behold the face of our Father, not mediately, as in the case of Moses, but directly, when that change into the same image shall have been completed in the transformation of our vile bodies into the image of His Own.

The seeing of the back parts was an intimation to Moses that the cause of alienation from Him must be removed from the children of God before they can possibly see His face.

The proclamation of the Yahweh Name to Moses was connected with the renewed relations between God and Israel—

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first; and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest.

"And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto Mount Sinai, and present thyself there to Me in the top of the Mount.

"And no man shall come up with thee; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that Mount.

"And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto Mount Sinai . . . and took in his hand the two tables.

"And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed,

"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will be no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation" (Exo. 34:1-7).

This proclamation of the Name of Yahweh was intended as the signification of *what He is in Himself, essentially*; and carries with it all that He has revealed of Himself unto the children of men in the Scriptures of Truth—*He Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come—the Almighty*.

The vision of glory witnessed by Moses was not, therefore, a vision of mere abstract glory, but one, which—while it exhibited Him Who dwelleth in light unapproachable — revealed the *character* and *purpose* of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.

If, therefore, the contemplation of such a Being does not excite in us admiration and love, *it is difficult to see in what other way it is possible*.

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

Circumcision and Baptism

“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ”—Col. 2:11

An attempt is often made to justify infant sprinkling by a comparison with circumcision. To such as have no desire to discover the real truth of the matter but who merely want to support the orthodox tradition of baby sprinkling, this argument appeals strongly. An honest and careful investigation, however, soon shows the groundlessness of such a position.

The argument is that baptism under the Christian dispensation corresponds with circumcision under the Mosaic, and that inasmuch as circumcision was performed a few days after birth, so baptism should be. This has a superficial appearance of plausibility, but the simple answer is that *it is not true and there is not a shred of evidence to support it*.

In some respects they are similar. But in other respects, equally important, they are very *dissimilar*. It is the height of folly and presumption to nullify and ignore plain commandments relating to the one on the basis of an *inferred* identity with the other. Any reasonable mind will readily agree with this. Any reasonable mind will be convinced that our *first* duty in the matter is to learn what God has commanded *us* to do, and to obey it as faithfully as possible.

An ignorance of what the Scriptures teach and command regarding baptism, and a hazy identification of it with something that differs from it in many fundamental respects, is clearly no way to please God and no safe course to follow.

It will surely be agreed, as a self-evident truth, that we are never at liberty to alter or nullify God's commands to ourselves on the very questionable basis of a supposed inference from a very different ordinance related to a people of a different dispensation, described as the "weak and beggarly elements" (Gal. 4:9) and "the law of a carnal commandment" (Heb. 7:16).

This is the crucial point at issue and cannot be overstressed. It is very clear. There is nothing involved or obscure. God, according to His divine prerogative, varies His commands and ordinances according to times and circumstances. Our concern is to fully understand and faithfully obey those relating to us, without the mischievous tampering of presumptuous speculation. *God has given us certain definite commands concerning baptism.* We have no justification whatever for ignoring these and substituting something else. Surely if we are really trying to please God it should not be necessary to emphasize this point! But a look around us at the so-called Christian world shows us, sadly enough, that it is necessary.

Simple obedience will not do. It does not gratify the urge to self-importance. The simple truth is not good enough. Man must needs set himself up as an authority and constantly meddle with God's holy and divine appointments.

Sincere people, commencing an inquiry into divine matters, sometimes wonder how it can be possible for Christendom to be so far astray from the truth of the Scriptures. *The answer lies in the attitude and frame of mind with which Christendom views its own position.* We find, strangely enough, that it has no qualms about being astray from the truth. It cannot conceive of itself being astray at all. It may change and alter and experiment and revise, but "all is for the best." There is no piercing this armor of self-approval, except with the two-edged sword of eternal and revealed truth.

But Christendom has little regard for the Word of God. It has far more confidence in its own powers of reasoning. To Christendom at large, Scripture is not the authoritative Voice of God. You may accept what part of it you wish as divine. You may interpret it according to your own whim. And even then you are free to receive or reject what it contains. Christendom admittedly prefers its own "common sense."

