

# 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

### Plain Talk by Peter

*"But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren"—Luke 22:32.*

IF WE had been among those who witnessed the betrayal of Jesus, and his mock trial, we might have seen one of his disciples displaying a spirit of cowardice as he followed Jesus at a distance. A little later, we might have been astounded to hear this fearful man say, "*I know him not.*" A few minutes later, he was "cursing and swearing" saying "*I know not the man.*" Then, as he looked at Jesus, he remembered something that Jesus had said to him early in the evening, "and he went out and wept bitterly."

Here was the beginning of one of the most striking transformations recorded in the Bible, and a great lesson for us for we too should be transformed by our contact with the Truth. Then Peter, who denied his Lord, was soon to go forth to strengthen his brethren.

As we open his first letter, we are impressed with his salutation, and listen to him carefully as he sets forth in plain words the nature of our "high calling of God in Christ Jesus." With this priceless treasure before us, Peter says—

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He Who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written,

"BE YE HOLY FOR I AM HOLY" (1 Pet. 1:13-16).

Here is a ringing challenge that forces us to stop and consider well what he has said. As we look back through the pages of our Bible, we observe that the basic lesson of the Law of Moses is set forth in striking terms—

"I will be sanctified in all them that draw near Me."

In fact, the keynote of the Law was "Holiness to the Lord." The separateness it enjoined was impressively comprehensive. It had relation to their system of worship, and penetrated all forms of their public and private lives.

The very first thing the ritual of the Law impressed upon them was that they were *naturally unclean*, and could only approach the Deity by means of sacrifice. There has been no abatement of this principle of holiness in the Christian dispensation, for, says Peter (1 Pet. 2:9)—

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a purchased people; that ye should show forth the praises (or, virtues) of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

Because of the high calling of the Gospel, we are expected to show forth the virtues of God in our daily lives. This can only be done by living a life of holiness, or *separateness from the things of the world* or, as Peter has said, "Do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance." He goes further and says (1 Pet. 2:11-12)—

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they

speaking against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

Peter continually stresses this principle of separateness, when he says, "Do not be governed by the moral standards of our time." *The only true moral standards are those revealed in the Word of God*; and they are the standards to which we must conform, and by which we will be judged. If we expect to be participants in God's holiness in the age to come, it can only be realized by developing a godlike character now as we identify ourselves with those things that are true, honourable, just, pure, lovely and gracious. Therefore, says Peter (1 Pet. 1:22)—

"Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, SEE THAT YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER WITH A PURE HEART FERVENTLY."

*Here is the greatest challenge in ecclesial life*—the basic first principle of Godliness. Love, in the scriptural sense, is not a weak sentimental feature of our lives, but an all-consuming desire to serve God with all our hearts and live in harmony with one another. Love is that which binds us together in One Body. Let us face this basic fact of ecclesial life, for it is vital to our existence as a body.

Peter's words are not just a passing thought, but a positive declaration of a divine principle that shines like the noon-day sun throughout the teaching of Jesus. Therefore, *if we are not prepared to love one another with a pure heart fervently, our ecclesial meetings will be without significance, and we will become just one more poor hopeless and misguided sect.*

\* \* \*

THE RECORD left by Peter impresses us deeply, especially his teaching on love. When we realize that "God is love," we are convinced that if we walk in the Truth, as we should, there will be developed in our ecclesias a state of health and harmony that will produce a true mutual joyfulness—

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

*This exalted quality of spirituality is NOT impossible in an ecclesia!* If it were, the commandments regarding love would never have been given. But it can only be realized if we as a group are enthusiastically and whole-heartedly dedicated to the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus. We must be labourers together; striving together for the Faith; and knit together in love, as we work together as a unit, building upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone.

"Ye also (says Peter) as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

If we could live, day by day, in the sublime atmosphere of the "Word of God," our minds would be filled with the lofty ideals presented therein, and when problems arose in the ecclesia, there would be no murmurings or disputings among us, and we would be happy to "do all things in a becoming manner."

