

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

An Evil Heart of Unbelief

"For this cause many are weak and sickly, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged"—1 Cor. 11:30-31

IN HIS second letter to Timothy, Paul warned him that "In the last days perilous, or trying, times should come." That we are living in the days of which Paul speaks, is beyond all doubt. These are days of tolerance—a time that is more trying, and more difficult to combat than days of persecution. It is that very tolerance, by which we are surrounded, that causes so many pitfalls to be found in our paths.

We are encircled on every side by the attractions of the world, and by various degrading habits of the people. These are constantly before us and, if we are not on the alert, we become captives of certain evils and vanities that are not becoming to saints and, if practised by us, would draw us away from the narrow path that leads to life.

If anything interferes with our walk in the Truth, and leaves us with little time for the application of the mind to divine things, then we are on the wrong path and, before we become aware of it, we will find ourselves "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." On the other hand, if the habits we generate are of the type that Jesus would approve, then we have nothing to fear.

John says that the man who holds the hope of seeing—and being like—Christ, "purifieth himself *even as Christ is pure.*" Such a man begotten by the Truth, and changed by the Truth, will love the Truth and all things connected with it. Men and women of that type cannot live as the world lives. Their love of God, and His Truth, will make them stand apart from a system so alien to all they love, admire and hope for. Therefore, let us show by our way of living, that we are not only separated from the world in matters of doctrine, but in our habits as well.

We do not speak thus because we have adopted an "holier than thou" attitude towards all others, but because of our sincere anxiety for the eternal welfare of our people. Let us then arouse ourselves to great watchfulness, that we may awake to the duty laid upon us by our acceptance of the Gospel, that scriptural comprehension of the Truth which develops a faith that works by love, and purifies the heart in the obedience it commands.

* * *

BUT THE pleasures of this life, and the habits of the people are not the only dangers that we have to face. One of the greatest and most insidious enemies of the believer is that set forth by Paul in Heb. 3:12-13—

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you **an evil heart of unbelief**, in departing from the living God.

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

An evil heart of unbelief is a natural part of our physical constitution. Here, in this chapter, the apostle presents a notable example in Israel's failures during the exodus. They had witnessed the plagues that humbled Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and experienced the miraculous deliverance at the Red Sea, and had their bodies sustained by the God-given manna; but all *these things did not permeate their understanding.* They murmured against Moses and Aaron; they provoked the Lord in Horeb, and hardened their hearts until there was no remedy—

"To whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Heb. 3:18-19)

Therefore, says the apostle, "Take heed!"—beware, be on your guard, exhort one another daily. If the warning was needful in the first century, when the believers were under the care of the apostles, it is even more so in this age of doubt and unbelief. The accomplishments of man in the fields of science are causing the minds behind the press to glorify man and exalt him far above his due.

Those who are unlearned, or untrained, in scientific matters look upon modern inventions as being marvellous beyond comprehension. These things have become the leading topics of the day, so that wherever we are, we come in daily contact with the various forms of human speculation.

We are in constant danger of being influenced by the pressure of the mind of the flesh by which we are surrounded. But if we can keep our minds centered on God's Word, upon His love and upon all those things that are written for our instruction, we will not become overawed by the things we see and hear, for even at their best we will know that—

"The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.
"For God hath chosen the foolish, things of the world to confound the wise"

(1 Cor. 1:25 & 27).

If we observe carefully the effect of increased knowledge on the part of some, we will find that it takes the form of conceit, and produces a feeling of superiority and overweening pride in one's worldly accomplishments. Having reached that stage, unbelief begins to develop, and this results in cynical doubt, and the victim's love of God and His Word grows cold. Without realizing what is transpiring, he emerges from his trial with "an evil heart of unbelief."

* * *

THERE IS a sharp line drawn between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of man, and it will be found plainly revealed in the Word of God. We must develop within ourselves a tireless determination to give the wisdom of God first place in our lives. The drawing power of the things of the world is far greater than most of us realize, and in order to successfully combat it, we must maintain an unshakeable faith and robust confidence in God. If we do this, we will become alert to the "deceitfulness of sin" and prevent the development of an "evil heart of unbelief" and thereby "make our calling and election sure."
—Editor

The Rainbow Covenant

"And a Rainbow circled about the Throne in appearance like an emerald"—Revelation 4:3

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

THE RAINBOW is referred to in four places in the Scripture, and it is from these only can be deduced the import of the symbol before us. In nature, the rainbow is evolved by the action of showery vapour upon the sun's rays, which, in passing through the aqueous globules, are refracted, and form an arch upon that part of the clouds opposite to the sun, glowing with all the colours of the prismatic, or solar, spectrum.

The rainbow is never seen *except when the sun is shining, and when rain is falling between the spectator and the part of the horizon where the bow is seen.* These facts must not be lost sight of in considering the significancy of the rainbow when used as a symbol. Sun, light, rain, cloud, are elements necessary to the production of the natural bow; so are they also necessary to the evolution of a *symbolical* arch in the heaven pertaining to the throne.

In the absence of the Sun of Righteousness from the heaven, and of the light of life, glory, honor, and power which he will irradiate, the rainbow encircling the throne cannot be seen. Neither can the light irradiating from him, be reflected to the spectator-world from the clouds of immortals

about the throne, until the rain-showers of the heaven shall descend upon the mown grass to fertilize the earth.

These are indispensable conditions to the evolution of the bow, which is the symbol of a clear and blessed sunshine after previous "lightnings, thunders, and voices from the throne," contemporaneously with gently descending rain.

Based upon these principles, I remark that the order of the bow's development is,

1. *The opening of the heaven* by the Stone-Power smiting Nebuchadnezzar's Image upon the feet;

2. *The establishment of the throne in the heaven* by mowing the earth at harvest time (Rev. 14:15); in the storm-period of "the lightnings, thunders, and voices proceeding from the throne" (Rev. 4:5); by which the kingdoms of the world are taken possession of by the saints;

3. *The grass of the earth being thus mown*, its harvest reaped, and its vintage trodden out, the rain of the heaven descends in the blessing of Abraham upon the nations; which, being subdued, are blessed in Abraham and his Seed, or in Jesus and the saints;

4. "As *brightness of morning*, THE RULER rises the Sun of an unclouded dawn, shining forth after rain upon the tender grass of the earth" (2 Sam. 23:3-4). The effect of this shining is that the Rainbow-Throne covenanted to David is beheld through the descending rain, which diffuses the knowledge of its glory to the utmost bounds of the habitable world.

* * *

THE RAINBOW, then, is the token, or symbol of the Covenant. The bow in the natural heavens has been so designated by the Spirit from the days of Noah, after his salvation by water; and *all who have looked upon the phenomenon with minds enlightened by the Truth, from his day to this, have viewed it as the memorial of Yahweh's Covenant.*

The first place in which this Covenant is alluded to is in Gen. 6:18. It does not follow, however, that no covenant existed till the time therein indicated. Yahweh had a covenant which He styled, "My Covenant."

It was on account of this Covenant that the race of Adam was perpetuated in Noah. If he had not found favor with Yahweh because of his faith in the covenanted promises, the race would have been exterminated from the earth. He became "heir of the righteousness which is by faith"; by that faith which is—

"The substance of things being hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

Noah died in this faith "not having received the promises." He has not received them yet; nor will he receive them "*without us*," for all the saints of all the generations are to be perfected together—Heb. 11:7, 13, 39, 40.

Hence, the things Noah believed were the promises of the Covenant with which he had been acquainted several centuries before the Flood. They were the promises made when the lives of the animals were *cut off* in Paradise for Adam's transgression—Gen. 3:15, 21. This covenant was renewed with Noah as its Heir, and afterwards with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. It was the Covenant "for the generations of the hidden period"; and therefore styled *berith olahm*, the "covenant of the hidden period."—Gen. 9:12-16.

Now, the total destruction of the Adamic race in the line of Cain did not shake Noah's faith in the Covenant. He still hoped for the promises it revealed. Seeing this, the Eternal Spirit condescended to communicate with Noah, and to assure him through Angel-Elohim, that no such sweeping destruction by water should again afflict the race. Elohim said:

"I have set My bow in the cloud; and it shall be for the TOKEN OF THE COVENANT between Me and the earth.

"And it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud."

"And I will look upon it, that I may remember the covenant of the hidden period between the Elohim and every living soul of all flesh that is upon the earth."