This viewpoint is strikingly illustrated by the late renowned "Dean" Stanley. He says, speaking of this very ordinance—

"The Eastern Church, indeed, with its usual tenacity of ancient forms, still immerses, but in the Western Church the Christian Religion has taken its **free and natural course**; and in the **boldness** which substituted a few drops of water for the ancient bath, which pronounced a **charitable judgment** on the innocent babe who dies without sacraments . . . we have at once the best proof of the **total and necessary divergence of modern from ancient doctrine** . . . It is a striking example of the triumph of common-sense and convenience over the bondage of form and custom."

Let us ponder that statement deeply. *Here is the whole answer to Christendom's condition.* Such are the "Fathers" of the Church—presumptuous man priding himself on setting aside the ordinances of God at the dictates of his own "commonsense and convenience"!

* * *

Let us direct our attention in relief to that "light shining in a dark place" that is "able to make us wise unto salvation."

The inauguration of circumcision is recorded in Gen. 17. It is a command from God to Abraham and binding upon all his male descendants upon the penalty of being "cut off from among his people" (v. 14). In v. 11 we are told that it is a "token of the covenant" between God and Abraham. The covenant was (vs. 4-8) that God would be the God of Abraham and his seed, that He would make them a great nation and give them the land of promise for an everlasting possession.

In v. 12 we learn that it was to be performed on the eighth day after birth, and that it applied to all who entered the congregation, Israelite or stranger. It was not dependant or contingent upon the disposition or consent of the individual. The will or intentions of the individual had no effect on the case in any way. *All* must be circumcised. In Exo. 4 we find that an angel of the Lord sought to kill Moses because he had neglected to circumcise his son. From this we learn that the responsibility was not imputed to the subject of circumcision but to the parent.

There are one or two figurative references in the Old Testament. Moses says (Deut. 10:16): "Circumcise your heart and be no more stiffnecked," and similarly in Deut. 30:6. Here are hints that circumcision *symbolized* a certain disposition that was pleasing to God, consisting of a cutting off of the wilfulness of the flesh and an obedience to Him. The ordinance was a token that it was upon this basis and understanding that God had made His covenant with the nation. Circumcision was a part of the "patterns of things in the heavens" to which Paul refers (Heb. 9:23), and as such it had a typical significance, a cutting off of the natural and sinful impulses of the flesh. God through Jeremiah says similarly (4:4)—

"Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, lest My fury come forth because of the evil of your doings."

Turning to the New Testament we find this further illustrated. Most of Paul's references to it are to the point that it was *part of the system of carnal ordinances that was done away with at the death of Christ*. He reasons that the act itself, being a part of the old system, was no longer required, but that the *disposition* it symbolized was the important thing. To have the *outward* sign without the *inward* mental attitude was only self-condemnation. The one but typified the necessity of the other:

"Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter" (Rom. 2:29).

He says further in Rom. 2:25 (and we must remember that he is here laying his basis for the principle of justification by faith),

"Circumcision verily profiteth—**if thou keep the Law.**"

Some tried to insist upon circumcision of all believers, but this showed a failure to understand the purpose of Christ's sacrifice and therefore was a fatal error. Paul says to them—

"If ye be circumcised **CHRIST SHALL PROFIT YOU NOTHING**" (Gal. 5:2).

The way opened by Christ put away the necessity of individual circumcision. It put away the necessity of individual conformance with all the ordinances of the Law. They were all fulfilled in Christ. Christ fulfilled and *finished* the Law, because after him there was no one for it to apply to. This is the big point. The Law illustrated God's righteous requirements. By its standard of perfection it demonstrated man's inability to fulfil the righteousness of God. By its system of sacrifices it *pointed to the necessity of a perfect man who could fulfil God's righteousness, earn its reward of life, and through whom man could approach God and God could bless man.*

