

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

Godly Edification

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness"—2 Pet. 3:11.

THE ATTAINMENT and preservation of godly edification is one of the great objects of the Truth, for it is a building-up in the things pertaining to the "Way of the Tree of Life." It begins first in the knowledge obtained through reading God's Word. In this we learn of the promises made unto the fathers which form the basis of the Gospel and the foundation of true religion.

As our knowledge of the Gospel increases, we become confident that the things revealed are true, and are fully persuaded that what God has promised, He is able to fulfil. This belief is the beginning of our faith which is developed through the application of the mind to the divine ideas that pervade the Scriptures. This is not a natural attainment, but a mental acquirement achieved by *continued effort in the daily reading, studying and meditation* on the things which have been written for our instruction; as it is written:

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God"—Rom. 10:17.

Having acquired a child-like faith in God and in the things He has revealed, we soon learn that our faith must be tried and proven; for, says James—

"But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

"Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only"—Jas. 2:20-24.

This combination of faith and works was not exhibited in Abraham alone, for we find it in such men as Noah, Moses and many others mentioned by the apostle in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. It is an *unwavering faith* that *WORKS THROUGH LOVE* and, without it, it is "impossible to please God."

As we proceed in our Bible study, we learn that if we are to benefit by the things God has promised to those who love Him we must lovingly submit to the *obedience* He requires, for even Jesus—

"Though he were a Son, yet **learned he obedience** by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him"

—Heb. 5:8-9.

There are many things that stand out prominently in the teaching of Jesus, but none more so than the matter of *obedience*. In fact, everything that God has promised to the human race is based upon obedience. That was the provision under which our first parents were placed in the garden of Eden, and the final message in the Apocalypse concludes with these words—

"Blessed are they that **do His commandments**, that they may have right to the tree of life"

—Rev. 22:14.

When Jesus sent forth the apostles to preach the Gospel, his instructions did not relate only to the matter of preaching; but he added—

"Teach them to observe ALL **things** whatsoever I have commanded you"—Matt. 28:20.

Knowing the Truth, attending our meetings faithfully, contributing to the work of the Lord as God has prospered us, and proclaiming His Word are all of the utmost importance to a baptized believer; but there is a greater principle set forth in the words of Samuel as he stood before Saul—a principle which, if disregarded, will cause us to be rejected at the judgment seat of Christ—

"Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?

"Behold, **to obey is better than sacrifice**, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

—1 Sam. 15:22.

If, then, we would be edified unto godliness, we must love God with all our heart and mind, joyfully submit to His commandments, in all things give Him thanks, and pray without ceasing.

And, too, we must do all we possibly can to strengthen our walk in the Truth. Many things have been left on record, by the apostles, in the form of advice and exhortation by which, if we give earnest heed, we will be edified unto godliness. "The prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" is a lofty standard toward which we are expected to direct our steps—

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from iniquity, and **purify unto himself a peculiar people, ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS**"—Titus 2:13-14.

By all means, then, let us be zealous in the service of the one who has done so much for us, but, in doing so, let us be certain that we are zealous *for the Truth*, for it is possible to misdirect our steps and become zealous in a way which is *not* according to knowledge. This is something we must guard against in ourselves, and be cautiously careful that we do not come under the influence of it in others.

May God give us wisdom, understanding and strength that we may be able to hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise, for yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry"—Heb. 10:35-37.

Editor.

Elohim

"I have said ye are Elohim, and all of you children of the Most High, but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes"—Psalm 82:6.

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

The principles of universal grammar require in general that a verb agree with its nominative in number and person; as, "*the spirit moves*," "*the waters roar*." Here *spirit* is of the singular number, and third person; and so is the verb *moves*: hence they agree in number and person. *Waters* is of the third person plural, and so is *roar*; hence they also agree.

But in the first chapter of Genesis, this rule appears to be disregarded by the Spirit, under whose guidance Moses wrote. In the first verses it reads—

"Berayshith bara Elohim—In the beginning Elohim created."

In this sentence *bara* is the verb in the third person *singular*, and *Elohim* a noun in the third person *plural*; so that they do not agree according to the rule. For an agreement to ensue, either the

noun should be Eloah, or El, in the singular, or it should remain as it is in the plural, and the verb should be changed to *barau*.

A first principle with me in all reasonings upon this subject is, that "*There is one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in all*" His spiritual family.

Another axiom is, that—

"He is the blessed and Only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; Whom no man hath seen, nor can see" (1 Tim. 6:15).

And again, God is spirit; and He is incorruptible. (John 4:24; Rom. 1:23). The Incorruptible Spirit Dwelling in Light is the Scripture revelation of the undefinable essence of the self-existent Eternal One, Who is from everlasting to everlasting, God.

What His essence consists in, He has not revealed; He has made known to us His Name, or character, which is enough for men to know; but to say, that, because He is a spirit, He is therefore "immaterial," is to speak arrant nonsense; for immateriality is nothingness; a quality, if we may so speak, alien to the universe of God.

John saith (John 1:18)—

"No man hath seen God **at any time.**"

But Adam, Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, saw the Elohim and their Lord; therefore Elohim does not necessarily mean the Everlasting Father Himself. *Elohim* is a name bestowed on *angels* and *orders of men*. It is written—

"Worship him, all Elohim" (Psa. 97:7).

This is quoted by Paul in the first chapter of Hebrews, as a command of the Everlasting Father to the angels, that they should do homage to the Lord Jesus as His Son, when He shall introduce him into the world again at the opening of the Future Age. It is also written of him (Psa. 8:5)—

"Thou hast made him a little lower than the Elohim."

Paul applies this to Jesus, saying (Heb. 2:9)—

"We see Jesus, who **was** made a little lower than the angels."

He continued inferior to them a little upwards of thirty years, from the birth of the flesh to his resurrection; when he was exalted far above them in rank and dignity, even to the "right hand of power," which is enthroned in light, where dwells the Majesty in the heavens.

Those to whom the Word of God came through Moses are styled *Elohim*, as it is written—

"I have said ye are Elohim; and all of you children of the Most High; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes" (Psalm 82:6-7).

"Thou shalt not revile the Elohim, nor curse the Ruler of thy people" (Exo. 22:28).
—that is, "Thou shalt not revile the magistrates, nor curse the high priest, or king."

Furthermore, it is a well established principle of the sacred writings, that what the Everlasting Father does *by His agents*, He is considered as doing *Himself*. There is a maxim in law similar to this, which runs somehow thus, "What one doth by, or through, others, he does of himself."

If this be borne in mind, many seeming incongruities will be harmonised. Thus "The Lord" is said to have appeared to Abraham, as he sat in his tent-door (Gen. 18:1), but when he first caught sight of the visitant, he did not see the Lord, but "three men," or *Elohim* of whom one was the chief.

Read the whole chapter and to v. 29 of the next, and it will be seen that the Everlasting God talks and acts by, or through, these *Elohim*, but chiefly through one of them, styled "The Lord God."

In another place, God is said to appear to Jacob (Gen. 35:9), and, in the second verse, to say to him—

"I am God Almighty."

And in the thirteenth—

"God went up from him in the place where He talked with him."

He was then at Bethel, where formerly "the *Elohim* were revealed unto him." On that occasion he dreamed that he saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven—

"The Lord standing above it, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it."

These angels were the *Elohim* or "*ministering Spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation*" (Heb. 1:14). On one occasion, they declared to Jacob the promises made to his father and grandfather in the Name of the "Invisible God"; he "wrestled with God" in wrestling with one of them, etc. Hence, they speak in the first person as personators of the Invisible and Incorruptible Substance, or Spirit, Who is the real Author of all they say and do.

On a certain occasion, the Invisible God spake to Job out of the whirlwind, and said (Job 38:4-7)—

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof? Declare, if thou knowest.

"Or, who hath stretched the line upon it? Or, who laid the cornerstone thereof: when the Morning Stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

Job could not answer these questions. He knew, doubtless, what the *Elohim* had done; but "touching the Almighty," by Whose Spirit they operated, "we cannot," said Elihu, "find Him out." The *Elohim* were these Morning Stars and Sons of God.

Jesus is styled "the Bright and the Morning Star," "the Day Star," and the Son of God. To say, therefore, that the *Elohim* are Morning Stars and Sons of God, is to speak in the language of Scripture.

The relation of the *Elohim* to Him that dwelleth in the light, in the work of creation and providence may better appear by the following illustration. Experimental philosophers can form water, air, and earths; they can bring down lightning from the expanse; they can weigh, or rather calculate the weight of, the sun, moon, and stars; they can speak by electricity; paint by sunlight; and outstrip the wind by fire.