* * *

IN HIS "visions of the Elohim," Ezekiel beheld the same scene as that presented to John in Patmos, respecting the Rainbow-Throne. He saw the appearance of the Man upon the sapphire throne, which he describes as of the colour of amber flaming from the loins upward, and as fire from thence downwards, and brightness about the whole; which brightness was as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud *in the day of rain*. All of which represented "the glory of Yahweh" (Eze. 1:26-28).

The Man and the throne, and the glory he bears, being *under the bow*, are thereby indicated as the *subject-matter of the Covenant* of which the rainbow is the token, symbol, or sign. This symbol points to a certain day, styled by Ezekiel, the Day of Rain. There can be no bow except in such a day.

"Day of Rain" is a phrase implying the existence of a day in which there is no rain; or, as the saying is "of a dry time." This is truly the character of the time in which we live; and not only so, but of all the time symbolized by "*the court given to the Gentiles*" (Apoc. 11:2), a time during which they are treading the Holy City under foot; concurrently with which also the Two Witnesses are prophesying, and the rain, consequently, cannot descend; for—

"They have power to shut the heaven, that it RAIN NOT in the day of their prophecy" (Apoc. 11:6).

As in nature, then so in grace, *no bow can be seen but in a day of rain*. At present every thing is dried up and parched:

"All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of Yahweh bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass; but the Word (preached) of our Elohim shall stand to the hidden period" (Isa. 40:6).

Such being the past, and present, and the future till the lightnings cease to flash, and the thunders to roll forth from the throne, no rainbow can or will be seen. It is now a day of perdition for want of rain. The people are withered, and shrivelled up for want of moisture; for their clergies are "wells without water, dry clouds driven about of winds, withered trees without fruit," (2 Pet. 2:17; Jude 12), from whom no spiritual sustenance can be derived.

"A Day of Rain" is the *opposite* of all this; and that the reader may have some idea of the nature of things when the bow shall be in manifestation about the throne, I invite his attention to the following testimonies—

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the Name of Yahweh; ascribe ye greatness unto Elohim.

"The Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are judgment; an Ail of truth and without iniquity; just and right is He" (Deut. 32:1).

"There is none like the Ail of Yeshurun riding heavens in thy help, and clouds in His majesty.

"Elohim of the east a refuge, and underneath the powers of the hidden period; and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.

"Israel then shall dwell in safety alone; the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall distil dew.

"Happy thou, O Israel; who like unto thee, O people, saved by Yahweh, the Shield of thy help, and Who is the Sword of thy excellency!"

"And thine enemies shall waste away before thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places"
(Deut. 33:26).

From the above we learn that when the Name of Yahweh is being published to the peoples of the heavens and earth, the rain of the heaven is showering and its dew in distillation—a state favouring the appearance of the bow.

Between the opening of the door in the heaven, and the going forth of the lightnings and thunders, and voices from the heavens, there is no rain to cool off the sultriness of the aerial. For when the Ensign is lifted up upon the mountains, and the trumpet is being blown throughout the earth, Yahweh saith—

"I will be still (yet in my dwelling-place I will be without fear) as dry heat impending lightning, as a Cloud of Dew in the heat of harvest" (Isa. 18:3-4).

But when the storm of thunder and lightning has subsided, and which is to result in presenting Israel before their King; and in bringing them to the place of the Name of Yahweh *Tz'vaoth*, the Mount Zion; then—

"As the rain cometh down, and the snows from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth, and bud, that it may give seed to the sower land bread to the eater; so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth.

"It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it.

"For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and ail the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

"Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree; and it shall be to Yahweh for a NAME, for the sign of the HIDDEN PERIOD which shall not be cut off" (Isa. 55:10).

This is the rejoicing of the nations with Israel, all blessed in Abraham and his Seed "in the Day of Rain"—the "third day," when Israel is "raised up" and lives in God's sight—

". . . whose going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto them as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth" (Hosea 6:2-3).

—see also Joel 2:21-29, in which it is foretold that the Spirit shall be rained down upon all flesh to the praise of the Name of YAHWEH ELOHIM in the midst of Israel, dwelling in Zion, His holy mountain—

"THEN shall Jerusalem be holiness, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more."

The symbol of all this blessedness and glory in the Day of Rain is the—

“Rainbow circling about the throne in appearance like to an emerald.”

The light green, the predominant colour, typifying the fertilizing effect of the rain that forms the bow. The grass of the earth has become "tender." The old grass has perished, and emerald fertility obtains on every side, for *the covenanted "Glory of Yahweh" covers the earth as the waters the sea.*

London Fraternal Gathering
(If The Lord Will)
Friday, March 27, at Orange Hall, 388 Clarence
Afternoon Meeting
"BEHOLD I COME QUICKLY"
Reading Isaiah 40

First Address "Israel in the Latter Days"
Second Address "The Gentile Nations in the Latter Days"
Third Address "The Household of Faith in the Latter Days"

DINNER

Evening Meeting

Reading Revelation 21 and 22

"THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND"

Sunday, March 29, at Orange Hall, 388 Clarence

Sunday School — 10:15 a.m.

Memorial Service — 11:30 a.m.

Public Lecture — 7 p.m.

Please notify bro Dan Gwalchmai, 173 Devonshire, London, Ont., Can. if you plan to attend

Christ Our Passover

"God brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus— that great Shepherd of the sheep—through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant"—Heb. 13

By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

WHEN JESUS instituted the memorial supper which we have met this morning to observe, he was surrounded by his disciples in an upper room in Jerusalem, where he had met them by appointment to keep the feast of the Passover. That feast was part of the Mosaic appointments. The meeting was on the basis of the Law of Moses; for Jesus and the disciples were all Jews, born and bred under that Law, which had been in force 1,400 years.

It was the last time they met together on that foundation, but not the last time they will eat the Passover together, for he said (Luke 22:15)—

"With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, **until** it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God."

The feast had been observed in countless previous occasions, and with an ostentation not to be found in that upper room among those quiet thirteen men; but *never had there been such a momentous celebration of it*. The whole Law, of which the Passover was a part, was converging for its finish in the one sorrowful man who was the center of that group—

"Christ our passover, sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7).
—was about to absorb in himself the significance of all that Israel had observed for ages in obedience to the law of Moses, and therefore of the passover which he was now about to eat for the last time as a mortal son of Abraham.

The passover was instituted on the eve of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. It was not merely a *celebration* of deliverance, but a *means* of it, which it is well to bear in mind in judging of its fulfilment in Christ. The angel of Jehovah was about to pass through the land for the purpose of destroying the first-born in every Egyptian house, that the Egyptians might be made to consent to Israel's departure.

But there was a possibility that this destroying visitation might extend to the houses of the Hebrews as well. To avert this possibility—we need not stay to inquire in what way—every family in Israel was required to slay a lamb, sprinkle its blood on the door post, and eat its flesh before the

morning. The destroying angel seeing the sprinkled blood would “*pass over*” the household so protected, for which reason it was called passover, as we know.

Afterwards Israel were to keep the same passover in their generations, in celebration of their deliverance, first from the destroying angel, and next from the Egyptians.

BEFORE THE sacrifice of "Christ our Passover," we have here himself eating the passover with his disciples, in token of the fact that *he was involved with them in all their woes*, from which his own blood, the blood of the anti-typical passover, would deliver them all; for though it harmonizes not with orthodox conceptions of the sacrifice of Christ, it is the truth that the—

"God of peace brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, **through the blood of the everlasting covenant**" (Heb. 13:20).

The passover was a memorial of the deliverance effected in Egypt, and a typical foreshadowing of the deliverance to be effected in Christ. It looked back and it looked forward. In both, Jesus was concerned. As the—

"Son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt. 1:1)

—he was as much interested retrospectively in the Egyptian deliverance as his disciples, who were to be considered as having come out of Egypt in their fathers. As the son of Mary, partaking of their common sin-caused mortality (for death entered into the world by sin—Rom. 5:12), *he stood in as much need as they of that redemption from death*, which he finally attained through the shedding of his own blood, as the antitypical lamb of Jehovah's passover (Heb. 9:12—omit italicized "*for us*", also chap. 5:7).

Where he differed was in the mental state resulting from the fact that God was his Father in the generative sense. He was God's well-beloved Son, in whom God was well pleased, because he abode in His commandments, and did always those things that pleased Him (John 15:10; 8:29).

He also differed in the *Father's abiding presence in the fulness of the Spirit* in the vessel so prepared. He was the Father's human manifestation in the midst of Israel, for the purpose of laying the foundation of human salvation in harmony with the principle of the Father's supremacy which required in the blood-shedding of such as partake of human mortality, the declaration of the Father's righteousness as the basis of the remission of sin unto life eternal to those recognizing and submitting to it. The work was accomplished in his death and resurrection, by which he became—

"The first begotten of the dead" (Rev. 1:5).