When this was accomplished in Christ the Law had fulfilled its purpose. It was not given, let us clearly understand, to tantalize man by the setting down of conditions which he could not fulfil; it was given, says Paul (Rom. 8:13) to *demonstrate the weakness of flesh and the sinfulness of sin, and to prove the necessity of the way that the mercy of God was providing for man's redemption.*

Christ fulfilled the Law for all. All who accept God's merciful provision are regarded as justified by the obedience Christ had rendered. Christ was the last one to whom the Law applied. It ceased with his death just as the laws of a country cease when the last inhabitant of that country dies. All believers after him are considered part of him. The Law only applies to them *through him*, and he has already rendered to it all it can claim—

"For Christ is the **END OF THE LAW** for righteousness to everyone that believeth"

(Rom. 10:4)

See what he says in the previous verse, speaking of the Jews—

"They being ignorant of God's righteousness (the righteousness of faith through Christ) and going about to establish their own righteousness (by the works of the Law), have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God."

"*Going about to establish their own righteousness.*" This brings us back to the point in Galatians (5:2)—

"If ye be circumcised Christ shall PROFIT YOU NOTHING."

Why? Because to insist upon circumcision is to *miss the whole meaning of Christ's work*. It is "going about to establish one's own righteousness." Paul continues (v. 3)—

"For I testify again to every man that is circumcised that **he is a debtor to do the whole law**. Christ is become of no effect unto you. Ye are fallen from grace."

If we accept Christ, circumcision is unnecessary—if circumcision is insisted upon, then a man must depend upon himself alone and render a perfect obedience to the Law, which is impossible.

Not that Paul taught that the *mere act* of circumcision itself would deprive a man of the benefits of Christ's sacrifice, but the *insistence* upon its *necessity* would. Of itself the act meant nothing. Twice he says to the Galatians, "In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision" (Gal. 5:6; 6:15). And again to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 7:18), "Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing."

To the Romans he especially points out (Rom. 4:10) that Abraham's faith was reckoned to him for righteousness *before* he was circumcised, and that circumcision was but a seal of the righteousness of faith that he had *already* been given.

It is sometimes asked why Paul had Timothy circumcised as recorded in Acts 16:3, in view of his statement that, "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing" (Gal. 5:2). But we have seen that Paul attached no importance either to the performance or the omission of the *act itself*. His strong stand was in regard to *reliance upon it*.

Now Timothy was half Jewish. He *should* have been circumcised *before*, according to the Law. His uncircumcision in such a position was a reproach in the eyes of the Jews. Under such circumstances, and dealing with the Jews whose feelings and prejudices were strong, Paul thought it wiser to have him circumcised, to remove occasion for cavil, though he attached no importance to the operation. His reason, as given, is "because of the Jews that were in those quarters." Paul here acted in accord with the principle he describes elsewhere—

"Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews, to them that are under the Law as under the Law that I might gain them that are under the Law" (1 Cor. 9: 19-22).

There is a very enlightening incident recorded at the time of Paul's last visit to Jerusalem. This was quite late in his ministry, we note, and just before his imprisonment at Rome. James and the elders in Jerusalem say to Paul (Acts 21:20)—

"Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the Law."

This is hard to understand inasmuch as they had the very apostles themselves to teach them the truth in Christ, but it illustrates the difficulties of this period of transition and shows clearly that under the patient guidance of the Spirit, the early church was still in the process of developing that complete understanding referred to by Paul (Eph. 4:13) as—

"The perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ in the unity and knowledge of the faith."

Continuing in Acts (v. 21)—

"And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."

Then they arrange for Paul to publicly fulfil a vow, that (v. 24):

"All may know that these things whereof they were informed concerning thee **are nothing**, and that **thou thyself** also walkest orderly, and **keepest the Law**."

So we see that Paul did *not* teach the Jews to forsake Moses, he did *not* teach them not to circumcise their children, and he himself *kept the Law*. In Acts 22:12 he speaks of Ananias at Damascus, who received him at his conversion, as—

"A devout man **according to the Law**, having a good report of all the Jews."

Now how is all this to be reconciled with his uncompromising stand *against* the Law in the epistles to the Romans, Galatians and Hebrews?