These are wonderful combinations of their genius. But *what have these they did not receive?* And from Whom did they receive it? They subject certain substances to certain conditions. *They do not originate a single principle.* The elements and the laws to which all simple and compound bodies are subject, are independent of the experimenters. They may say, "Let water be formed"; and by passing the electric spark through the gaseous mixture, water will be formed; but *it is the power of God that doth it, not theirs.*

After a like manner, the *Elohim* gave the word; they brought the latent elements of the globe into play; they gave direction and application to power; and the Spirit of the Invisible God

accomplished all they were commanded to arrange. The Spirit of the Incorruptible God through the Elohim created the heavens and the earth.

They said, "Let there be light"; *they* saw that it was good; *He* made the expanse: *they* called it heaven:—He did it all through them; and they executed by His power what He enjoined. This power, or Spirit, being committed to them, it became "*the Spirit of the Elohim.*" Hence, in the beginning, *the Spirit of the Elohim* created; which being plainly indicated in the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis, needed not afterwards to be repeated; so that throughout the chapter, "*Elohim*" is written instead of "*the Spirit of the Elohim.*" and is found in connection with a singular verb, not as its nominative, but as the governed word of the nominative singular—*ruach*, Spirit—understood. This is the solution I offer of this grammatical enigma.

God has revealed Himself to us as a Potentate, a King, a Lord, etc. Now, they who fill these stations *commit to others the service of executing their will and pleasure.* And thus it is with the Invisible and Eternal Potentate. His kingdom ruleth over all. His angels, or Elohim, mighty in strength, do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His words. They are His hosts; His ministers, that do His pleasure (Psa. 103:19-20).

In the light of this revelation I understand the Mosaic record of the creation. It pleased the King Eternal nearly six thousand years ago to add a new habitable province to His dominion; not by an original creation of a globe, but by the re-constitution of one already existing as one of the solar planets.

He commanded His angels to go and execute the work according to the order detailed by Moses. They hearkened unto the voice of His word; and *IN SIX DAYS finished all they were commanded to do.* But without His power they could have effected nothing. Therefore, in the history, all things are referred to Him. *He* willed, the *Elohim* executed by His Spirit.

"LORD, INCREASE OUR FAITH"

Let us make sure of this: sooner or later our faith is going to be tested; yes, many times. As to whether or not it stands the test depends altogether upon the **quality** of our faith.

Christ's disciples implored him— "LORD, INCREASE OUR FAITH."

Should we not do likewise? And should we not do our part in strengthening and enlarging our faith through constant study of the Word and the assimilation of divine principles?

If our faith fails; if we fail to stand the test when tempted to turn aside from the divine commandments; or, if our faith dwindles away and becomes weak, inoperative and lifeless; it will be because we have not kept that faith in a healthy, vigorous state of life.

It will be because we have loved temporal things too much and divine things too little. If this is our case, we have no one to blame but ourselves; for— "He is faithful that promised." —O.B.

The Golden Candlestick

“Who art thou, O great Mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain. And he shall bring forth the Headstone thereof, crying, Grace, grace unto it!”

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

PETER, in his old age and his last known letter, expressed his anxiety that the brethren should be *mindful of what the prophets had written*. We shall act in harmony with his desire this morning if we bestow a little attention on that portion of the Prophets which has been read (Zech. 4).

It may not appear to have much connection with the purpose for which we have met—to remember the Lord in the breaking of bread.

We shall find a connection, notwithstanding—a connection it may be said to be found, directly or indirectly, in *every part of the Scriptures*—not a wonderful thing in view of the fact that “all Scripture is given by inspiration,” and that *the testimony for Christ is the inspiring idea of it all*.

The chapter before us presents this testimony in the form of symbol. This may be difficult at first to understand; but the effect of symbol, after understanding is attained, is to make the matter set forth much more vivid and striking to the understanding than it would be in a merely literal presentation.

Considerable use is made of symbol throughout the prophetic writings, though these writings mainly deal with the literal. Yahweh alludes to the fact (Hos. 10:12) thus—

“I have also spoken by the prophets, I have multiplied visions and used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets.”

If the similitudes were employed without any clue to their significance, their use would not be enlightening, but the clues in almost all cases, are supplied—if not in the immediate context, in some corresponding part of the Word. *Diligent search and comparison will find them*.

In some cases it requires no such search; they lie on the surface. Thus Jeremiah, at the commencement of his ministry, was caused to see an almond rod. He was asked what he saw, and he said—

“I see a rod of an almond tree.”

“Then said the Lord unto him, Thou hast well seen, for I will hasten My Word to perform it”
(1:12).

Here an *almond rod* is constituted the symbol of *speed in the execution of the Lord's purpose*, so that every time it was seen, it would carry that meaning with it, in the same way that the scales in modern allegory represents justice. The same prophet was shown a *seething pot* with its face towards the north, the explanation of which was—

“Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.”
—namely, a *military invasion*, as the next verse shows. Consequently a seething pot would become a symbol of the sore affliction arising from war. Amos (8:1) was shown a basket of garnered fruit, and informed that it signified the *completeness of Israel's iniquity*, because of which Yahweh would bear no longer with them.

* * *

IN THE CHAPTER in Zechariah, the symbol is very beautiful, and the explanation glorious when apprehended in the fulness of its meaning.

The prophet sees two olive trees, and a seven-branched golden lamp standing between. From each olive tree is a golden pipe communicating with the bowl out of which the seven branches are supplied with oil. This bowl is at the top of the central shaft or stem and at the bottom or meeting point of the seven branches.

The prophet having attentively inspected the apparatus, asked the meaning of it. The answer he received was brief but pregnant. At first it seems no answer; but at last it appears complete and glorious. The answer was—

"Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

In what way did the olive-fed candlestick show forth this idea? It will not be difficult to perceive this when one or two simple clues are followed up.

This was not the first time the seven-branched golden candlestick had been symbolically employed. It was part of the furniture of the Mosaic Tabernacle in the wilderness—a Tabernacle of which Paul says it was—

"A figure for the time then present" (Heb. 9:9).

It was therefore an element in the—

"Shadow of good things to come" (Heb. 10:1).

Those "good things to come" are all covered by, or summarized in, the intimation made by Yahweh to Moses—

"I WILL fill the earth with My glory" (Num. 14:21).

The Gospel is a declaration of this purpose *in detail*, and if there is one feature more conspicuous than another as to the *agency* by which this glorious purpose is to be accomplished, it is the one expressed in the interpretation of the olive-fed candlestick—

"Not by might, nor by power, but by MY SPIRIT, saith the Lord of Hosts."

But it may be asked, "*Is there no might, is there no power in the Spirit of Jehovah?*"

Yes; in truth there is no might or power besides, for all might and all power are of it. What then is the meaning of the contrast expressed in the interpretation? Obviously the contrast is between *human* power, and *divine* power. It is the contrast otherwise expressed in Paul's words thus—

"Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called . . . that no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

Not by human might, not by human power, but by the direct operation of the Spirit of God, were the things to be accomplished that had been foreshown earlier to Zechariah.

What these things are may be learned from attentive consideration of the matters exhibited in chapter 3. They are, in brief, the emancipation from mortality which awaits the chosen of God, the cleansing of the house of Israel and all nations from their present sin-polluted state, and the consequent peace and blessedness that will ensue over all the earth. These results are to be achieved—

"Not by might, nor -by power, but by the Spirit of Yahweh!"

The reformation of the world is not to be accomplished by human power, but by God Himself, *operating in the particular form signified by the symbol shown to Zechariah.*

What particular form is this? What is meant by the oil combusted in the candlestick, after being drawn from two olive trees? We perceive the answer when we look forward to the organization through which the Spirit of God is to illumine the earth in the day of Jehovah's glory. This organization is expressed in its simplest form as *Jesus and the saints in corporate completeness, glorified and imperially enthroned.*

But from whom are the elements of this his One Glorious Body derived? There are *two sources* recognized in the apostolic writings. Paul, having alluded to *Israel after the flesh* as "the circumcision," among whom he remarks the *Gentiles* are called "the uncircumcision" (Eph. 2:11), says—

"He (Christ) is our peace, who hath made **both** one (abolishing the law) to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; that he might reconcile **both** unto God in one body by the cross."

He further says—

"He came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh: for through him we **both** have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

The reference is, of course, to *Jew and Gentile*. The question is, Are the Jews and Gentiles spoken of under the figure of "olive trees"? The answer comes at once from Romans 11, where Paul discoursing of the natural relation of Jew and Gentile to the covenants, says to the Gentiles—

"If thou wert cut out of the **olive tree** which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a **good olive tree**: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their **own olive tree**?"

If this idea were enigmatically presented in reference to the glorious ending of the matter in the day of "the manifestation of the sons of God," how could it be more strikingly done than in Zechariah's symbolism—*an illuminating apparatus fed by material drawn from two olive trees*?

The FLAME would tell us of the Spirit which transforms and empowers the saints in the day of their glory; the OIL, of the called and chosen persons through whom the Spirit will be manifested; the OLIVE TREES, of the two great sections of mankind (as they are grouped in relation to God) from whom the saints are selected.