—and a Name by investiture with which men may be saved—the only Name given under heaven for this purpose.

* * *

WHEN JESUS observed the passover, the time was at hand for his own offering up by which the significance of the typical feast would be superseded. He, therefore, takes occasion to appoint another institution by which the antitypical accomplishment itself would be kept before the mind of believers "*until he come*." Beautifully enough, he finds the elements of the new type in those of the old, for both had their ultimate significance in the same thing. He took bread from the remains of the passover feast and broke it and said—

"This is my body Which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me."

This saying which must have been enigmatical to the disciples at the time of its utterance, was illustrated on the following day, when Jesus surrendered himself to the cross on which his body was cruelly and publicly impaled, underneath an accusation which was no disgrace, but the utterance of the simple truth—

"THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

This agonizing tragedy, so far as the human aspect of it was concerned, was the *divinely arranged public condemnation of sin in the flesh*—the declaration of the righteousness of God in the offering of the body of Jesus once for all—a body which was at once the condemned nature of Adam and the sinless Son of God, in whose death the righteous law of God had its execution, and in whose resurrection the perfect righteousness of Jesus had its vindication, and by which double event a man was provided through whom came the resurrection of the dead without any nullification of any of the ways of God. All this was involved in the words of Jesus—

"This is my body given for you."

The whole arrangement was "for (or, *on account of*) those who shall be saved," but of course included in its operation Jesus himself, who is the—

"Firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29).

By this accepted offering, all are sanctified who come unto God through him, confessing their sins, humbling themselves in the obedience of baptism, which ceremonially introduces them to the death of Christ.

The same glorious lesson comes out with equal clearness in connection with the cup, which he took after the bread, saying—

"Take this, and divide it among yourselves . . .

"This cup is the **New Testament in my blood**, shed for many for the remission of sins."

If this was a strange saying to the disciples at the time of its utterance, it did not remain so, for it was the topic of conversation after his resurrection. And it is not strange to those in our day who scripturally understand the Truth, for it has been the subject of exposition in the apostolic writings. But put it to the common run of Christians—

"The New Testament (or Covenant) in my blood."

What understanding have they of its meaning? Ask them a plainer question:

What is the new covenant? What are the covenants of promise to which believers are no longer strangers? (Eph. 2:12). What are the promises made unto the fathers which Christ came to confirm? (Rom. 15:8).

To these questions there is no response on the part of the common run of Christians, or on the part of their teachers, the so-called "Rev." gentlemen of all denominations. If the New Covenant itself is not known, how can its relations in the blood of Christ be discerned?

* * *

WE HAVE learnt from the Scriptures what the New Covenant is. Its name, as the *New Covenant*, involves an allusion to the *old* one that was established at Sinai when God, by the hands of Moses, promised to bless Israel in the land to which they were going, on condition of obedience; and Israel, on their part, undertook to submit to whatever was required of them.

This old contract, or agreement, or covenant (ratified by the sprinkling of the blood of sacrificial animals), pronounced a curse on every one who should not observe its obligations in every particular; and these were very numerous and entered into every relation of life. Such a rigid and absolute observance being impossible in the infirmity of human nature, Peter styles it (Acts 15:10)—

"A yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear."

No one rendered the exact obedience it required but Christ. It served its purpose, however. God did not make a mistake in appointing it. It was "a schoolmaster"; it *established the first principles of godliness* in the midst of Israel, namely, that OBEDIENCE TO GOD WAS THE FIRST LAW OF HUMAN WELL-BEING, and that *man was unable to bless himself*.

Still, so far as *practical* results were concerned, it cursed all who had to do with it, since none but Christ was able to comply with its requirements in the perfect manner required.

This old curse-bringing covenant was about to be done away when Christ ate the passover for the last time with his disciples. It was about to be done away in him by his dying under it after having perfectly obeyed it, and rising again from the dead because of his righteousness under it; and in him, thus triumphant over the Old Covenant, the New Covenant was to be established and offered—a covenant, says Paul, "established upon better promises" (Heb. 8:6). These promises he styles—

"Promises made to the fathers" (Rom. 15:8).

What these are we have learnt. They are contained in the writings of Moses and the Prophets. They are promises of future blessedness on earth to Abraham and his seed (Gal. 3:16—a blessedness connected with inheritance of the land of promise, and involving the bestowal of everlasting life.

The New Covenant is based upon these. It is a more beneficial covenant than the old. It is an agreement that if we have faith in what God has accomplished in Christ, and bring ourselves in connection with it in a humble, loving, obedient disposition, our sins will be forgiven, and we ourselves made heirs of the blessedness promised to Abraham and his seed.

* * *

BUT WHY should this covenant be offered *in blood*? Why should Jesus, taking the symbolic cup of wine, say: —

"This is the New Covenant **in my blood**"?

There is a simple meaning to this, which we shall get at by a few questions. In what character is blood brought forward in the Mosaic shadow from which much of the phraseology of the new covenant is derived? Lev. 17:11-14 answers:

"The **life of the flesh** is in the blood; I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul."

Blood then, is sacrificially employed to represent *life*, which it is; for withdraw the blood, and you withdraw the life of any creature. If blood represents life, then the shedding of it represents *death*. To pour out the blood of any thing sacrificed was to cause its death: when a worshipper approached God with the blood of a slain animal (having placed his hand on the head of the animal before it was slain), it was a confession that before God, as a sinner, he had no right to live, seeing that "death is the wages of sin," and that death hath passed upon all men through Adam.

It was in fact a typical declaration of the righteousness of God, with which God was pleased to be approached; but only *typical* because there was no natural connection between the slain animal and the consequences of sin; consequently—

"The blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin."

The type pointed to the purpose of Jehovah to provide a perfect declaration of His righteousness in the shed blood of an *actual wearer of the nature condemned in Adam*, who should be acceptable to Him in all things, and whose resurrection could therefore follow his blood-shedding. This antitypical lamb, as we know, was the Lord Jesus, who though made in all things like unto his

brethren as regards mortality of nature on account of sin, was himself absolutely free from sin in his own character.

Here was the Lamb of God without spot or blemish, and yet a suitable sacrifice in the possession of the very nature which had come under condemnation, because of sin in the beginning. In the shedding of his blood, there was a—

"Declaration of the righteousness of God" (Rom. 3:25).

He was not destined to return to dust; it was therefore necessary that his blood should be spilt and that death should follow, as the ceremonial declaration of Jehovah's righteousness in the *public condemnation of sin in the flesh* (Rom. 8:3)—as a basis for the offer of free pardon to all who should recognize the declaration, and identify themselves with it, and come unto God with confession and faith in the Name of the crucified Jesus, as the one great sacrifice through which alone man can acceptably approach God.

* * *

IN VIEW of all these things it is evident what force there is in the words with which Jesus introduced the memorial cup to the notice of his disciples—

“This is the New Covenant **in my blood**, shed for many for the remission of sins.”

The New Covenant or agreement, which ensures coming blessedness to the fallen sons of Adam, is in the blood of Christ and *nowhere else*. There can be no blessedness without covenant, because, apart from the addition of special covenant on the part of God, Who only has the power to bestow blessedness, we are shut up to what we have by nature, and that is, a poor mortal body that will wear out in due course, and disappear in death.

And there can be no covenant without sacrifice, for so has God willed, and we can no more get past His will in this matter than we can alter the constitution of heaven and earth. And there is no sacrifice but one with which we can approach God for covenant, and that is the one great sacrifice accomplished in Christ.

And there is no way of becoming associated with that sacrifice but by enlightenment in the promises on which the covenant is established, and faith in the blood in which it is offered, and legal contact with that blood in baptism, which is the divinely appointed mode of association with the death of Christ.

The root of the whole matter lies first in the *greatness*, and then in the *goodness* of God. God is a great and dreadful majesty, to whom the earth and all flesh belong, for He has made them out of His own energy. He is not only great, but He is holy, and jealous of His supremacy. He has been disobeyed on earth, and has in consequence given us over to death; and *will not be approached by us except in the manner He has appointed*.

But He is good and He will forgive and bestow everlasting life if we humble ourselves and come to Him in the way appointed. The way appointed is through the shed blood of a perfectly righteous wearer of our nature, in whom sin was condemned on our account. He will forgive us if we come in this way: not because that blood-shedding pacifies Him, or gives Him anything, or pays any debt; for then it would be no forgiveness — but **BECAUSE HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS IS DECLARED**, and His prerogative recognized, and our position acknowledged in the acceptance of the slain lamb of His appointing.