The answer seems to be this. It was the mission of the apostles, not to *antagonize* the Jews, but to *persuade* them. Their message was that the Law was fulfilled in Christ and was no longer binding upon them, but ingrained as the Law was into their national fibre this was a very difficult and delicate undertaking. To have been precipitate would have destroyed all possibility of good and rather created chaos. We have many instances of how easily even an *apparent* infraction of the law could throw the Jews into a fanatical uproar. If each believer, as he began to comprehend the freedom of Christ, had immediately cut off all the forms of the Law, a condition of strife and confusion would have resulted in which further teaching would have been impossible. So prejudices were patiently borne with until they were dispelled by enlightenment.

Even the apostles themselves took time to learn these things. Peter's lesson in relation to Cornelius was a great and shocking revelation to him. And later again we see him wavering on this very point, and Paul finds it necessary to rebuke him. Peter through fear of the Jews, we are told (Gal. 2), withdrew from eating with the Gentile Christians. This was a point Paul could not concede, regardless of the consequences. He had no desire to anger the Jews, and he kept the Law himself, but when it became an issue affecting the fellowship and communion of the church, a clear stand must be taken whatever the cost. The seriousness with which Paul regarded the dissimulation of Peter is shown by his describing it as (Gal. 2:14)—

"Walking not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel."

And again, when *principle* was in question (Gal. 2:3-5), Paul resolutely refused to have Titus, a Gentile, circumcised to satisfy the prejudices of certain Judaizers. So it becomes clear that though in all things the apostles endeavored to avoid violating the scruples of the Jews they were trying to persuade, still whenever any question of *truth* or *principle* was at issue, they refused to compromise the freedom of the Gospel, or allow its teaching to be obscured.

Circumcision as a national custom they did not oppose. They endorse its practice to avoid offence, but they firmly taught that to insist upon it as necessary to salvation or as of any religious value was to reject Christ.

* * *

Reviewing, we have seen that circumcision was a *national* ordinance, imposed upon *all* regardless of any personal considerations. It was the token of a *national* covenant—its *national*, as contrasted to *individual*, character is further shown by the fact that it only applied to a *representative half* (the males) of the people. It was given to Abraham *after* his justification and acceptance by God, and in like manner in each case performed it did not *bring* the individual *into* the covenant, it was a token that they were *already under* that covenant—it was a seal of the fact that God *had previously* chosen them as a peculiar nation, regardless of their will in the matter.

It was a *permanent mark* of distinction, a constant reminder of their unique position before God. It was a command to *parents* in regard to their children. Its performance was not consequent upon the volition, knowledge, consent or belief of the individual. It was part of the system classified as "carnal ordinances"—that is, it had but a mechanical or ritualistic effect,

"Not making the subject of it perfect, as pertaining to the conscience" (Heb. 9:9).

It had nothing to do with the remission of individual sins, for it was performed before any sins were committed. It was a *type* of purity, separation, and putting off the sins of the flesh. There is not the slightest hint anywhere in Scripture that a child dying uncircumcised went to torment and a child dying circumcised to heaven, or that circumcision had any effect at all upon a child, except to permit it to remain in the congregation of Israel. In apostolic times to insist upon its necessity was to reject Christ and return to the rudiments and shadows of mechanical ritual. *Whether or not a man had been circumcised had no bearing of any kind upon his necessity for baptism*, clearly showing that one was not a substitute for the other.

All familiar with the truth concerning baptism will perceive many points of difference between these two ordinances, and will further perceive how foolish and dangerous it is to reason superficially from one to the other. It would be just as reasonable to baptize only *males* as to baptize infants on the strength of the argument from circumcision.

There is one clear and outstanding feature of scriptural baptism that above all others effectually destroys the argument that it may be performed at birth after the manner of circumcision. *BAPTISM*, to be scriptural and effective, *MUST BE PRECEDED* by *BELIEF IN THE INDIVIDUAL*. This was *not required* in circumcision. Here is the big difference between them. The Scriptures are *very clear* on the *necessity of belief*. Anyone truly desiring to be guided by the Word cannot arrive at any other conclusion—

"When they **believed**, they were baptised" (Acts 8:12).