There are two characteristics to be found among men, and we may partake of one or the other. They are pride and humility. Pride is a product of the flesh, and God hates it. Humility is a development of the Spirit, and was beautifully exhibited in the life of Jesus. Therefore, says Peter—

*"All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*

*"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time"—5:5-6.*

—Editor

## A Habitation of the Deity

"I saw no nave therein, for YAHWEH ELOHIM the Almighty is the Nave of it, even the Lamb"  
—Rev. 21:22

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

THE DEITY is building for Himself a habitation, in which His Word will be enthroned. Illustrative of this, we may remark that Paul, in writing to the ecclesia of saints in Corinth, says (1 Cor. 4:15)—

"I have begotten you in Christ Jesus **through the Gospel.**"

This was the prime agent of their introduction into Christ—the *GOSPEL ministered by the apostle*; so that when, through a hearty belief of it, they came to be immersed for the putting on of him in whom they believed, he says to them in 1 Cor. 12:13—

"By one Spirit are we all immersed into One Body, whether Jews or Gentiles."

The many members of this One Body being all the servants of the Deity sealed in their foreheads *by the Gospel*, the apostle tells them (1 Cor. 3:9, Eph. 2:20) that they are—

"A building of Deity" . . . "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the foundation-corner;

"In whom, all the building fitly framed together groweth into a HOLY TEMPLE in the Lord; in whom ye are builded together into a Habitation of the Deity through spirit," or the Truth.

Thus, "the Deity dwelleth not in temples," or "churches," "made with hands," but *in a Holy Temple built by the formative power of the Truth understood, believed, and obeyed*. Every stone of this Temple is living, and precious, and bought at the high price of the blood of Jesus Christ. Peter says, they are (1 Pet. 2:5)—

"Lively stones built up a spiritual House," or Temple.

And Paul repeats the idea, saying to the true believers—

"Ye are the Temple of the living Deity" (2 Cor. 6:16).

After such plain and pointed declarations as these, no one being acquainted with them, and comprehending them, can possibly believe that the temples of the "religious world," whether the term be affirmed of a name, or denomination, or of all names and denominations collectively, or of cathedrals, churches, chapels, and conventicles,—are temples of the Deity. These are none of His buildings. The impress of His workmanship is upon none of them; and therefore in none of them doth He reside, either by the truth, or spiritual gift.

The Temple of the Deity has no community of faith, interest or practice with the spiritual bazaars of "the religious world." THE TEMPLE OF THE DEITY IS FOUNDED UPON INTELLIGENCE OF THE WORD, and is undefiled by the impostures and superstitions of the Apostasy. This is a temple the purity of which *must* be maintained, and he that defiles it by word or action will be certainly destroyed; as saith Paul to the faithful in Christ—

"If any man defile the Temple of the Deity, him shall the Deity destroy; for the Temple of the Deity is holy, which Temple ye are" (1 Cor. 3:17).

Now this Temple of the Deity is apocalyptically manifested in two states. In the first state, the "TABERNACLE OF THE TESTIMONY" alone is visible, and that not in *the* heaven, though "in

heaven" in a certain sense (Rev. 8:3, 13:6). But, in the second state, the "*Temple of the TABERNACLE OF THE TESTIMONY*" becomes visible; and its interior even is opened, and the Ark of the Covenant is seen therein; and the whole developed in the heaven (Rev. 3:12; 11:19; 15:5; 21:22).

These apocalyptic temple-states answer to (1) the Altar-Court, the Holy Place, and (2) the Most Holy within the Vail of the Mosaic Building. The apocalyptic Altar-Court and Holy Place are what Paul styles in Eph. 1:3, "the "Heavenlies in Christ." They are constituted of "the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus," who are partakers with the Altar, and worshippers therein (1 Cor. 9:13; 10:18; Heb. 13:10; Rev. 11:1).

An Ecclesia of Christ is, apocalyptically speaking, "the Altar and them that worship therein." They who constitute it have all been (Eph. 5:26)—

"Cleansed in the Laver of the Water by the Word."  
—and in passing through the water have passed into the Christ-Altar, and become one with it. When they die, they lie under the Altar, or "sleep in Jesus." When they are slain for the Word of the Deity and for their testimony, they are blood-souls under the Altar, crying for vengeance (Rev. 6:9).

But while they are living in the present state of tribulation and patient waiting for Christ, they are Altar-worshippers "having access by faith into" the heavenlies where Christ sits at the right hand of Power (Eph. 1:20; Rom. 5:2).

But, being constituents of the Altar, they are "a Holy Priesthood," consecrated for the purpose of—

"Offering up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to the Deity through Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 2:5).