WE ENDORSE and proclaim all these glorious things every time we take this cup into our hand and drink it, and say "Amen" at the giving of thanks for—

"The New Covenant in the blood of Christ shed for the remission of sins."

This breaking of bread signifies our acceptance of God's Way, and is a testimony to the world that they have *no hope outside of this Way*. We find great comfort in this Way ourselves, and we would extend that comfort; but we find many obstacles in the imaginations and high thoughts that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God (2 Cor. 10:5). We have even earned the bitterest odium it is possible for man to bear—the reputation of being illiberal, and uncharitable, and narrow-minded, and bigoted—because we maintain the teaching of Christ and his apostles on this vital matter.

What can we do but accept the result with resignation? It is a result that has always more or less attended the testimony of the Truth. It is no new thing for "the preaching of the cross" to be productive of offence. Paul speaks of it in his letters. He says the preaching of the cross was to the Jews a "stumbling block" and to the Greeks "foolishness." He accepted the reproach incident to such a situation; he refused to glory in anything save the cross of our Lord Jesus.

We are in the best of company when we are in the company of Paul, and we are undoubtedly in his company when we are accused by the modern Greeks (the scientists of every grade) of being behind the age and badly informed, and old fogey and sectarian; and by the Jews, of being worse than the Christians in the rigidness of our insistence on the original teachings of Christ; and by Christians, of being gloomy retrogressionists, the slaves of a dead letter, and strangers to the broad life and charity and the true spirit of the Gospel. To each and all, we can but say—

"We accept Christ because he rose from the dead; and we accept the apostles, because we accept Christ; and we accept the New Testament writings as the standard of truth, because we accept the apostles; and we challenge you all to deny that the conclusions which we maintain are the teachings of these writings.

"It would be pleasant to come on to your broad platform and to join in your "charitable" spirit and to share your freedom from the "narrowness" and restraint that undoubtedly hamper the profession of the Gospel, as originally delivered, as regards the present evil world.

"We should have your pleasant society, and your encouraging recognition, and your advantageous patronage, and your general enjoyment of the broad fields of human culture and pleasure and good fellowship.

"But wherein should we be the gainers in the day when Christ arrives to sweep away the present order of things, and to re-organize affairs in harmony with divine principles only, and to give glorious place in his house to those only who do the will of his Father, as written in His revealed Word of Truth?

"We should have a poor staff to lean on, in a respectable world which will then dissolve in terror before his face.

"No: we have made Christ our portion, and for better or worse, we will accept the isolation and the odium that result, confident that experience shortly to be apparent, will justify an uncompromising adherence to the written Word as the only enlightened policy that can be pursued."

"Let Us Rise Up and Build!"

PART SIX

"The Lord shall suddenly come to His Temple. Who may abide the day of His coming? Who shall stand when He appeareth?"—Mal. 3:1

It would have presented a very beautiful and pleasing final picture if the book of Nehemiah had ended with chapter 12. But there is another chapter—a sad one, and yet it too is glorious. Beginning with v. 6, its events are many years later—

"But in all this time was not I at Jerusalem: for in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes, king of Babylon, came I unto the king, and after certain days obtained I leave of the king."

We remember at the beginning the King set him a time. How long he stayed at Jerusalem the first time we do not know, nor how long this chapter is after he left the city.

We discern another type, which will be more striking and impressive as we consider the events of this chapter—

"The Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch."

What did Nehemiah find when he returned after a long absence spent in the presence of the king?

The scene is a sad one—

"When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find the faith on the earth?"

Nehemiah tells us (v. 7)—

"And I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the House of God."

Here was one of the major causes of the evil condition Nehemiah found on his return—the High Priest, *the spiritual leader*—was unfaithful, and allied to the enemy.

He had brought in the enemy and established him right in the Temple of God.

"And it grieved me sore. Therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber."

The Temple is cleansed. Judgment begins at the House of God. Malachi, who prophesied sometime during this period, declared (3:1-3)—

"The Lord shall suddenly come to His Temple. Who may abide the day of His coming? Who shall stand when He appeareth? . . . He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver."

Nehemiah continues (v. 10)—

"And I perceived that the portion of the Levites had not been given them . . . for the Levites and singers were fled every one to his field."

"*The singers were fled.*" The rejoicing had fallen silent. The praise and worship and thanksgiving had stopped.

V. 11—"Then contended I with the **rulers**, and said, "Why is the House of God forsaken?"

"*Why is the House of God forsaken?*" We remember the solemn covenant they had made before he left them.

V. 13—"And I made treasurers over the treasuries. — Shelemiah (Recompensed of God), Zadok (Righteous), Pedaiah (God has ransomed), Hanon (Merciful)—for they were counted faithful."

A complete change of administration. *Faithful* stewards are given charge over the treasuries—

"Thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things."

V. 15—He found them profaning the sabbath, working for their own advantage, following their fleshly interests.

V. 16—And aliens were coming in, and trading on the sabbath. God had said—

"My House shall be a House of Prayer for all nations."

Israel was chosen to teach the whole world the *blessings of righteousness*. But what kind of teachers were these? How could the alien learn the ways of God when these appointed teachers encouraged them to come and help them *break* God's laws?

So Nehemiah set his servants as guards at the gates, to allow no merchandise to be brought in on the Sabbath. Then the merchants set up their stands *just outside the walls* to entice the people to come out and shop.

They sought to circumvent the law by a technicality—to come as close as they could to getting in. But Nehemiah "chased them FAR AWAY." The principle is clear. Temptation and evil must not be put just outside the wall, where it can continue to tempt. It must be chased *far away* and *out of sight*.

* * *

V. 23—"In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab.

"And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jew's language."

What a sorry state of affairs they had gotten themselves into in Nehemiah's absence! How can children learn the language of the *Truth* when we deliberately choose an instructor for them in the language of the *world*?

Surely this is the *saddest and most evil aspect of alien marriage*—the children grow up misguided and confused—speaking half the Jew's language and half the confused, heathen, worldly tongue of Ashdod—a pitiful mixture so often manifested in families born of alien marriage—far sadder even than no knowledge of the Truth at all.

V. 25—"And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair."

"*There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.*"

"Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this **great evil**, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?"

—the age-old evil that had corrupted all the earth, and brought the flood on the world of the ungodly.

* * *

V. 28—"And one of the Sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son-in-law to Sanballat . . . therefore I **chased him from me** . . ."

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into outer darkness."

How could the high priest countenance the marriage of his grandson to the daughter of Sanballat, the arch-enemy who had laboured so hard by every evil device to destroy Nehemiah and his work for the Lord? *Here is how—*

A new movement was in the air. The old narrow separateness was in disrepute. The past was to be forgotten.

"Was not Sanballat a Samaritan?—of a people who accepted God, accepted the Law of Moses? Nehemiah was an extremist—well meaning indeed, and he did a lot of good work, but he did not have the proper spirit. Fortunately he is gone now, and we can be more charitable. True, Sanballat was an enemy, but are we not commanded to love our enemies?"

Such would be the argument—very persuasive—very appealing to the flesh.

The sad thing is that *such reasoning is prevalent today*—reasoning that misses the whole spirit of Scripture, and subtly endeavours to undermine the walls that faithful Nehemiah laboured to build in troublous times, just as our pioneer brethren have built them up from the rubbish for us.

To illustrate the reality of this danger, I would like to quote a paragraph from a standard Christadelphian publication put out by another group—a paragraph that shocked me very much. The writer is discussing these actions of Nehemiah in ch. 13 which we have just considered. He says—

"One cannot but be thankful that Nehemiah did not live a millennium or so earlier, otherwise he might have contacted Obed and there would then have been no "sweet Psalmist of Israel" nor wise king Solomon, nor good kings Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah, for the Bible would have been deprived of one of its most beautiful characters, Ruth the Moabitess, the ancestress of David from whom those kings sprang."

How could ANYONE claiming to be in the Truth SO misconstrue and misunderstand Scripture—and set Scripture against Scripture—faithful Nehemiah against faithful Ruth!

He is thankful that Nehemiah did not live in the time of Ruth or he might have been able to prevent her marriage to Boaz! See how this line of reasoning undermines the power of the whole book of Nehemiah, and opens the way for the undermining of any other unpalatable portion of Scripture—opens the way for the free course of the thinking of the flesh. *This is today's great danger to the Household.*

Nehemiah laboured amid enemies of every sort, and his true friends—those who stood for the narrow way without compromise—were few.