"He that **BELIEVETH** and is baptised shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

We are buried and risen "with Christ in baptism, through **faith**—"pistis," belief—same word (Col. 2:12).

"Baptism doth now save us—the **ANSWER OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE**" (I Pet 3:21).

"**REPENT**, and be baptised" (Acts 2:38).

"Many **BELIEVED**, and were baptised" (Acts 18:8).

"Without **BELIEF** it is impossible to please God—he that cometh to God must **BELIEVE**" (Heb. 11:6).

The truth seeker will not be convinced by the shallow, superficial arguments of an apostate Church, who condemn themselves out of their own mouths. "Dean" Stanley, whom we quoted earlier, and who admittedly preferred "common sense and convenience" to Holy Scripture, himself declares:

"There is no one who would now wish to go back to the old practice. It had, no doubt, **the sanction of the Apostles and their Master**, (but) Speaking generally, the whole Christian World has decided against it. The change from immersion to sprinkling has **set aside the larger part of the apostolic language** regarding baptism and has altered the very meaning of the word."

And so a corrupt Church glories in its very shame. *What hope is there of awakening them?*

—G.V.G.

Signs of the Times

"The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end . . . The wise shall understand"

—Dan. 12:9-10

In our last article on Signs of the Times, we had something to say about a certain pattern of things in the world which continues to retain its shape in all the conflicts throughout the world; a certain picture which may in some respects vary slightly from time to time, yet the general appearance remains the same. This is because of the fact that we are living in the time of the end when the prophecy of Hab. 2:3 is being fulfilled:

"The vision is for an appointed time, but **at the end it will speak**, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

The vision did appear to tarry for upwards of 25 centuries, but we have unquestionably arrived at the time when it is no longer tarrying, but "the Lord is hastening it in His time." We have come to that time when the words of the vision are being unsealed by the increase of knowledge, the fulfilment of prophecy and the unmistakable signs of the imminence of Christ's coming

The Pattern Begins to Form

Events and political developments, which have by now developed a pattern exactly conforming to the prophetic picture of the time of the end, began about 1820 with the gradual decay of the once-powerful Turkish empire, which eventually resulted in the expulsion of the Turks from Palestine, and the opening up of the Holy Land for Jewish settlement.

The Gathering to Armageddon (Rev. 13:13-16)

After more than 30 years of peace, about 1852 there began a series of wars and political upheavals out of which was created the German and Austrian empires. Military alliances were created—among the Central European powers on the one hand; France, Russia and Britain on the other. These alliances created rivalries and a "balance of power", and touched off an armament race which has continued and grown in volume to this day.

This was the work of the "unclean spirits"; it was the **beginning of that spirit of militarism, leading the nations onward toward Armageddon**. From that period of time weapons of war rapidly increased in destructive power, armies increased in numbers, new and more destructive weapons of war followed each other in rapid succession and much of the world became an armed camp which twice during a single generation erupted into two fearful world wars.

The prophecy of Joel 3:9, "Prepare war!" has been unmistakably and graphically in process of fulfilment, until the nations have now arrived at that stage indicated by the prophecy of Joel and other prophets, when **the chief occupation of the great powers is war preparation**; a time when most of the national income, the best of the talent and the greatest effort is being used to create bigger armies

and navies and more powerful weapons of war, until now they are in a position to annihilate all humanity, and doubtless would do so if left to their own maddened impulses.

The Pattern Continues Development

For about 40 years, dating from 1870, there were no major wars, but the march toward Armageddon went on unabated, and the seeds of other and greater wars were being sown. The power of military weapons continued to increase and armies and navies rapidly grew in size and efficiency, until by the turn of the century all previous weapons had been outmoded and military tactics had undergone a complete change.