The GOLDEN PIPES through which the oil was conveyed from the trees to the lampstand, would also tell the principle on which the selection is made. Gold, in moral similitude, is always employed to express the idea of tried faith—

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:7).

"When I am tried, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23).

The golden pipes through which all the oil must pass that finds its way to the illuminating lampstand, to be used there in the manifestation of the divine glory, are a symbolic intimation of the fact that—

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

—and that no one may hope for a place in the glorified body of Christ who has not, in mortal probation, glorified God by a steadfast faith in His promises in the midst of affliction.

All parts of the symbolism unite in proclaiming the fact that the salvation in due time to be accomplished in the earth is *not of human might or power*. It is—

"According to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to his good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself.

"That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ" (Eph. 1).

Even as regards the preliminary adoption of which believers are now subject, it is—

"Not of works, lest any man should boast . . . By grace are ye saved through faith."

God, in His favor, has condescended to *appoint and accept their faith as righteousness*; this is not an arrangement of themselves; it is the gift of God—

"Who hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph. 1:5).

Much *more* is the resurrection-sequel—

"Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit."

—for who can refashion and glorify the dead but God only by His Spirit through Christ to whom He has given the power of using it for this purpose?

By a happy coincidence, we have the symbol of the golden candlestick in the New Testament portion of our reading as well as in our reading from Zechariah. The seven golden candlesticks seen by John in Patmos are not the same as those in Zechariah, except in the sense of being involved as an element of these.

Those of Zechariah *comprehend those of John* in the sense in which the New Jerusalem comprehends the saints as they now are—that is, as a thing involved and not as a thing expressly represented. Zechariah's olive-fed golden candlestick shows us the One Body *glorified*, those of John, the One Body *in the day of its development* and probation.

The symbol is the same because the thing signified is the same, though at a different time and in a different relation. *A tried faith giving forth the light of testimony* is the idea proximately manifest in the golden candlestick; in weakness now; in power and glory in the day of the manifestation of the sons of God.

As applicable to the present time, there is special significance and usefulness in the symbol of the candlestick when we consider the leading idea associated with it. Men do not light a candle says Jesus, to put it *under* a table, but to put it on a table that all in the house may have light.

To represent a community by a candlestick is to intimate that its function is to maintain and exhibit the light. This is the plain lesson of the apocalyptic candlesticks—

"The 7 candlesticks are (represent) the 7 ecclesias."

Seven stand for the whole. The messages sent to the 7 (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea) were each accompanied with the intimation that they were for "him that had ears to hear," generally—therefore the symbols of *all similar communities wherever found*.

The friends of Christ are a light-bearing community in all ages. They speak of and uphold the exhibition of the testimony of God, whether men will hear or forbear. In this they are to be discerned from the sluggish and dark-minded, who are Christians so-called. Jesus says of them—

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

—and he tells them to *let their light shine* (v. 16). Therefore, however unpalatable to men, they are those who—

" . . . speak of the glory of Jehovah's Kingdom and tell of His power."

The light appertaining to them is not of or in themselves: it is the light that has come from God by revelation to prophet and apostle and which, being written, becomes an illumination through the Word written to all who study it. Hence, they can all say with the Psalmist—

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

They are men in whom the word of Christ dwells richly, as Paul exhorted—in whom therefore the LIGHT SHINES. Where this is the case there will be a showing of the light, in some way or other, every one in his own way and according to his own measure, but still showing the light. Their life will be a testimony for Christ in some way or other; *otherwise they are no part of the candlestick by which Christ is pleased to symbolize his ecclesia in the present state.*

Men obtained admission into the community of the believers in the apostolic age who did not possess or ever acquire the characteristics of that community. *Jude* refers to them as "men crept in unawares." *Paul* speaks of them with tears, as "many" who were in reality the enemies of the cross of Christ, and who minded earthly things. *Peter* describes them as false teachers, whose pernicious ways many should follow, and by reason of whom the way of truth should be evil spoken of. *Jesus* had foretold the same thing in likening the kingdom of heaven in its doctrinal operations, to a net let down into the sea, into which all manner of fish would come, *good and bad.*

The conclusion to be deduced from this is that it is necessary to exercise discrimination with regard to men called brethren whose influence and teaching are in opposition to the mind of the Spirit as embodied in the Word. There will always be such: *we must try every one, yea, ourselves also, by the ONE STANDARD.* Jesus commended the brethren in the seven ecclesias addressed for this very thing. The very first words of the entire series of messages are—

"I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast TRIED THEM which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars" (Rev. 2:2).

On the other hand, we find him *condemning the carelessness and indifference of some ecclesias who tolerated wrong teaching in their midst.* Thus to Pergamos (Rev. 2:14-15)—

"I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the **doctrine** of Balaam . . . So hast thou also them that bold the **doctrine** of the Nicolaitanes."

To Thyatira, he says (Rev. 2:20)—

"I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants."

The tendency of such teachings is manifestly in contradiction to the spirit of the present age, which includes a "charity" that would sacrifice the truth to "peace and love."

There can be no peace or love acceptable to God that is not based upon that wisdom which as James says, is "FIRST PURE then peaceable." The Truth, in faith AND practice, is the rule of fellowship and peace with every son of God.

He will be considered bigoted and uncharitable; but what matters the unfavourable opinion of men if the Lord Jesus approve at his coming? We must (Jude 3)—

"Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."

So says the apostle Jude, and *he is a higher authority than the uninspired thinkers and speculators of an easy-going age*. It but requires to be added that this faithful contention in the hands of true men will not degenerate into cantankerousness or bitterness: in the hands of such, it will be done in the true spirit of kindness and forbearance, anxious only for the ascendancy of truth as Paul prescribes—

"The servant of the Lord must not strive: but be **gentle** unto all men, apt to teach, **patient**, in MEEKNESS instructing those that oppose themselves" (2 Tim. 2:25).

A further feature of these messages deserves special notice before closing. It is a feature bringing comfort and encouragement. It is the frequent occurrence of the word "*repent*." To almost every one of the seven ecclesias, this command is addressed. To such of the Laodiceans who were "neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm,"* we are not surprised at such an exhortation: but even Ephesus, commended for their vigilance in the detection of spiritual imposture, is advised—

"Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works."

To Sardis, "having a name to live but being dead," we expect to hear the words addressed—

"Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die . . . repent."
—but we find a similar exhortation to Pergamos, of whom it had been testified—

"Thou holdest fast my Name, and hast not denied my faith."

It might be suggested that there was little comfort to be found in this general necessity for exhortation to repentance. The comfort lies here: Christ addresses *his own brethren* in these messages. He therefore illustrates in this way the fact overlooked in some systems of interpretation—that we are ALL invited to renew our ways before God.

Some have taught that defection in the saints is unpardonable. This is only true as applicable to *presumptuous and wilful sin*. It is not true as applicable to sins of weakness, such as Peter's denial of the Lord through the combined effect of cold, sleeplessness, fear, and the surrender of Christ to the hands of his enemies.

This discrimination is important. It will give heart and hope to every struggling believer. *Let us never give in*. LET US DIE FIGHTING. If we are oppressed with the consciousness of past remissness, let us listen to the words of Christ who, in addressing the seven ecclesias of Asia, spoke to his brethren everywhere for all time—

"Repent, and do the first works."

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Out of Egypt Have I Called My Son

"The glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and His voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory"—Eze. 43:2

PART THIRTY

ISAIAH HAD a similar vision to the above, which John applies to Christ (John 12:41). The vision was given "in the year that King Uzziah died." The prophet says—

"I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple (spoken of by Ezekiel).

"Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

"And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen THE KING, THE LORD OF HOSTS" (Isa. 6:1-5).

This vision is not only *identical* with that of Ezekiel, but it is reproduced in the apocalyptic visions of the apostle John. The chapter in which it occurs (Rev. 4) is wholly devoted to a symbolic representation of the establishment of the KINGDOM OF GOD in its *second stage*, under Christ and his brethren.

Being in spirit, he says, he saw a THRONE set in heaven, and one sat on the throne, like a *jasper* (symbolical of the *Spirit*) and a *sardine* stone (a symbol of the *flesh*): and there was a RAINBOW round about the throne.

And round about the throne were four-and-twenty thrones, upon which sat *four-and-twenty elders* clothed in *white raiment* (spirit nature), with crowns of gold upon their heads, which are symbolised as *four living creatures* full of eyes before and behind (omniscience), each with 6 wings—

"And they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come" (Rev. 4:8).

These four living creatures and four-and-twenty elders (the one expressive of the other) are represented in the following chapter as falling down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And, John says (Rev. 5:8)—

"They sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy . . . for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation: and hast made us unto our God KINGS AND PRIESTS; AND WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH."