Today the struggle, and the choice of allegiance, is ours. Let us labor and watch constantly upon our walls, and say to all who would hinder, or compromise, or distract—

"We are doing a great work, we cannot come down to you."

—G.V.G.

Out of Egypt Have I Called My Son

PART 32

THERE IS another matter in connection with the typical *Day of Atonement* at which it will be well to look for a moment. It is contained in the words—

"And ye shall afflict your souls.

"For whatsoever soul it be that is not afflicted in that same day he shall be cut off from among his people.

"It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month, at even, from even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbath."

The form of this affliction was total abstinence from food from sunset on the ninth to sunset on the tenth. It is not difficult to discern the antitype of this affliction in this *antitypical* Day of Atonement in view of what has happened to the remnant of Israel as the result of their denial of "the Holy One and the Just," and asking "a murderer" to be granted unto them; and of having "killed the Prince of life."

The words of Christ addressed to the women that followed him when on his way to Calvary, as recorded in Luke 23: 28-31, descriptive of the terrible punishment that would rest upon his murderers, are still operative and in full force, but there is hope of ultimate favour. The apostle Paul's answer to the question which he himself puts reveals this—

"Have they stumbled that they should fall (for ever)? God forbid: rather through their fall **salvation is come unto the Gentiles** for to provoke them (Israel) to jealousy.

"Now if the **fall** of them be the riches of the world, and the **diminishing** of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their FULNESS?

"If the **casting away** of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the RECEIVING of them be, but life from the dead?

"For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy so are the branches"
(Rom. 11:11-16).

Again he says (Rom. 11:25-26)—

"Blindness in **part** is happened to Israel, **until** the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written—

"There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

The object of the divine favor towards the Gentiles is thus stated by James—

"God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His Name"

(Acts 15:14).

Or in the words of the apostle John (1 John 3:1)—

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

These sons of God, taken from among Israel and the Gentiles, are symbolically represented by the 144,000 Pentecostian firstfruits. Most of them are, at present, sleeping in the dust of the earth; but they will "awake" from their long slumber and come forth to life eternal in the Kingdom promised to them in the Gospel of their salvation.

In these *firstfruits* we may discern the antitypical *princes*, heads of the thousands of Israel (Numb. 10:4), who will have been gathered together in the operation of the sounding of the Gospel trumpet, and the resurrection blast of the last trump (Rev. 14:4; 1 Thess. 6:15-17).

They are therefore, represented, in vision, as being with the Lamb on Mount Zion, prepared to take part in that antitypical operation represented by the "memorial of blowing of trumpets" preparatory and introductory to the sounding of the *trumpet of Jubilee* in the antitypical gathering together of the congregation, or assembly of Israel.

The reader will doubtless have noticed the symmetrical agreement between type and antitype in these prophetic foreshadowings. And, in order to emphasise this, the writer asks pardon for recalling attention to the fact that, as the period styled the "Day of Atonement," in its antitypical bearing upon *individual* salvation, was preceded by the antitypical memorial of blowing of trumpets, in the proclamation of the gospel by John and Jesus, so also will the period styled "*the trumpet of the Jubilee*," in its antitypical national bearing upon the salvation of Israel and the nations, be preceded by the antitypical memorial of blowing of trumpets in the Pentecostian proclamation to issue from Mount Zion, styled "the everlasting Gospel" (Rev. 15:6).

This is precisely in accord with the fact that "*the trumpet of Jubilee*" was to be sounded on the *Day of Atonement*, as will be seen by reference to its appointment (Lev. 25:8). And these two periods, as in the type, *must* also in their antitypical relations *precede that future period styled the "Feast of Tabernacles."*

* * *

WITH REGARD to the *time* to be occupied in the operation of the antitypical sounding of the trumpet of Jubilee, we are not directly informed; but as it is the period which ultimates in the—

"Return of every man (Jew) to his possession (in Israel)."
—we conclude that it is that period apocalyptically styled "*the hour of judgment*;" and, if so, it will extend over a period of *thirty* years.

But as to the joyful period of the antitypical Feast of Tabernacles, which will succeed the "hour of judgment," we have specific information that it will last "a thousand years"; at the close of which the general harvesting of the earth will be accomplished, preparatory to the introduction of that state of perfection and felicity which will characterise the everlasting ages (Zech. 14:16; Rev. 21:1-5).

The antitypical "memorial of blowing of trumpets," then, being an operation in which the saints take part, it becomes us to make it as clear as possible; and in the endeavour to do so we invite careful attention to the vision to which we have already made reference—Rev. 14.

The first five verses of this chapter exhibit to us the *position occupied by Christ and his brethren after the capture of Jerusalem* from, and the destruction of, the invading armies of the "King of the North" (Dan. 11:40-45; Eze: 38 & 39). And being thus enthroned on Mount Zion, their first public act emanating from that center, and the nature thereof, is thus stated—

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying, with a loud voice,
"Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (vs. 6-7).

This proclamation to the world of nations is the antitype of the memorial of blowing of trumpets in its *national* bearing upon that world. It is styled "*the everlasting Gospel*," or aionian good news, because of its relation to the age, or "world to come."

It is an act of grace of which the world is not worthy—a message of peace accompanied with conditions, which will not be accepted (Rev. 19:19; 17:14). In this beneficent act we perceive the goodness of God—it is an offer of mercy, which will afford the opportunity for punishment of the world by reason of its rebellious attitude towards this benign advance.

And we shall not be wrong in saying that the Gentiles have been even more guilty before God, in their day of grace and salvation, than were Israel under the Law; for they have wickedly persecuted, tormented, and slain the servants of God, and corrupted, and destroyed His holy Truth, and trampled under foot, and desolated His city, land, and people.

What length of time will be afforded the nations for an answer is not stated; but their attitude on receiving the message will determine this. That attitude has been revealed, and we have called attention to it in the references given above.

The "hour of Judgment" will now have fully arrived, and with it the period of the sounding of the *trumpet of Jubilee*, the *first* note of which we hear in the "voice" which John heard from heaven (Mount Zion), saying—

"Come out of her (Rome), my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4).

That the *Jewish* population resident in the *doomed city* are thus addressed is evident from the fact that God will, at the time of the invitation, have no *other* people there. *Both* the dead and living residents amenable to the judgment seat of Christ having been previously taken therefrom.

The identification of this "voice" with the *angel* which announces the fall of Babylon, saying,

"Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (Rev. 14:8).

—establishes the *initiation* of the period of the blowing of "the great trumpet," to which the prophet Isaiah calls attention, saying—

"And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river (Euphrates) unto the stream of Egypt (the Nile), and ye shall be gathered one by one (or, as in the R.V., 'one to another'), O ye children of Israel.

"And it shall come to pass **in that day** that **the great trumpet** shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount of Jerusalem" (Isa. 27:12-13).

The twelfth verse of this chapter describes the *exact situation*, at this juncture of Israelitish affairs, consequent upon the destruction of the Gogian hosts upon the mountains of Israel, the taking possession of the city of Jerusalem, and the subjugation of the entire south from the Mediterranean to Persian Gulf.

This is, therefore, one of the divine clues given to us for the *location of the Jubilee trumpet era* and its events; the great trumpet of v. 13 being that of the Jubilee.

There are other ensigns of this period, but these must suffice for want of space, and as we do not purpose in this article to do more than attempt the identification of the Mosaic shadows to which we are calling attention, and their relation to that *second*, and final, exodus when—

"The Lord shall set His hand again the **second** time to recover the remnant of **His people**, which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea" (Isa. 11:11).

The *hour of judgment* is—

"The day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion"
(Isa. 34:8).

We are introduced to it by the invitation, or call to Israel, to leave Rome before its destruction, which will follow closely upon that call; and which, if unheeded, will result in their participation in the plagues to which that city, as the seat of the Beast, will be subjected.

We may just add here that the angels of vs. 6 & 8 of Rev. 14 are identical; and—with the angel of v. 9—represent the holy community of the symbolic 144,000 in the various phases of their mission in the destruction of the Fourth Beast, and the binding of the Dragon, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

In the combined operations of these three angels the war of the great day of God Almighty will be carried on; the winepress of God's wrath trodden; the kingdoms of this world became the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ; all nations blessed in Abraham and his seed; and the Feast of Tabernacles inaugurated, as depicted in the gorgeous vision of the "sea of glass," or glassy sea of nations, when the victors of the whole earth shall stand upon it, having the harps of God, and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, saying—

"Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name? For Thou art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest"
(Rev. 15:2-4; Zech. 14:16).