Now these sacrifices have to be offered both in the Altar-Court and in the Holy Place, where are the Bread and the Wine, and the ministry of the Word, prayer, praise, and fellowship. As a community of priests, the faithful come together on the First Day of the Week, and in their session are manifested as a Heavenly; as a Holy Place; as the "*Tabernacle of the Testimony*"—

"Showing forth the praises of Him Who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light" (v. 9).

In their ministrations and worship they stand, as it were an angel at the altar in the court, with the golden frankincense bowl of prayer. They are themselves this golden bowl, in which is much incense of prayers and praises, which they offer upon the golden altar. Their petitions and thanksgiving are kindled into odours of acceptable perfume by the fire taken from the altar of the court; and as constituents also of the golden altar of the Holy Place, the perfumes ascend before the Deity as it were out of the angel's hand.

The reader will perceive that we are now in view of the scene dramatically exhibited in Rev. 8:3-5. In this the angel, the altar, the golden censer, and the golden altar, are all symbolical of one body—the *Temple of the Deity*—the saints in their spiritual apparatus of worship. They were the thousands being sealed in the half hour of silence (Rev. 8:1), whose prayers against Constantine and his Clergy, in their perversions of the Truth and blasphemies against heaven, were answered when the half hour was about expiring, by the "voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and earthquake," which retributively scourged their enemies, the family of the emperor, and the excessively corrupt and vicious Catholic Church.

The answer to the prayers from the Divine Temple is dramatized by the angel filling the censer or frankincense bowl with fire of the altar of sacrifice and casting it into the earth. This scene indicates that the judgments inflicted upon the church-peoples or Gentiles of "Christendom" are in the interest of the true believers. In writing to these, Paul says—

"ALL THINGS are **for your sakes**" (2 Cor. 4:15).

These voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and earthquake, were for the sake of those "whose prayers ascended before the Deity out of the angel's hand." The voices, and so forth, would work no harm to them, provided they "loved the Deity, and were the called according to His purpose."

The sealed of the 144,000 Foursquare Community prayed, and, in so doing, sent up many perfumes from their burning hearts, which smoked before the Deity. In His presence is their Forerunner, the Head and Chief of their community, no longer like themselves, "compassed with infirmity," but perfected, and, as the Quickening Spirit, makes intercession for them according to the Divine Will (Rom. 8:26-27).

He returned the answer to their prayers; for to him is given all power in heaven and in earth (Matt. 28:18). The judicial fire, therefore, went forth from the Christ-Altar, and kindled judgment upon the Arians and Athanasians of the Laodicean Apostasy, styled "the earth," illustrating the saying of Paul, "*Our Deity is a consuming fire.*"

\* \* \*

THE TEMPLE and Altar of the Deity are measured (Rev. 11:1), which is equivalent to saying that the *saints* who constitute the Temple and Altar are measured. Their measurement is 144,000 furlongs, or 144 cubits. This is the—

"Measurement of the Man that is, of an Angel" (Rev. 21:17)

*None are included in this measurement who are not in THE MAN*, who have not believed into Christ, and are, consequently, not members of the One Body, which is the almighty angel or Messenger of the Apocalypse.

All not of this measured community constitute—

"The Court which is WITHOUT THE TEMPLE."

This is cast out unmeasured and given to the Gentiles (Rev. 11:1-2) who, in relation to the Temple of the Deity, are mere outside barbarians, "walking after the imaginations of their evil hearts." This ejected Court of the Gentiles is wholly occupied by those symbols of their civil and ecclesiastical organization, the beast of the sea, the beast of the earth, and the image, and the scarlet-coloured beast and drunken woman that sits thereon. What are termed "the Names and Denominations of Christendom," all belong to this outside arena or court, reeking with pollution, and with the blood of the saints and witnesses of Jesus (Rev. 17).

No fragrant perfumes ascend from this court before the Deity. It is the arena of "philosophy and vain deceit"; of "science falsely so-called"; of "voluntary humility and worshipping of angels"; of "ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men, which are a mere show of wisdom in will-worship"; of vain heathen repetitions, in which they think they will be heard for much and loud speaking; of professional prayer-making and sermon-mongering; of pietistic riotings for religion-getting, of—

"Seducing spirits and teachings of demons, who speak lies in hypocrisy with a seared conscience, forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats;"

"Darkness," therefore, "covers the earth, and gross darkness the peoples." The worship of this court, according to the rituals of the Greeks, Latins, and Teutons, is mere will-worship. The Deity has not required it of them; and that which He has required they will not observe to do.