From this sketch of John's vision the reader will not fail to perceive its identity with that of Isaiah: the *seraphim* of the latter being equivalent to the *four living creatures*, each of them having six wings, which, multiplied by four, become expressive of the *four-and-twenty elders*, endowed with omniscience, seen by John.

And since the vision of Ezekiel concerning the glory of the God of Israel, which came from the way of the east, was, as he says, according to the vision which he saw by the river Chebar, we shall, on turning to that vision, discover its *perfect identity with those of John and Isaiah*.

In the Chebar vision, recorded in Ezekiel 1, the prophet saw the likeness of 4 Living Creatures, which—

". . . had the likeness of a man."

—every one having four faces and four wings. On a comparison of the faces of these four living creatures with those of John's vision, the reader will find the description precisely the same in both visions—the wings and faces in each case preserving the identity between the four living creatures and the 24 elders. Ezekiel's Living Creatures were also—

". . . full of eyes round about."

—and the *voice* in both cases was like unto the *noise of great waters*. And, like John, he saw in connection with these things, the likeness of a THRONE, and the likeness as the appearance of a *man* above upon it, as the appearance of *fire*:

"As the appearance of the BOW that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the **brightness** round "about. This was the appearance of THE LIKENESS OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD" (Eze. 1:28).

* * *

HAVING THUS established the connection between these several visions, and their relation to Christ and his brethren in that eternal relation of things styled the KINGDOM OF GOD, we proceed with the further elaboration of the idea embodied in the phrase—

"The glory of the God of Israel."
—which, Ezekiel says (Eze. 43:2)—
". . . came from the way of the east."

No language could be more appropriately descriptive of the nature of the heavenly community to be manifested as the brethren of Christ by the change to be effected in them through the operation of the Spirit, which will transform them from this mortal to immortality, than the concluding words of the vision of Ezekiel in his first chapter—

"THE LIKENESS OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD"

This change from flesh to spirit, at the time we are speaking of, is thus referred to by Christ—

"Then shall the righteous **shine forth as the sun** in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43).

In speaking of this spirit-assimilation of every particle of Adamic flesh and bones, whereby the subjects of it become spirit, Paul says (Phil. 3:20-21)—

"Our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."

This apostle had been privileged to see Christ in the fulness of his glory, which he says was—

". . . above the brightness of the sun."

This change, as we know from other Scriptures, will be effected in the *immediate neighbourhood where we have been contemplating the scene of the Tabernacle upon which rested the pillar of cloud and fire*. Here the Lord Jesus, on his return from heaven, will, apocalyptically—

". . . clothe himself with a cloud" (Rev. 10:1).

This "*cloud*" will consist of the body corporate of Christ, every member of which will be spirit like unto himself; and thus clothed, they are identified with the vision of Ezekiel by the "*rainbow*," which was upon, or above, the head of this glorious angel of multitude spoken of in these visions.

They are the "*white cloud*" upon which the Son of Man sits, as seen in the vision of Rev. 14—the *cloud* with which he had clothed himself on his return from heaven.

* * *

HAVING IDENTIFIED this symbolic cloud with "the likeness of the glory of the Lord," and the pillar of cloud and fire, we will endeavour to sketch its career until it arrives upon the scene in which Ezekiel beheld it as it came from the way of the east.

This we can only accomplish by noting what the prophets saw in vision relating to this fact. Thus, for instance, the prophet Habakkuk, describing what he saw in vision, says—

"God (Eloah) came from Teman (the south), and the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise" (Hab. 3:3).

This latter clause is the connecting link with the visions of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John (Rev. 18:1). This *filling of the earth with the praise and glory of God* is the mission of the symbolic cloud now under consideration. But before this can be done the earth has to be subjected to mighty judgments, which when poured upon it in the manner set forth by the prophets, Jesus Christ, and his apostles, will result in its learning righteousness, and being—

". . . filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"
(Isa. 26:9; Hab. 2:14).

It is the special mission of the Christ-body corporate—the symbolic angel invested with almightiness—to accomplish this. This angel, developed in the neighbourhood of Sinai, sets out upon its *mission of conquest* from thence.

Habakkuk saw this mighty Messenger coming from Teman, which is also styled by him Mount Paran, situate in the wilderness of Sinai, in its career from thence to Jerusalem, where it had arrived when Ezekiel saw it enter that city by the way of the east.

The same prophet (Habakkuk) sees the Mighty One in Mount Paran in the attitude of halting, and viewing the work before him, which the prophet describes as measuring the earth. He then speaks of the result which will accrue from the exercise of the almightiness with which the angel is invested. He says—

"He stood and measured the earth: he beheld, and **drove asunder the nations**; and the everlasting mountains (empires) were scattered, the perpetual hills (kingdoms) did bow: his ways are everlasting" (Hab. 3:6).

The prophet then sees the almighty messenger exercising his power upon the tents of Cushan, east of the river Tigris, causing affliction there; and also upon the curtains of the land of Midian, which did tremble (Hab. 3:3-7).

These districts will be the first to feel and acknowledge His power, being in the immediate vicinity of the divine encampment, and constituting part of the estate promised to Abraham and his seed. Speaking of the Midianite Arabs of the wilderness the Psalmist says, they shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust (Psa. 72:9).

Having subdued these portions of the Abrahamic inheritance, and taken possession thereof—

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as a rose.

"It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.

"They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God" (Isa. 35:1-2).

The prophet Isaiah, delivering the burden of Egypt, says—

"Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt" (Isa. 19:1).

The object of this is the *deliverance of His people* from the affliction which has overtaken them there (Isa. 11:11), and the smiting of Egypt, then in the hands of the king of the north (Dan. 11:42-43), when the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away from Israel (Zech. 10:11).

In effectuating this deliverance of Israel from Egypt the same prophet describes the operations in connection therewith as the "beating off from the channel of the river (Euphrates) into the Nile" (Isa. 27:12), which implies the subjugation of the whole of the southern portion of the land promised to Abraham, "from sea to sea," i.e., from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf (see Psa. 72:8).

When Israel is thus freed from Egypt, the healing thereof will take place (Isa. 19:22). Israel will then, as in their first exodus, be brought *again* from the depths of the (Red) sea on their way to the land of their inheritance (see Psa. 68:22; 66:5-6; Isa. 11:15-16; Mic. 7:19).

By these operations the Land from the Nile to the east of the Tigris, and thence north to the Caspian, and westward to the Mediterranean will have been recovered from the enemy by the hand of this almighty Angel of the Rainbow.

The prosperity of the colonies of Jews established in the midst of the land under the protection of the power prophetically described as—

"Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof"

(Eze. 38:13).

—in which description the student of prophecy will recognise the *British power*, is doubtless the cause of the invasion of the land by the *Russian autocrat* and the nations then under his guardianship (see the whole of Eze. 38). In this invasion the city of Jerusalem is taken (Zech. 14:2).

At this crisis the "fury of Yahweh (the angel of the bow) comes up into His face" (Eze. 38:18), and He comes out of Egypt (Hos. 11:1), having effected Israel's deliverance there-from (Hos. 11:11; Zech. 10:11; Hab. 3:8), and after their arrival in the wilderness of Paran, into which he leads them, he pursues his journey to Bozrah in Edom (Isa. 63:1).

At this juncture, the mighty angel comes in contact with the invading forces of the king of the north (Eze. 38:20; Zech. 12:4; Eze. 38:22), where they are overthrown in the fury of his power; and from whence the treading of the wine-press of his wrath is initiated, and the whole land made to shake and tremble at his presence by a terrible earthquake (Eze. 38:20; Isa. 30:25-31).

From Bozrah he causes the whole of the mighty army of Gog to engage in mutual slaughter, which is followed by pestilence, and reduces the invading hosts to a remnant of their original force.

Having thus cleared the land of the enemy, the angel leaves Bozrah (Isa. 63:1), from whence he pursues his journey toward the city of which Christ is the great King.

He is next seen at the Mount of Olives, where his arrival was preceded by the division of that mountain, as the result of the earthquake to which we have referred (Zech. 14:4-5). He then stands upon that mount in view of Jerusalem.

At this point, we have reached the position of the vision of Ezekiel when he saw the glory of the God of Israel come from the way of the east.

From the Mount of Olives he approaches the city under the circumstances set forth in Psa. 24:7-10. The city is entered and taken possession of, and the king is recognised, and identified in the way stated in Zech. 13:6; 12:10; resulting in the initial salvation of the tents of Judah (Zech. 12:7).

The reader will see that this digest of the inauguration of the war of the great day of God Almighty (Rev. 16:14) is a feeble attempt at the condensation of Dr. Thomas' writings upon this

interesting subject, in the hope of enkindling in the hearts of interested readers the desire to avail themselves of the richer teachings of the word of Truth so incomparably set forth in Eureka.