It was during the era from 1860 to 1910 that the following weapons came into use: The breech-loading and repeating rifle, machine-gun, torpedo, long-range cannon, dreadnaught battleships, submarines, airplanes, armored motor vehicles and poison gas. During a half-century there had taken place greater development in not only military weapons, but industrial equipment as well, than had taken place during all the previous history of the human race.

Then came World War I in 1914, and from that day to this, the world has been in a constant state of war or the threat of war.

"The Powers of the Heaven Shaken"

As a certain sign of his coming, the Lord Jesus Christ foretold that these signs would be prevalent in the political affairs of the nations:

“On the earth distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for **the powers of the heaven shall be shaken.**”—Luke 21:25-27.

During the period of time from 1914 to the present, the map of the world and the political affairs of the nations has undergone the most revolutionary change in history in so short a time. The greater portion of world governments have been overthrown or undergone changes in their form of government. The empires of Germany and Austria have disappeared (as foretold by bro. Thomas).

Russia has become the most powerful military power on earth, and from an insignificant naval power, she has become the second ranking1 naval power in the world; the United States, previously a giant in resources, but a weakling in military strength, has become the greatest naval power and one of the strongest military powers on earth; China, the sleeping giant of the Orient, who for many centuries had been too weak to oppose aggression, is now saying, "I am strong," and her limitless manpower is being trained for war and industrial production.

Fear, tension, suspicion and the constant threat of war holds the nations in an iron grip from which they cannot extricate themselves, for God is leading them to their destruction in the war of the great day of God Almighty.

"Knowledge Shall Be Increased"

Let us turn to another part of the picture, and what do we see? "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." — Dan. 12:4-10. First let us note that the angel told Daniel to "Shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of the end," but at the time of the end "none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." It was about the middle of the 19th century that Dr. John Thomas, after years of study of the prophecies relating to the time of the end, succeeded in recovering from the darkness of clerical theology the Truth of the Gospel, and at the same time delineating the course of human history from that day to the establishment of Christ's kingdom.

But it was not only the increase of knowledge regarding prophecy that was to be evident in the time of the end; many were to "run to and fro" in the search for knowledge in all fields. This phenomenal increase of knowledge has made of this era one of the most revolutionary in all human history.

We live not so much in a changed world, but in a different world. The entire military, industrial, commercial, financial, political and social life of the greater portion of humanity has undergone a complete change. And there has been created a **monster of speed and power which threatens to destroy its maker**: As the wise of this world seek 'to explore, and even boast of conquering space, the problems of mundane peoples go unanswered and the perplexities grow more complex and fear of what is coming on the earth grows more intense.

The Two Groups of Nations

As we stand in awe observing 'the phenomenal growth in power and dominion of the Soviet Union, we further examine the picture and we see another group of nations already formed as opponents of the "King of the North," and a necessary part of the divine pattern. It is "The merchants of Tarshish and all the young lions thereof," or the Anglo-Saxon nations and their allies. (Eze. 38:13). This group is formed and fully capable of giving strong, though probably futile, resistance to "Gog and the many people with him." This part of the picture is nearly, if not complete.

Return of the Jews to Palestine

As we turn our attention to another part of the picture, we see another and a very essential development in the completion of the pattern of the time of the end. It is the Jewish sign, which was to be contemporary with and to overlap the other signs.

It was in 1856 that interest in the return of the Jews to Palestine first began to take shape. It was about that time that an old Roman edict forbidding Jews returning to Palestine was revoked by the Turks and restricted Jewish immigration was permitted. Over a period of more than 40 years from that date, only a few struggling Jewish settlements gave evidence that the pre-advantual return of Israel to their land was beginning to develop. In 1897 the Zionist Congress was formed, the first organized movement to establish a Jewish state in Palestine. Many difficulties stood in the way, chief of which was Turkish opposition to any extensive Jewish occupation and development of the Land.

Then came World War I, when Britain, "through circumstances beyond her control," drove the Turks from Palestine and opened up a portion of the Holy Land to Jewish settlement. Then followed nearly 30 years of increasing immigration and extensive development of the land and industry.