* * *

This concludes a series of articles that has been running for 4 years— since March, 1955— first as "The Tabernacle in the Wilderness" (the 40 year wandering), then as "Out of Egypt." This latter series has now reached the point at which the former began.

This period of Israel's history and God's operations through them, is marvellous, beautiful, and teeming with prophetic types and spiritual lessons. Here is the wisdom and love of God, openly supervising and shaping human affairs in personal, social, national and international affairs, all in the light of the Eternal Covenant and Purpose.

How fitting that it should conclude with the great Jubilee Trumpet of liberty, peace and righteousness soon to be gloriously and anti-typically sounded through the evil and darkness of this present troubled generation. May we have the wisdom to realize—and live from moment to moment in harmony with the realization—that all else in the world but this is meaningless and vain. We hope these articles have contributed to this end, helping to lift our minds from the emptiness of temporal, fleshly things to the fulness and beauty of spiritual things.

Shechem

"The bones of Joseph buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem, and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph"—Josh. 24:32

PART TWO

AS THE curtain goes down upon Jacob's descendants in Egypt we move on some 350 years to the days when Moses delivers his final exhortation and commandment to Israel in the plains of Moab.

Though not permitted to enter the land of Promise, the Spirit takes his thoughts to the northwest and causes him to make reference to Shechem in the purpose of the Lord.

The record is contained in Deut. 11:29-30 and also in Deut. 27. From these two chapters we obtain further information and description of the locality of Shechem. Moses had been instructing Israel of the blessings which would come upon them if they were obedient unto the Lord, and the curses which would be attendant upon disobedience—

"Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse—a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God—and a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God" (Deut. 11:26-27).

And Moses, instructing Joshua at the same time, made reference to where the blessing and curse were to be enacted, in what appears on the surface as a peculiar observance: but *only so until we seek fully its meaning and significance*—

"Thou shalt put the blessing upon Mount Gerizim and the curse upon Mount Ebal. Are they not on the other side Jordan, by the way where the sun goeth down, in the land, of the Canaanites, which dwell in the champaign over against Gilgal, beside the plains of Moreh."

These two mountains, *Gerizim* and *Ebal*, rise to the north and south of Shechem (the city nestling between the two heights) which rose about 3,000 feet above the Mediterranean Sea. We notice that Moses links these two mountains with the plain of Moreh—the oaks of *Moreh*—"Strong Teacher."

More force is added to the basic thought of the Instructor being the Father in the declaration or reading of the whole Law before the people at this place. This took place as we find in Joshua 8, before Israel had completely subdued or possessed the land. They were wanderers about the land, occupied in overcoming the nations of iniquity.

Before they could enter into the possession, there had to be this conquest of sin and a positive declaration of acceptance of the will of God after having it clearly pronounced.

The exactitude with which Moses' words were carried out is shown by what we read in Joshua 8:34-35—

"He read all the words of the Law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law.

"There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, **and the little ones**, and the strangers that were conversant among them."

With the reciting of each phrase of the Law the whole congregation declared their acceptance by a loud "AMEN."

Do we not see in these incidents our own calling and election in God's purpose? First the recognition of the necessity of overcoming sin in ourselves, the full acquaintance with the Law of God, the public declaration of acceptance of all its requirements. The final expression of Joshua shows the linking of Gentiles with Jews in what is foreshadowed:

"The **strangers** that were conversant (or walking with or) among them" (v. 35).

The thought behind the word *stranger* is "a foreigner or alien." Paul writing to the Ephesians about their (and our) natural condition, states—

"Remember, that ye being in time past, Gentiles in the flesh . . . without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

"But now in Christ Jesus, ye, who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:11-13).

It is through the blood of Christ that all are made nigh the covenants of promise to Abraham, whether Jews or Gentiles. For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, but inwardly of the heart. (Rom. 2:29).

* * *

TURNING AGAIN to Moses' description in Deut. 11, we find that these two mountains, Gerizim and Ebal, were over in the plain or champaign toward *Gilgal*. (This is another place of the same name as that near Jericho, where the Israelites of the wilderness were circumcised.)

The name *Gilgal* means "rolling"—the rolling away of the reproach of Egypt, the removal of the ways of darkness, a preparation for the possession of the land of Promise. It is therefore instructive and interesting to find the same thought conveyed in these significant events at Shechem, near Gilgal.

Mountains in Scripture are indicative of *nations and kingdoms*. This is illustrated by Isaiah 2:12-14—

"For the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty . . .

"And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up."

Dr. Thomas, referring to the possessing of the mountains or nations of the earth by the saints (Eur. 1, pgs. 63-64), says:

"The meeting the Lord in the air, as Paul expresses it, is in the style of Daniel, the Saints possessing the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven; which they cannot do until immortalized, or flesh and blood be changed to spirit. Neither will this dominion be possessed till it is conquered; for it is a great mountain, that has to be reduced in Zerubbabel's presence to a plain."

* * *

The names of the two mountains themselves combine in impressing the lesson of Salvation and hope on the Divine basis. The name *Ebal*, means to "be bald or bare," while *Gerizim* means, "to be cut off." Applying these meanings in one sense, we have a picture of the Jews and Gentiles associated or called together into a meeting with Christ, the teacher sent from God. The Jews are the nation cut-off, while the Gentiles are shown in the unproductive sense.

But Paul shows the true branches, the nation of Israel, being cut off, and the unproductive wild branches being grafted into the true stock (Rom. 11:16-21), only to remain there if they changed to the nature of the true stock itself.

In another sense the name Gerizim applies to the Saviour and secondarily to the saints who follow in his steps. The word Gerizim comes from the Hebrew *Garaz*—to cut off. Christ pre-eminently in Scripture is the one spoken of as being cut off; the cutting off being the means of Jewish and Gentile salvation. It is primarily as a remembrance of this feature of the purpose of God that we meet week by week to partake of the memorials of bread and wine. Isaiah speaking of the sacrifice of Christ said (53:8)—

"He (Christ) was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken."

The same applies to the servants of God. They in degree must undergo the cutting off of the flesh, a life of service, wholly dedicated unto the Lord. This will bring trial and testing, a cutting off by the world, as the world in turn is cut off or shunned by the saints—

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world” (I John 2:15).

Mount Ebal also has application to the Law of Moses in its failure to bring life and salvation. The Law in itself was not bad, but holy, but it failed to bring life everlasting because of the weakness or inability of human nature to keep it in every respect. Paul said, writing to the Galatians (3:21-24)—

“Is the Law against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law . . .

“Wherefore the Law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we might be justified by the faith.”

10— It was not to be by the works of the flesh. And as if to drive home the point Paul stated, ver.

“For as many as are of (the works of the Law are under the curse: for it is written,

“Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them.”

Paul was here quoting directly from Deut. 27, where the record of Moses speaks of the transactions of Shechem. It was upon Ebal that all the *curses* were to be pronounced.

Conversely we find that the *blessings* were to be pronounced upon Mount Gerizim. This links this mount with the covenants of Promise, the Abrahamic Covenant. The effect of this covenant is to bless and not to curse, even to bring blessedness to all the world (Gen. 22:18)—

“In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.”

But the cutting off aspect has been difficult for all to receive (John 12:32-34)—

“If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me. This Jesus said, signifying what death he should die.

“The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, The Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this son of man?”

The blessings upon Mount Gerizim are only accomplished by the cutting off; those faithful under the Law can only be saved or have the curse removed by the sacrifice of Christ, they remove from the Ebal side of the valley to the Gerizim side. Those also of Gentile origin can also only cross the valley of death to the blessings of the covenant by association with the cutting off of the Saviour, by undergoing death in baptism, a crucifying of the works of the flesh—

“For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ (his death, his cutting off) have put on Christ.

“And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise”
(Gal. 3:27-29).

In this process we move from the side of Mount Ebal, the mount of the curses. We take our station upon the side of Mount Gerizim, the mount of blessings.

Those who stand approved in the presence of the Son of Man will pass from the side of Ebal to the side of Gerizim. They will be born of the Spirit, the flesh will be cut off, they will become physically equal unto the angels, passing from cursed Adamic nature into the blessed angelic existence:

“When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

“O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"
(I Cor. 15:54-57).

— E.F.H.