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

The Sweetness of a Friend

“Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God”—James 4:4

WHEN WE put ourselves under the law of Christ, we come under obligations from which there is no escape. We have a responsibility that we cannot lay aside. To Christ our Master we either stand or fall.

Our natural desires are strong, and are ever trying to swerve us from faithfulness to God. But God cannot look upon sin, neither can He tolerate disobedience. He has a purpose with the world, and a plan of mercy, but *obedience is necessary to obtain His favor.*

Yet, even today, God hears His Name blasphemed by millions. Could we believe that He is indifferent to this and to the pride and lusts of the nations? *Let those who believe such consider the fate of Edom, Moab, Egypt, Tyre and Babylon.* In Isa. 42:14, we read—

"I have long time holden My peace; now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once."

And in Eccl. 8:11—

"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

Israel suffered many judgments; and surely the Gentiles will not go unpunished—

"Ye shall **not** be unpunished; for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth"
(Jer. 25:29).

The signs of the coming of the end have multiplied, but the multitudes pay no heed to them. Their leisure time is spent in seeking after pleasure. Yet we read almost daily of the perplexity that fills the minds of those in authority.

As it is today, so has it ever been. Jesus in his teaching twice uses the words, "*As it was in the days of Noah.*" The people of this day give no more heed to the divine warnings than they did at the preaching of Noah. So will it go on till the coming of the Son of Man.

Pleasure seeking is dangerous. It must be shunned by the saints. We cannot afford to indulge in the use of those things that the multitudes use as a means of passing away their time. John says—

"The whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19).

It was bad then; today it is worse. What advantage has worldly education been to our civilization (so called)? The people are said to be wise and prudent, and boast of their abilities, yet all must admit the *great increase in crime*, especially in the younger generation. They know little about the Word of God, and care less.

In two short chapters of Habakkuk, speaking of the time of the end, we find the word "*violence*" used five times, and we know that violence is a direct result of wickedness.

The nations tremble through fear. Their faith in God is a vain thing. They put their faith in things made with hands. But as we look at the signs of the times, let us put our whole trust in the God

of Jacob, ever trying to have the faith that Jacob had, and a firm belief in the "Hope of Israel." Thus we may become heirs of salvation.

* * *

TO US THE Bible is the most wonderful book the world has ever known. *From beginning to end it is a record of the love that God has for man.* But as man fell from his first estate, God had to invoke punishment upon Adam for disobedience. But in love and mercy, though man was condemned to death, God opened up a way of redemption unto eternal life in His Kingdom.

God called out men whom He deemed worthy, and He made great and precious promises to them. In Rom. 4 we read,

"Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Being not weak in faith he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was fully persuaded that what God had promised, He was able to perform.

"Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

From the intimate communion Abraham had with God, he is distinguished by the name of "The friend of God."

What is a "friend"? Just what qualities does it take to make a friend? The dictionary gives little information. It defines friends as "people who know and like one another; persons who favor and help each other." We read in Proverbs 18:24—

"A man that hath friends must show himself friendly; and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

The friendship between Jonathan and David was lovely. When Jonathan fell in battle, David said—

"How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places!

"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: and thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women" (2 Sam. 1:25-26).

Jesus said (John 15:13-14)—

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

"Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call ye not servants; but friends."

There is a difference between a servant and a friend. Jesus said—

"The servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth."

A servant obeys strict orders, while a friend has the privilege of intimacy, founded on mutual love and respect.

No true friendship can come except by reciprocated trust and affection.

We have a remarkable example in Abraham. He was a friend of God who looked for no temporal rewards, but fully understood his position as the chosen servant of God. By his continual exhibition of faith and love, he became the "father of the faithful."

The making of friends should get our careful attention. What did Jesus do when he was about to select his closest friends? If we turn to Luke 6, we find that he—

". . . went up into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."

Then when it was day, he called his disciples, and of them he named twelve to be his friends.

The calling of the Gentiles was not done in the same way as was the case with Israel. Israel was called *as a nation*, and as such they were to be multiplied as the sand of the sea shore. But *as a nation* they went far astray; and *as a nation* they were punished.

The Gentiles have not been called as a community, or a nation. They are called as *individuals* from all classes, with different temperaments and abilities. They come from young and old, and some, by patient continuance in well doing, have become the *friends of Jesus and of one another*.

It is with confidence that we can look forward to the day when all these mutual friends, will be quickened and purged of the sin nature, and become a glorious community, being then in the highest form of friendship; for they will be the Bride of Christ.

In our efforts to be obedient to the commandments of Christ, we are compelled to be strangers to many things. Sometimes it would seem almost an impossible task to keep ourselves separate, since we are so few compared to the millions of unbelievers.

In the Scriptures we have many examples: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joseph, David, Esther and Daniel. These remained faithful in the face of many trials. To have friendship with Jesus, many times causes separation among one's own relatives.

Jesus teaches a great lesson in the parable of the man that made a great supper and bade many. But they all had excuses, and had no desire to be friends of the man. So the Lord said—

"For I say unto you, that none of these men which were bidden shall taste of my supper"
(Luke 14:24).

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

He that would have friendship with Jesus must follow him *willingly and whole-heartedly*. No excuses can be accepted, for Jesus said —

"No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God"
(Luke 9:62).

Good books can be good companions to those who will cultivate the art of reading. They can be a source of comfort and instruction. But those silent friendships should be founded solely on godly sincerity and love for the Truth, with the firm resolution to—

"Love not the world, neither the things of the world."

Happy are they that choose their silent friends wisely. Among the silent friends, we would choose no better than the Bible. The Psalmist says—

"I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye" (Psa. 32:8).

Next to the Bible, what better books can anyone desire than the writings of bro. Thomas and bro. Roberts?

"Ointment and perfumes delight the heart; so doth the sweetness of a man's friends by hearty counsel."

There are millions who are *slaves*—slaves to ignorance, to the idea that they are always sick, to fear, or to sin; for the serpent still whispers to the human conscience: "*Follow the ways of the world, or you will be unpopular, and very lonesome.*"

To give heed to such suggestions is to put on the chains of slavery. Let us strive to be as the Psalmist, who was so firmly convinced that God, his Shepherd, would be with him, though he walked through the valley of the shadow of death.

When we are tempted to indulge in things worldly, *then* is the time to seek strength from God's law and commandments. He is ever near to us, if we will seek Him where He may be found.

God's purpose with the earth will most assuredly be accomplished. The earth will be redeemed from all evil—

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

It will be peopled with immortals like Jesus. It is written:

"He that OVERCOMETH shall inherit all things."

Let us ever remember the words of Jesus (Rev. 2:25)—

"But that which ye have already hold fast till I come".

If we prove faithful and worthy, then the day of Christ will assuredly bring us glory, honor, and immortality, to be ever with Christ, and to reign with him on the earth.

Let us abide in him, and when he shall appear, may we not be ashamed. —C.H.T.

"Let Us Rise Up and Build!"

"Mourn not, nor weep; neither be ye sorry, nor grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength"—
Neh. 8:9-10.

PART FOUR

Nehemiah's next concern (7:4) was with the inhabitants of the City—

"The people were few, and the houses not builded."

And he says—

"And my God put in my heart to gather the people that they might be reckoned by genealogy."

We notice that Nehemiah has a single purpose—*the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem*—and he proceeds in an orderly way from step to step. He says so often, "*My God put in my heart*" to do this or that.

All action must be based on prayer and study of the Word of God, seeking guidance—

"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

We must learn, and remember, that as natural, animal creatures we have neither the knowledge nor mental capacity to determine our course of action ourselves. Man, with all his pride, is utterly and constitutionally incapable of knowing what he should do even from moment to moment, let alone the big issues of life.

For the foundation of his genealogy, Nehemiah first goes back to the record of those who came back from Babylon 100 years before under Zerubbabel. The rest of ch. 7 is this list, which is identical, except in minor detail, with that in Ezra 2.

It is thought more probable that Ezra's list is the way it was when made up in Babylon before leaving, while Nehemiah's is a list made after arriving in the land, with adjustments made for any changes that occurred in between.

* * *

THE WALL was finished on the 25th day of the 6th month, just a few days before the beginning of the 7th, in which the joyful *Feast of Tabernacles* was to be celebrated.

The people were apparently aware by custom and tradition that certain national celebration days fell in this month, but they were not aware of the details. Having completed the wall, however, their minds turn toward God Who has prospered their effort thus far. What should they do—how should they proceed to arrange their national life?

This is the most encouraging sign in the whole book, and must have given Nehemiah great comfort and satisfaction.

Just how widespread the feeling was, or how long it endured afterward, we do not know, but at this time at least there was a great movement to *seek the Law of God*.