Then came those dark days when Britain first restricted, then stopped immigration of the Jews to Palestine; then renounced her protectorate over the Jews and pulled her forces out of the country. But what appeared to be a death blow to Zionist dreams, and a thing which made her enemies rejoice for a time, proved to be the very thing which fulfilled the Zionist hopes for a State of Israel.

For, the Jews, thrown upon their own resources (in the providence of God), did what no other people in all human history ever did before: A people without a government, without a homeland, for 19 centuries scattered throughout the earth, persecuted, suppressed, killed — **returning to the land of their fathers and establishing a government of their own** (Hosea 3:4-5).

Since that time the population has increased to nearly two million; the Jews have met and defeated their Arab enemies in two wars; great strides have been made in agricultural, industrial and commercial development. The picture is almost, if not quite complete. Their Messiah is surely near at hand to "restore the kingdom to Israel."

Present Events Follow the Prophetic Pattern

The present pattern of world affairs is in exact agreement with the developments of the prophetic picture for the past century. The Russian confederacy is assuming shape; the Western powers are girding to oppose her; the whole world is involved in a hopeless state of perplexity and fear, revolution, unrest and tension. The world is filled with violence, general godlessness, crime and immorality as in the days of Noah. The Mid-east, which is to be the scene of God's judgment upon the nations, is, like steel to magnet, drawing the nations toward the field of Armageddon.

And last, but not least, paganism and modernism have corrupted the churches and apostasy is spreading among those who were privileged to know the truth of these things. Surely "all the trees are budding forth." **Are we ready?** —O.B.

Ecclesial News

HOUSTON, Texas—8008 Junius St.—Sun. Sch. 10 a.m.; Breaking of bread 11 a.m.; Lecture 3rd Sunday 7:30 p.m.; Discussion of daily Bible readings each other Sunday at 7 p.m.

It is with much pleasure that we report the addition to our small number here of W. L. Dyess, who after a satisfactory interview, rejoices with us in the work and service of God's holy Truth in the earth. Bro. Dyess is a brother in the flesh to sis. Beulah Sisson of this ecclesia.

May our mutual association in the vineyard of the Lord be to the comfort and strength of all the body to the end that we may be found of the Lord in peace at his coming, without spot and blameless.

As we observe with interest the signs in world affairs of the approaching "great and terrible day of the Lord," and consider the fact that we will be among the first to see him when he comes, the sobering thought impels us to careful consideration of the great issues that will face us then. Will we be able to tell him: "Thy pound hath gained ten pounds," or, "Thy pound hath gained five pounds"?

If so, it will be good to hear the words: "Because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities."
—bro. Charles Banta

Texas Fraternal Gathering

Hye, Texas, Monday, July 28 to Sunday, August 3

God willing, the 80th annual Texas Fraternal Gathering for 1958 will be held on the Christadelphian Camp Grounds, near Hye, Texas for six days, from Monday, July 28th at 9:00 a.m. to Sunday noon, August 3.

The arrangements, as in previous years, provide for three services each day (except the last): at 11:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. The Gathering closes with the Sunday morning Memorial meeting on Aug. 3.

During the morning a period of about one hour is allotted for reading and discussing the Bible lesson for the day. At the same time the children are gathered in age groups for instruction on scriptural subjects suited to their understanding, according to a previously arranged schedule of lessons.

Three meals each day are served on the grounds in the dining room near the tabernacle.

God willing, the program covering the sixteen lectures and exhortations for the Gathering, will be mailed out early in June. As the program is prepared, an endeavor will be made to include a comprehensive coverage of Bible subjects that present a well-rounded and balanced study with a view to the development of "Christ in us, the hope of glory."

The presence of all our brothers and sisters for this week of association around the pages of God's Holy Word, is earnestly requested.

May God prosper our efforts to show forth His praises and grow up in the knowledge of His will toward us, so that we may find grace in His sight, and at last, everlasting peace at the coming of the Lord.

If you plan to come, or desire that we make advance arrangements for your stay, please write to: —bro. E. W. Banta, 7009 Sherman St., Houston 11, Texas

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