**"THOU WILT SAY UNTO ME, WHY DOTHE HE YET
FIND FAULT, FOR WHO HATH RESISTED HIS WILL?"**

Thus incisively does Paul state the final challenge of the objector. It appears unanswerable, like many other sallies of sophistry. It fails through not recognizing that the working out of God's purposes with persons leaves room for the exercise of human will as well, and that **IN THE MARGIN OF INDIVIDUAL VOLITION, IT IS NOT UNREASONABLE THAT GOD SHOULD DISTRIBUTE PRAISE OR BLAME AS THE CASE MAY CALL FOR.** — **Bro. Roberts**

The Light Shineth in Darkness

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven"—Matt. 5:16

IT IS in our study of the Scriptures that we are brought into the True Light wherein is no darkness at all. In John 9:4 we read of a conversation of Jesus with his disciples—

"I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work."

Then in v. 5 he tells his disciples—

"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Now there was coming a time, even in the life of Jesus, as in the life of all mankind, when night would set in and he, as other men, would sleep the sleep of death in which there is "*no work, nor device, nor knowledge*" (Eccl. 9:10). So he worked, as we should, while there is opportunity.

It was in his personal touch and appeal, as he faithfully did his Father's business, which he came to do, that he was the light of the world. He, said John (1:9)—

". . . was that True Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

But Jesus is *still* the "light of the world"; for it is written—

"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is **none other Name under heaven** given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Light is the opposite of darkness, whether we speak of things natural, secular, or spiritual. Darkness is the hold and covering of all that is evil, as the light is the symbol and habitation of that which is pure and true and good—

"Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil."

How great is this darkness!

The True Light gives us to understand the Gospel message of God to a perishing world; it brings us within the paths of righteousness, and the hope of eternal life, and helps us realize more and more the import of Jesus' word—

"I am the light of the world"

With this light in our hearts, it can be said truly—

"Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be!" (John 3:2).

How empty and hopeless is man's life in the absence of this light of life of which Jesus is the embodiment: "*Vain his ambition, noise and show.*" When Jesus said—

"I am the light of the world."
—let it be understood that the light is only for those who avail themselves of it—

"As many as **received him**, to THEM gave he power to become the sons of God."

Most men of that day preferred to remain in darkness—

"Because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

It is not in the spirit of boastfulness that we say we have chosen to come to the light as the opportunity was given us.

How we should appreciate that opportunity! It is not that we loved God, but that *He* first loved us, and provided this means for us to become His sons and daughters—children of light—

"And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, **IF SO BE WE SUFFER WITH HIM**, that we may be also glorified together."

In Isa. 42:6, we read—

"I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a Light to the Gentiles."

And the purpose in this is to—

"Open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness, out of the prison house."

While Simeon held the babe Jesus in his arms, he spake through the Holy Spirit of his work as—

"A Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

The words: "*I am the light of the world*," come into full focus as we read the words spoken to John in Patmos—

"I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold **I am alive for evermore**, and have the keys of hell and death."

Jesus had said (John 9:5)—

"As long as I am in the world. I am the light of the world."

He further says in John 3:17—

"For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

And then in vs. 18 and 19 the apostle reminds us that believers in Jesus are not condemned, although condemnation is sure in the case of unbelievers; for Paul says—

"Death hath passed upon all men" (Rom. 5:12).

And yet condemnation comes in a more personal sense when the light is rejected—

"And this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.

"Everyone that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

"But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (John 3:19-21).

Yet how wonderful and true do the words of Jesus ring out in his confirmation of the hope of salvation—

"I am the Light of the world! He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

"Again a new commandment I write unto you which thing is true in him and in you, because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth" (1 John 2:8).

In the past Jesus rose as a great light; in the future he will arise as the Sun of Righteousness whose presence will *flood the earth with glory unspeakable*. As natural light brings us health and happiness now, so spiritual light in the hands of Jesus will eventually bring to all the world eternal life, and joy inconceivable.

We are struck by the recurring frequency of John's use of the words "life and light" together, as in 1:4—

"In it was life, and the life was the light of men."

These words are quite familiar to most of us, yet how sadly they are misunderstood and applied in the doctrines of Christendom! Here we have John's definition of "life"—

"In it—the Word—the Logos—was life, and the life was the light of men."
—that is, this "life" is an illuminating radiance termed "light" which comes from reading or hearing the Word.

It is indeed the instrumentality by which all true disciples are begotten and enter into union with God and Christ—

"He came unto his own and his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he **power to become the sons of God**, even to them that believe on his Name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

James says (James 1:18)—

"Of His own will begat He us, with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures."

It is in proportion as one grasps, studies and obeys this Word of God, that this *life*, which is *light*, that is centered in Christ (the Light of the world), will be his.

In the Greek the two words "*zoe*" and "*psuche*" are used for life, each having its own significance. The animal life, sustained by blood, is the *psuche*, while *zoe* refers to life in the abstract and is used for that life to be sustained by the spirit or mind of God, and pertains to that life which comes from the Light of the Word.

Jesus declared (John 6:63)—

"It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The **words that I speak unto you**, they are spirit and they are life."

And to the same audience Jesus said—

"Verily I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."

The true meaning of the Master's words here are that *if Christ's doctrines and teachings are not truly and sincerely our meat and drink, then we have no life in us*. We have the natural animal life (psuche), but Christ speaks here of that higher life (*zoe*).
—W.J.P.

The Body Is One

The ecclesia means more to the true brother or sister of Christ than anything else in the world. Nothing that happens to us in our lives concerns us so much or affects us so deeply as do the things connected with our ecclesial life.

A flood comes and many people are swept away—or an earthquake shakes the earth so that buildings crumble to the ground—presidents and kings rise to great power and fall again; but none of these things that make the headlines in the news are as important to us, who are the parts of Christ's body, as the *daily and weekly affairs that go to make up our life in the Truth*.

This is as it should be. God is pleased when He finds that our hearts, our souls, our very lives are inseparably bound up with and centered upon those pure and holy relations we have to God and to one another in the bonds of unity and love. God is on our side; His favor and loving care—His blessings and love—are with us as our lives are filled with interests and affections that concern our duty to Him and to His people.

We come to the Sunday morning meetings, to the lectures and study classes with zeal and alacrity *because these are our treasures that draw our hearts in the ways of righteousness*. We go there as members of a body to worship God, to learn His word, to proclaim His saving Truth to all who will hear.

But more than this, we come to be with each other, to *strengthen the bonds that hold us together*; and to be mutually exercised in heart and mind by stirring up to remembrance the things that are meant for our purification and strength. We come that our supplications and the meditations of our hearts might mingle with the prayers of the saints as they ascend with acceptance before God's throne.

Without our presence the Body would be lacking in one of its parts. The fulness of health and joy in the spiritual life of the Body would be impaired, as it endeavoured to give full expression to the purpose of its existence as the—

"House of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth."

Not only would the Body suffer for the lack of one of its members in case one was absent from the activities that collectively generate the light from the light-stand of the ecclesia, but the absent one would suffer the most while severed from the Body—

"And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular"
(1 Cor. 12:26-27).

Our life in the ecclesia is the divine means for the preparation and training of a body of people who will be intimately associated with Christ when He—

"Gathers together in one all the children of God that are scattered abroad" (John 11:52).

The individuals of this immortal body of saints will have much in common. The background of their period of instruction and discipline forms a picture that is much alike in the case of each of them. They learned the lessons of *harmony with God and with each other* as they followed the course of their ecclesial life in all of its activities. The prayer of Jesus for us, on the eve of his suffering, was that we might *all be one*—

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

As this oneness is being developed in the Body so that the individual members with one heart and soul can present a united effort, and with one consent strive together toward unity with God in mind and purpose, *there must be submission on the part of all, and complete denial of one's self.*

Jesus' words in this connection are full of meaning to the brother or sister who is in earnest and really intends to pay the price that unity with God and His people will demand—

"If any man will come after me, let him DENY HIMSELF, and take up his cross and follow me."

Where this is not done, conflicting personalities and demands for rights and privileges will bring confusion and ruin to the Household. God's way is the best. Any human element entering in will take its toll from the well-being and peace of the ecclesia.

There is a pattern we must work to, and as we hew closer to its outline we find our old self with its ambitions and pride losing its hold and fading away.

We find that *what we thought was good in ourselves and worth pursuing, was worthless in the sight of God*, and that it must be drawn out and discarded before we could find a place among the goodly stones of Zion's future Temple.

Submitting, then, to the hand of the Master Builder, we take our place ALWAYS with the children of God as they work, and pray, and learn in the school of ecclesial life under the guiding hand and loving care of the Father of all life. —E.W.B.

"AS WE FORGIVE"

It may be said that the doctrine of forgiveness neutralizes the doctrine of moral excellence being necessary to inclusion among the "elect." It may be asked, Where is the need of righteousness if forgiveness rehabilitates the sinner?