An enthusiastic desire on the part of *all members* for a constant increase of the knowledge of the Word of God is *essential* for any sound ecclesial life—not just a few, well-worn, crotchety points, beaten back and forth, year after year, but a *broad, balanced wholesome study of all Scripture*. This love for, and knowledge of, God's Word is the great distinction between the people of God and the people of the world. Without this we may be very "nice" people, but we have no right to consider ourselves children of God.

* * *

8:1—"And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street (or broad place—RV: square) that was before the water gate, and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel."

God had specifically commanded in the beginning that this Law should be periodically read in public to *all* the people at this Feast of Tabernacles.

ALL the people should *know*, and *understand*, and be *deeply interested*—there alone is safety.

And the command specifically required that "children" be included in the audience. As soon as they were old enough to comprehend what was going on (and that comes quite early), *they were to be there listening*. They were to be considered—they were an important factor—they were mentioned specially—they were not to be forgotten, or just allowed to run riot while their elders worshipped. These early years are vital in laying the character's foundation.

* * *

8:2—"And Ezra the priest brought the Law before the congregation, both of men and women, and **all that could hear with understanding**—(all old enough to understand) upon the 1st day of the 7th month."

This is the first mention of *Ezra* in this book. Up to now *Nehemiah*—the worker, the builder, the organizer—has dominated the scene. But now all the people, including Nehemiah himself, call upon Ezra to take the lead in reading and explaining the Law of God.

Ezra was a direct descendant from Aaron and appears to have been the grandson, or possibly great-grandson, of the High Priest Jehozadak, who was carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar.

He was not in the direct line of the High-Priesthood, being apparently a younger son, or son of a younger son.

(One of the 'chief', or leading, priests who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel was named Ezra, and it is a possibility that this was the same person. If so, he must have been quite young at the time of Zerubbabel, and he would be very old now—at least 120 or 130).

It is a very strongly established Jewish tradition that Ezra was the instrument used by God to compile the book of Chronicles and to arrange and complete the canon of Scripture. There is no proof of this, but several facts fit in very well with it—

1. This work must have been done around this time. It could not have been earlier or later for this is the end of the historical period of the O. T., and the sun is descending over the prophets, leaving Israel in a darkness that was not dispelled until John came as a "shining and a burning light."

2. Ezra appears to be the most fitting and qualified for this work, and was clearly the leader in teaching the Law of God at this time.

3. Ezra had dedicated himself to—

"Seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."
—and it was for this very purpose of teaching the Law that he had (like Nehemiah later) sought and been granted permission from the king to go with authority to Jerusalem.

4. He is spoken of in terms that appear to indicate a special relationship to the law in the sight of God, as—

"The scribe of the Law of the God of Heaven" (Ez. 7:21).

"Ready (skilled, prepared) scribe in the Law of Moses."

"The scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord, and of His statutes to Israel"
(Ez. 7:11).

* * *

WHEN THE people were gathered (v. 5)—

"Ezra opened the Book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people."

He was on a platform, so they could all see him as well as hear him.

He "opened the Book in the sight of all the people." This is important. The Book must be kept in the forefront. Without this Book we are, like Samson without his hair, "as weak as other men." But in this Book is life and strength—a power greater than any power on earth. When we present it we must always keep it and its words *right out in front*, and ourselves always behind it.

"And Ezra read from daylight until midday, and the ears of all the people were attentive."

They did not *force* themselves to pay attention — they *enjoyed it*—realizing with marvel and excitement as he read that these were the *living words of the eternal God Himself*, Who had condescended to speak to them and to their fathers.

Other priests and Levites worked with Ezra in reading and explaining the Law—

8:8—"So they read in the book of the Law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."

This again is very important. *There is little to be gained by reading without understanding.* We should never be content to do our readings mechanically without understanding.

What we cannot understand we should ask — ask our brethren, consult the works of the pioneers in the Truth, ask God in prayer.

God is not pleased with a blank, half-hearted, ritualistic reading of His Word, any more than He was with Israel's mechanical thoughtless sacrificing.

* * *

VERSES 9 and 10 are very interesting. When the people heard the words of the law, *they wept*. They wept for humiliation and sorrow and remorse for the condition the nation had gotten itself into after God had been so gracious as to choose and bless them above all people.

But Nehemiah and Ezra said to them—

"Mourn not, nor weep, this day is holy unto the Lord your God."

It was the first holy sabbath of the joyful Feast of Tabernacles—the last feast of the year, the feast that represented the ingathering of all God's glorious elect—the end of all toil—the swallowing up of death in victory.

It was natural to weep. It was a good and wholesome reaction. But there was a more excellent way to express their deep emotion—*joy and zealous determination—thanksgiving and praise.*

Ezra and Nehemiah exhorted them—

"Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and **send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared . . .**

"Neither be ye sorry, for the **joy of the Lord is your strength.**"

"*The joy of the Lord is your strength.*" Just what does that mean to us? Surely this is the central message of this book. Here is the secret of Nehemiah's confidence and courage in the face of constant problems, without and within.

Truly joy *is* strength, and the "joy of Yahweh" is a sound, glorious, eternal joy. Are we a part of that joy and strength? Jeremiah records (15:16) in words that perfectly fit this occasion in Nehemiah—

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy Name, O Yahweh, God of hosts!"

We too are *called by His Name!* Think upon it—glory in it—joy in the strength of it! *Yahweh Elohim*—"He who shall be mighty ones"—the glorious Memorial Name!

Nehemiah continues (v. 12)—

"The people went their way, to **make great mirth**, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them."

They understood. They had learned more about God. They had approached closer unto Him, for understanding is the basis of all fellowship and communion—

"This is life eternal, that they may **know** Thee, the only true God" . . . "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

They continued to gather day by day to hear the Word read, and they learned that at this time Israel were to leave their houses and dwell in booths made of tree branches to remind them of the free open life they lived when God delivered them from Egyptian bondage, and in these booths they were to rejoice in the Lord seven days.

"And day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the Law of God.
"And there was VERY GREAT GLADNESS."

And so the great feast of Tabernacles ended, after 22 days of celebration.
(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH. IF THE LORD WILL)

"Heresy Hunting" a Duty

"All heresy-hunting is of diabolos," says the Flesh.

"TRY THE SPIRITS whether they are of God," writes the *Spirit*; and the reason given is (1 John 4:1)—

“. . . because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

The "false prophets" were teachers of heresy, but professed to teach that which is true. There was a difficulty in identifying them, and therefore *all teachers of divine things were to be tried* to ascertain whose teaching was genuine and whose adulterated. The object of the test was that the heresy teachers might be repudiated.

The Spirit in Peter, writing of Israel, says—

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them" (2 Pet. 2:1).

How were such false prophets to be treated? Moses says—

"They shall be PUT TO DEATH" (Deut. 13:5).

Even a "brother," "son," "daughter," "wife," or a "friend" who attempted to introduce idolatry was not to be spared (v. 6-11). The object was that Israel might be *purged of evil*.

* * *

COMMUNITIES were to be dealt with on the same principle as individuals. If it were reported that any one city had commenced to "serve other gods" (vs. 12-13), "Then," said Moses (vs. 14-15)—

". . . shall thou enquire and make search, and ask diligently; and behold, if it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought among you, thou shalt surely **smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword**, destroying it utterly and all that is therein."

The comparison drawn in Peter's epistle between false teachers in fleshly Israel and spiritual Israel is *evidence that this Mosaic enactment contains a lesson for us*.

The use of the sword or anything destructive is out of the question; a practical protest by refusing to fellowship is the full extent of permitted action. The command to "enquire" is not at variance with New Testament injunction; it is in harmony with it.

When, therefore, it is reported that any brother or ecclesia is following false doctrine, it is not only permitted, but *it is obligatory on other brethren and ecclesias to "enquire and make search, and ask diligently" to see whether it be true and the thing certain.*

If it is, the responsibility of their position leaves no option but that of repudiating complicity with the evil.

It is on this principle that ecclesial action has been taken on the Inspiration Question. It was reported that false teaching existed in spiritual Israel concerning the authorship of divine writings, and on enquiring, making search, and asking diligently, many have found the thing "certain."

Some, it will be said, have enquired without finding its existence; but it is necessary to remember that *there are different ways of enquiring, and that none are so blind as those who do not wish to see.* The evidence of its existence is undisputable, and there are no excuses to justify its being ignored.

The repudiation of responsibility for the false teaching of those at a distance shows a defective appreciation of the unity which should exist between all members of the One Body—

"The members should have the same care one for another, and **whether one member suffer, ALL THE MEMBERS** suffer with it" (1 Cor. 12:25-26).

Heresy searching among national Israel was not of diabolos, but of God; therefore heresy searching among spiritual Israel, can have no other origin.

And what is its results? It tends to preserve the purity of revealed Truth. If a heresy test were of diabolos, it would be difficult to justify the repudiation of heresy; and thus the One Body would gradually become so defiled that pure doctrine would wholly disappear.

Bro. Roberts, Christadelphian, July, 1886.

"THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE"

Morality without this "fear of the Lord" is an indeterminate, colourless thing. It is a husk without the kernel, flesh without blood, a form of "wisdom" minus the life-giving POWER.

What is the theme of Jesus' discourses? Does he indulge in abstract moralizings of the modern "philosophic" order? Far from it. He goes to the root of the matter—of all matters—in exhibiting the FATHER to their attention. God is the center of all he has to say. His tuition of the disciples is best described in his own words, as used in prayer to the Father—

"I have manifested THY NAME unto the men which Thou gavest me out of the world . . ."

—**Bro. Roberts**

The Israel of God

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed"—Gen. 32:28.

THIS NEW and prophetic name that God bestowed upon Jacob appears in the above passage for the first time, but from this point onward throughout the Scriptures it is found *more times than any*

other name than that of God. The last passage where the name occurs is found in Apoc. 21:12, in connection with the vision of the Lamb's wife, or the Holy City, New Jerusalem—

"Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel."

This vision that John saw symbolizes *the Israel of God in the complete and perfect manifestation at the end of the thousand years*, when the name that God gave Jacob will be written upon all the immortal inhabitants of that glorious age. This is indicated in the closing words of the message that Jesus sent to the ecclesia at Philadelphia—

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the Name of my God, and the Name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new Name" (Apoc. 3:12).

Now these twelve gates on which are written the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, and which afford entrance to the Holy City, may be taken to symbolize the divinely appointed way by which the constituents of this holy polity have found access within its walls of jasper to the streets of gold. In his final admonition to his servants, Jesus says—

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Apoc. 22:14).

But all who have borne the name of Israel, either by natural birth or by adoption, during the seven thousand years that precede the final and glorious manifestation of this city of God, will not be allowed to pass through its gates. This is a sad thought, but an evident truth, from the words that close the description of the city (Apoc. 21:27)—

"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

This sober fact is also stressed in the words of the apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatians—

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a NEW CREATURE. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the ISRAEL OF GOD."

Also we read in Romans 9:6-7—

"They are not all Israel, which are of Israel, neither, because they are Abraham's seed, are they all children."

We have become related to Israel by adoption through Christ, as his brethren, or *Christadelphians*, which name was adopted in the time of the end to distinguish the few belonging to spiritual Israel from the so-called "Christian" world, out of which they have been called.

But as the name Christadelphian itself came into broad acceptance to include many groups among whom the Truth of the Gospel was not faithfully adhered to in precept and example, it became necessary to further designate ourselves by the name *Berean Christadelphians*,

The word "Berean" is taken from Acts 17:10, and the mind of the Spirit concerning the believers there at Berea is given in vs. 11-12—

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

"Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few."

Should we feel presumptuous and high-minded because we bear the name of the noble Bereans and call ourselves brothers and sisters of God's own Son? Or because we have endeavoured in these latter days to hold fast to the purity and holiness of the way of life?

If such should be our state of mind, a study of the words Jesus applies to his brethren (Christadelphians) and also the words that are applied by the Spirit concerning the Bereans should humble us, as we apply them to ourselves. *Do we measure up to them?* Jesus said—

"Whosoever shall **do the will of my Father** which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

And of the Bereans it is said that they—

"Received the Word with all readiness of mind, and **searched the Scriptures daily.**"

The fact that we bear such a name will mean nothing to us in the day of Israel's glory *unless our lives are conformed to these high standards.* —E.B.

"HE THAT COVERETH HIS SINS SHALL NOT PROSPER"

There must be no concealment; there must be no pretence of faultlessness. There must be admission of fault; yea, a humble, contrite, BROKEN-HEARTED recognition of our unworthiness.

And more than this—there must be AMENDMENT—a ceasing to do evil, a learning to do well (Isa. 1:16). We must not be always confessing and never forsaking our sins. There must be a GROWTH IN HOLINESS —and increase of stature in Christ—a growing in the knowledge of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. The sins of the RIGHTEOUS will be forgiven, but—

"If the **righteous** scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"
(1 Peter 4:18).

—**Bro. Roberts**

Signs of the Times

ALTHOUGH IT might be considered a rather trite saying, yet, as we view the world situation as a whole, we are inclined to refer to it as "A Look Around a Troubled World." The prophet Daniel refers to the time of the end as a—

"Time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."

Are we not witnessing the beginnings of that time of trouble? The news of the World is a chronicle of the world's troubles, tensions and fears. Newscasters and commentators, by newspapers, radio and television, refer to the subject of their broadcasts as a recital of "what is taking place in this troubled world." "Front page" news is devoted almost exclusively to stories of war, political trouble, revolution, crime and world tensions generally.

And **there is not a sign on the world horizon to give any indication of a change for the better.** A prominent minister, a few days before the world's celebration of Christmas, said—

“Talk of happiness, rejoicing and good will at this Christmas time is a mockery, when, throughout the world, everything Jesus Christ stood for is derided and violated.”

A few brave souls cry out against complacency and the desire not to be disturbed, but, for the most part, their warnings fall on deafened ears.

So common have world troubles become, the public has been inured to the constant, repetitious reports of world crises to the extent that this is being accepted with resignation by the many as the natural course of things which will eventually work itself out, as they pursue their "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage," absorbed in "surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life," heedless of the gathering storm which will soon burst with cyclonic fury on a wishful-thinking world, who will cry, "Peace and safety!" as destruction comes upon them.

There is danger even that those who have had the privilege of understanding the meaning and the purpose of things, that we, too, might be lulled to sleep by the long-continued waiting for the consummation. The Lord Jesus warns us of that danger when he says—

"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time **your** hearts be overcharged," etc. (Luke 21: 34-36).

Let us not forget that the antediluvians were not oblivious to the coming of the Flood because they lacked warning, neither were the inhabitants of Judea unaware of the coming of the Chaldeans for any lack of testimony by the prophets, but in both instances they were caught unprepared when calamity descended upon them solely because they were **more concerned with the petty affairs of this life** than the sign of impending divine judgment.

A Look Around

AS WE view the world situation in relation to the Signs of the Times, let us not, as the world is inclined to do, merely concern ourselves with the surface of things, but look deeper into the **meaning of it all** in relation to divine prophecy concerning the time of the end.

Let us note that the Lord Jesus Christ, (Luke 21:24-26) stresses a peculiar state of affairs on earth just prior to his coming as unmistakable evidence of his immediate appearance.

It was the return of the Jews to Palestine, coupled with general strife, unrest, revolution, perplexity and fear among the Gentile nations—a prelude to their disintegration and final destruction.

The wise of this world, the optimists and the wishful-thinkers try to believe that there is "nothing unusual" in the world situation; that it is merely a trend of the times, growing pains of a world revolution which will eventually bring about justice and equity to all through the benefits of science and good government.

Wishful dreamers they are, who reckon not with the perversities of sinful humankind and know not, and care not what the prophets of God have spoken. Only a few, the more sober, thinking leaders, can see the awful implications of the present state of affairs on earth, and that nothing like it has ever occurred in all human history; a time when all the world is bent on destroying each other, and have the means of doing so.

Intense International Rivalry

DURING THE past few weeks there has been much discussion about arms reduction, control of nuclear weapons and the testing of the same, agreements about surprise attack, etc., all of which has resulted in nothing more than double-talk, propaganda schemes and political manoeuvring.

Meanwhile the missiles race goes on unabated with ever-increasing power, size and volume. Russia claims to have fired a ballistic missile 8700 miles, and also announced the successful flight of an atomic-powered airplane.

The U.S. counters with a guided missile of more than 6000 miles distance, and having surpassed Russia in the satellite race by sending up a 4½-ton missile into orbit with numerous devices for testing various things in connection with space exploration, and the feasibility of using satellites as a means of communications in military operations, weather predictions and world-wide radio and television broadcasts.

While there is much talk about using space satellites for peaceful purposes, there is not a shadow of doubt that the chief purpose of these space ventures is to impress the world with their scientific ingenuity and advancement, and, most of all, exploring the possibilities of using the satellites for military purposes, even to the extent of bombing the earth from the stratosphere.

Russia and the U.S. are vying with each other in the construction of nuclear submarines and underwater exploration. Subs which can project guided missiles from beneath the surface of the water give promise of revolutionizing naval warfare and making coastal cities of the entire world vulnerable from attack from a distance of at least 200 miles offshore. One fear which grips many people is the possibility that many secret and more terrible weapons than any yet revealed are in the making.

Berlin Crisis

Berlin, which, since the fall of Germany, has been occupied jointly by Russia and East Germany, and Britain, France and the U.S., is like an island inside Communist Germany, with only narrow corridors connecting the Western portion of the city with West Germany. Now East Germany, backed by Russia, threatens to close these avenues of entrance to Berlin from the West, in violation of an agreement made at the close of the war. The Western powers and West Germany threaten to fight rather than permit this to be done. A test of cold-war nerves is at hand, while the world waits, apprehensively, the outcome.

Tension in the Midwest and Africa

A Communist-inspired riot in Iraq over the visit of U.S. Asst. Sec. of State Wm. Rountree indicates the anti-Western feeling existing there, and the disunity of the government, in which pro-Communist forces appear to be gaining strength.

Israel and Syria exchange artillery fire, with casualties, and Israeli aircraft shoot down an Egyptian plane over the Negev, claiming Egypt violated their airspace. Withdrawal of British and American troops has increased fears that Nasser is about to begin anew his efforts to win over other Arab nations to the U.A.R. and stir up enmity against Israel.

Dr. Nahum Goldman, Pres. of the World Zionist Organization, said recently in an address to the Zionist Council—

"The Middle East is as unstable and explosive as ever, pregnant with threats and dangers to Israel's future."

He said that it would be necessary for the Zionist movement to "mobilize world Jewry in support of Israel."

A bloodless revolution in Sudan, engineered by the army, leads to much speculation as to whether the new government will lean toward or away from Nasser's policies. In view of the fact that most of the water which Nasser hopes to impound with his Aswan Dam project comes from Sudan's

highlands, it would appear that they have a strong bargaining point with the Egyptian dictator. Nevertheless, Sudan is a worry to the Western world. For, if Nasser gets control of Sudan, through any means, which is doubtless his purpose, it will open up the very heart of Africa to Red agitation.

Africa, once the dark and little-known continent, given over to Colonialism, ruled and exploited by foreigners, is bursting at the seams over Nationalism and determined that Colonialism shall be abolished from the continent.

Its 220 millions, 90% illiterate, are another worry for the Democracies. For it is evident that these people, who have never before experienced self-government, are incapable of successfully conducting democratic government, and **dictatorship is the inevitable result of any attempt to govern themselves**. It is a perfect setting for Communist infiltration and another example of the sea and the waves roaring.

Unrest in Western Hemisphere

Though usually overshadowed by Old World tensions and disturbances, yet the Western World is no exception to the general trend in this time of trouble. The CUBAN revolution, which has dragged on for 2 years, is worsening by the day, and it now appears likely that the island will soon be rocked by a general revolution.

ARGENTINA is on the verge of bankruptcy, and revolutionary forces, some demanding Peron's return, are growing stronger and more vocal in their criticism of the government.

Unrest in VENEZUELA and several other Latin-American countries is evident. In most of these countries, claims of "democracy" are a mockery, where dictators rule by force and not by the will of the people, while the Roman Catholic Church keeps the people in superstitious fear.

In the U.S.A. the **race segregation issue** appears to be getting no nearer a solution, but rather grows worse, as age-old prejudices and antipathies refuse to yield to laws seeking to abolish customs that have existed for many generations.

The **rapid increase in crime** in the United States is alarming the public and baffling law enforcement agencies. A recent report by the FBI shows an increase in major crimes for the year 1958 of at least 15%, and in some instances as much as 30%. Surely the earth is "filled with violence" as in the days of Noah, as human life and property is imperilled by a growing crime wave for which there seems no remedy, and this violence is rapidly increasing, even in countries supposed to be examples of good government, law and order.

General Breakdown of Peace Moves

WHILE RUSSIA makes peace proposals, she, at the same time, is conducting a "cold war" offensive on 3 fronts —political, economic and diplomatic—seeking to stir up trouble over Berlin, and **joining forces with every move, in any country, favourable to disorder and to Communism.**

On the ECONOMIC front, Russia threatens to ruin Western markets by such an increase in production as to swamp world markets with cheaper goods. On the DIPLOMATIC front Russia at Geneva or in the U.N. blocks every move which might bring about some degree of arms reduction, nuclear control, or any other movement toward the settlement of international disagreements.

But it should be kept in mind that Russia is not alone in this grim game of making friends for themselves and enemies for the other party by every scheme and intrigue known to international diplomacy.

The conference at Geneva over arms reduction, "surprise attacks," and nuclear weapons regulation, has completely broken down, and observers give no hope of anything at all being accomplished along these lines.

On the heels of the breakdown in the Geneva conference, the foreign ministers of the 15 NATO nations issued a communiqué in which they affirmed their determination "to use nuclear retaliatory forces to repel aggression."

The recent session of the United Nations is described as a complete failure so far as accomplishing anything of a constructive nature is concerned. The feeling of dissatisfaction has been so general that many foreign ministers returned home in disgust even before the sessions closed. Obviously the lack of action in the U.N. stems from the fact that the World is hopelessly divided and the U.N., like Geneva, is used chiefly as a sounding board for propagandists who have no intention of agreeing to anything except that which favours in a decisive way, their own particular interests.

Surely "evil goes forth from nation to nation" and the powers of heaven are being shaken as conditions like the days of Noah envelop the whole earth. "Take heed to yourselves" was never more necessary to the disciples of Christ than in this time of peril, uncertainty and fear. —O.B.

Ecclesial News

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

We have been encouraged and strengthened by the pleasure of having several visitors from other ecclesias during the summer. Sis. Hunter of the London ecclesia visited us and attended the memorial on May 18. In July, bro. & sis. Gibson spent about two weeks with us. The company and association with them during that time leaves fond memories that will remain with us for a long time to come. There is no company or association like being with those of like Faith in the Truth. We look forward in anticipation of that endless joy and companionship with those we love in the Truth if by any possible chance we may obtain mercy and favor at the judgment seat.

On Sunday afternoon, Aug. 3, bro. Gibson lectured for us on the subject "Paradise Regained." On Aug. 10 he gave us the word of exhortation around the emblems.

We have had occasional visits by brethren and sisters of the Worcester ecclesia. Brethren Waid, Will Davey, Elliott, Stanhope and Hanna have exhorted and lectured from time to time.

Now that the joint Fraternal held at Worcester, Mass., is passed, we wish to express our appreciation for all the effort and labor of love put forward on that occasion.

The subject of "Overcoming in the World, in the Ecclesia, and in Ourselves," was deeply impressed upon us by brethren E. W. Banta of Houston, Texas, Fred Higham of Detroit and Victor Gilbert of Buffalo. Brother Gibson was the Presiding brother for the day and his introductory remarks were very timely on our position as it stands today.

Bro. Kling Sr. of Buffalo exhorted at the memorial Sunday morning, and bro. Dan Gwalchmai lectured in the afternoon on: "The Eastern Question," bro. Mammone of N. J. presiding.

On Nov. 9 sis. Irene Baines of Montreal met with us around the emblems while on a week-end trip.

It is always a pleasure to welcome any and all in our fellowship who may be travelling this way. —bro. Edgar A. Sargent

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

We held our Sunday School outing at Springbank Park on June 7. It proved to be a delightful gathering of the brethren and sisters and Sunday School Scholars.

We held a special lecture on Sunday, Nov. 9, bro. Clifford Cope of Hamilton being the speaker.

We have been exhorted by brethren F. Higham, G. V. Growcott (Detroit); V. Gilbert (Buffalo) and Cope (Hamilton). These ministrations have strengthened and comforted us.

We have had the pleasure of the company and fellowship of bro. & sis. F. Higham, bre. Ellis Higham, Growcott and Fabris (Detroit); sisters Anderson and Donner, and bro. & sis. Gilbert (Buffalo); sis. Crone (Toronto); and sis. Cope Sr. (Hamilton).

We enjoy the company of our visiting brethren and sisters.

—bro. W. D. Gwalchmai

THE SHALLOWNESS OF THE WORLD'S "WISDOM"

When we compare the wisdom embodied in the Proverbs with the "morals" of Gentile philosophy, of whatever school, we discover a great contrast and a further evidence of divinity. The difference is this—the one has GOD in it, the other has not.

Perhaps this needs further explanation. The explanation is simple. If you study the moral maxims of the schools, you will find they are recommended and inculcated for their own sakes, just as the bath and exercise in the open air are recommended for health.

The idea of God may be recognized in the abstract, but not as the MOVING SPRING of philosophic morality. The practice of virtue "for its own sake," and "virtue its own reward" express this view.

In this view, the mental eye is turned on our own mechanism or the mechanism of the universe, and not on the power and wisdom in which that universe had its origin. This is cold and unsatisfying for many reasons.

Bible wisdom is a complete contrast to this. GOD, not man; the CREATOR, not His work; His REVEALED WILL, not human guesses, are constantly pressed upon our notice. At every turn and corner, GOD was kept under Israel's notice. GOD was the pivot of the national existence—the regulating power of individual life.

Moses was himself an exemplification of the right thing in the case. He was no speculating philosopher or babbler about abstractions; he was a robust, strong-minded RECEIVER OF FACTS. And the fact of facts pressed home upon his notice His power, His will, and His REQUIREMENTS.

—Bro. Roberts

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