The question overlooks the fact that FORGIVENESS ITSELF IS CONDITIONAL. For example, Jesus teaches that a man who is not forgiving will not be forgiven. And there are other qualities that the Scriptures tell us are requisite for forgiveness. —**Bro. Roberts**

Signs of the Times

NOT FOR A long time have there been so many "peace and safety" proposals as we have heard recently, even from the Soviets, that it has caused a feeling of optimism among many peoples that, after all, there is hope for permanent world peace. With a people whose chief aim is to be allowed free course to acquire wealth and "enjoy the pleasures of sin," there is a tendency to eagerly accept anything as fact which favours what they want in the way of national and international affairs, while

treating with indifference and skepticism developments and conditions which are contrary to their line of wishful thinking.

It is a matter of history, profane as well as Biblical history, that only a few among the many have, in a calm and logical manner, carefully weighed the facts, and have, with a high degree of accuracy, been able to foresee the trend of event's within the foreseeable future. And as a consequence they were able to calmly face the inevitable evil situations when they did occur, while the wishful dreamers grew panicky, confused and desperate.

The present era is a case in point; for, it depends on a very few to keep alive the evidences of coming disaster hanging like a sword over the heads of all the inhabitants of the earth.

* * *

"Men's Hearts Failing Them for Fear"

WHILE THE most of humanity take a somewhat disinterested view of the world situation, except when a crisis is upon them, thinking men who are alert to the potential dangers now facing the world, size up the situation somewhat as follows:

1. Although the potential capabilities of **lethal gas and germ warfare** are top secret; it is undeniable that chemical and biological warfare is possible on a large scale, so much so that a high Pentagon official recently said: "We're scared to death even to mention germ warfare."

Because of the fact that such deadly weapons do exist, with the means to use them, the secrecy surrounding gas and germ development, "The most lurid distortions and conflicting statements about germ warfare go virtually unchallenged," as one writer puts it.

2. "**Missile-carrying nuclear submarines** that can carry atomic warheads within any part of the globe are only weeks away from reality."

3. Author Bertrand Russell, in a book recently published, expressed the fear that "There may be **assaults on heavenly bodies**, and it may well happen that means will be found to cause them to disintegrate . . . The moon may split and crumble and melt. Hate and destructiveness, having become cosmic, will spread madness beyond its present confines . . . **The spread of power without wisdom is utterly terrifying.**"

While we have no fears that the Creator of the universe will permit puny man to disrupt its course in the slightest degree, yet such dire predictions can easily fill the minds of a skeptical world with "fear of what is coming on the earth."

4. Fear that the **German war machine** may rise again is prevalent among both the Soviet and Democratic nations, especially in Europe, where the ravages of the late wars are still fresh in the memory of many people. Although it is recognized that a separated Germany will always be a source of friction between the Soviets and the Western powers, a unified Germany poses a threat of the return of German militarism which sparked two world wars within a generation. Nazism is not dead, German desire for power and supremacy is still alive, and German genius is not diminished.

The rapid growth of industry and economic comeback since the last war is phenomenal, especially the recovery and expansion of the vast Krupp empire, which could quickly equip another war machine as it did for Hitler. As one correspondent expresses it: "The spectre conjured up of a re-armed, revengeful Germany, lusting anew for power and territory, is calculated to play on the rest of Europe's fears and memories." And it is ironical that both the Western powers and Russia have been compelled to do the very thing which they vowed should never be done; that is, assist Germany to rise again.

Undoubtedly God has decreed that the German empire is to play a decisive role in the final struggle, and that on the side of Russia, Gog of the North parts. And so perplexity stalks the nations involved as they try to win the support of the Germans without running the risk of having to face another Kaiser or Hitler.

* * *

Cold War Unabated

WITH THE olive branch of peaceful proposals in one hand, while he shakes a mailed fist with the other, Mr. Khrushchev of Russia, in a 7-hour speech, lets the world know that Russia wants peace, but only upon Russian terms.

He boasted of Russian military might and industrial expansion while predicting the rapid decline of "capitalism," which he claimed would soon be out-produced by Soviet superior methods of production. He blamed all the friction between Russia and the U.S.A. on the American political leaders, financiers and newspaper editors; and, what appeared to be a subtle attempt to drive a wedge between the American public and their leaders, he said that there was in the U.S. "a growing number of adherents of friendly, neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union."

He expressed Russia's determination to fully support all communist-dominated countries in opposition to what he termed "imperialism and colonialism." All of which adds up to a determination on the part of Russia to continue to press the cold war, even at the risk of provoking a hot war.

* * *

Israel Makes Progress

LIKE REFUGEES on an island in a storm-tossed sea, Israel plods along, making gains in the face of what might appear to be insuperable difficulties.

Mounting immigration has brought about a state of emergency in Israel which they hope to meet by floating bonds, and fund-raising campaigns among Jews all over the world. It is estimated that \$100,000,000 will be necessary for the initial care of these new immigrants which is expected to reach the 100,000 figure by the end of this year.

There are many factors which have brought about this rapid increase in immigration. The removal of barriers against emigration of Jews from European Communist countries, and the fear that anti-Semitism is once more rising in Germany and certain other European countries, has had much to do with this new exodus of the Jews to Palestine, and, regardless of the fact that Israel is just now experiencing one of the worst droughts since the formation of the State, that indomitable spirit that has sustained them and enabled them, with the help of God, to overcome difficulties in the past, is rising to the occasion and will doubtless enable them to keep open their doors to as many new immigrants as wish to settle in Israel. It is the hand of God and it cannot fail.

* * *

AS MEN'S hearts fail with fear and tensions increase throughout the world; as a godless world approaches nearer and nearer to the brink of destruction, let us remember that the Saviour's cheering words for his disciples of this generation are: "Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

—O.B.

Ecclesial News

HAMILTON, Ont., Can.—Sherwood Rm., Wentworth Arms Hotel, Main St.

It is with sorrow that we record the falling asleep of our sister Mary Martin, on Jan. 28, after a prolonged and wearisome illness. She is now at rest, peacefully sleeping until the day—surely near at hand!—when the Lord shall call and they that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.

We are few here, and greatly welcome visits from the brethren and sisters. The Body is one, and we all need the comfort and companionship of one another.

* * *

**HONESDALE, Penna.—IOOF Hall, Main St.—Sunday School and Bible Class 10:45 a.m.;
Breaking of Bread 11:45 a.m.**

During December three of our members left for warmer climates during the winter season. Brother and sister H. A. Sommerville went to Texas visiting Canton and Detroit en route, and sister Ella Smith went to Florida.

On Dec. 28, we held a Sunday School program in which the children sang hymns, recited Psalms and delivered essays. We trust these exercises stimulated their interests in the ways of the Lord.
—bro. David Sommerville

Texas Annual Fraternal Gathering

(If the Lord Will)

Monday, July 27 to Sunday, August 2, 1959

* * *

Toronto Fraternal Gathering

(If the Lord Will)

Saturday and Sunday, October 3-4, 1959

Strong Delusion

"Having their conscience seared with a hot iron"—1 Tim. 4:2

WHEN THE flesh is seared it becomes calloused and insensible. Figuratively speaking, the same thing happens to the mind when there is a departure from the principles of the Truth because of fleshly influences and "itching ears" for more pleasing doctrines.

A seared conscience is the final result of continued wishful thinking and self-deception. It is the result of being led away with a desire for leadership, drifting with a weak majority, influence of relatives or friends who have little or no interest in the Truth, and the love of temporal things.

Any or all of these things may easily sear the conscience if allowed to lessen one's loyalty to the Truth. The symptoms are not hard to recognize. The victim becomes dull of hearing; is unable to open his eyes to anything contrary to his heart's desire, and his heart becomes like flint towards sound reasoning and the most obvious facts.

Such were the leaders of the great falling away from the faith beginning in Paul's day. They were men of prominence, popularity, education and ability. Some of them are hailed today as "the Christian Fathers," whose works are standard teaching in the religious seminaries.

But their conscience was seared. They stooped to any form of deception in order to please "itching ears." They resorted to "Good words and fair speeches," by which "they deceived the hearts of the simple" and so the Truth was all but lost.

Seared consciences do not develop overnight. Like an infectious disease, it develops by a slow and stealthy process until the victim is powerless to resist, but when the mind is once thoroughly seared, there is seldom, if ever, any remedy.

The safe remedy is to prevent the development of such a condition by keeping our minds alive and alert to the principles of divine truth, being ready to accept it, and by being willing at all times to abide by it, *regardless of whatever sacrifices such course may entail.* —O.B.

Houston Tape Library

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