The faithful in Christ Jesus are styled apocalyptically, "His Tabernacle," because they constitute the only habitation the Deity has on earth.

"He dwells not in temples made with hands,  
—but in the hearts of His worshippers in spirit and in truth. In writing to these, the apostle saith (Eph. 3:17)—

"Let Christ DWELL IN YOUR HEARTS by faith;"  
—and Christ said—

"I AM THE TRUTH" (John 14:6).

When the TRUTH therefore, dwells or tabernacles in a man, the Deity dwells there. Hence, an ecclesia of such men is the Deity's Tabernacle pre-eminently.

It is furthermore styled the Tabernacle of the *Testimony*, because the faithful in Christ are the community of saints—

"Who keep the commandments of the Deity, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ"

(Rev. 12:17).

—and the "testimony is the spirit of the prophecy" contained in the apocalypse (Rev. 19:10). The apostle John was one of this Tabernacle for he bare record of the testimony and suffered for it in Patmos (Rev. 1:2, 9). The souls were laid under the altar in blood because of their faithfulness to this testimony (Rev. 6:9). The Tabernacle overcame the Dragon, red with their blood, "by the word of their testimony" (Rev. 12:11).

The Tabernacle is synonymous with "the Name," and "them dwelling in the heaven;" for all the constituents of the Tabernacle are constituents of the Name, having been all immersed into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and they "dwell in the heaven," in the sense that—

"The Deity hath made them to sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2.6).

Saints walking in the Truth, and being in fellowship with the apostles, and therefore with the Father and the Son (1 John 1:3), are a holy, heavenly community; and, being all in Christ, when they sit down to break bread and to drink wine, (as Aaron and his sons did in the typical heavenly place), and to be instructed by the exposition of the Word, which shines into their understanding and illuminates them, after the type of the seven branched lamp enlightening Aaron and his sons, the faithful sit down together in *Christ* and apocalyptically "dwell *in the heaven*" (Rev. 13:6).

But, though the Tabernacle of the Testimony is visible on earth and may be discerned by all who have spiritual understanding; and though it is now the Temple of the Deity, it is not the Tabernacle and Temple as it will be in the future state. The whole Temple of the Deity consists of the Altar-Court, the Holy Place or Tabernacle, and the Most Holy Place or *naos*.<sup>\*</sup> These are the apocalyptic divisions, and answer to like divisions in Solomon's building. The word *naos* (English: nave) is applied in Greek to the inmost part of a temple occupied by the Deity worshipped. In Rev. 15:5, the whole divine habitation is styled the—

"Nave of the Tabernacle of the Testimony in the heaven."

—understanding by *Nave* the place where "Deity manifested in Flesh justified by spirit" dwells. In this sense, the apocalyptic Nave is separated from the *Tabernacle* by the Veil of flesh. That is, those who constitute the Tabernacle are believing men and women, *in the flesh and mortal*; while those who constitute the *Nave* will be *flesh and bones incorruptible and deathless*, that is, spirit, as Jesus is now.

<sup>\*</sup>(In the New Testament there are two words translated "temple" and not distinguished in the English version. They are HIERON, meaning "temple," and NAOS, meaning "inner sanctuary." In the Revelation, "temple" is always NAOS in the original, occurring 16 times.)

The way into "the Nave of the Deity" has been demonstrated by him—(1), wash in the Laver of immersion, through which the Altar is approached; *then* the Tabernacle is entered; death places

under the Altar, and the Veil is rent; but (2), resurrection to incorruptibility and life constitutes the subject who had been a constituent of the Tabernacle a constituent also of the Nave.

At present, the Nave is not opened. It is not yet in manifestation as the Tabernacle is. Jesus is the Nave, being quickened as well as a Quickening Spirit; and true believers have the promise that "they shall be like him." They, therefore, now enter within the veil where he is, not in person but by faith; for now they "walk by faith, not by sight."

The grand difference between the Tabernacle and the Nave is the difference between flesh and spirit. When the true believers shall be perfected, they will have been both flesh and spirit. As flesh, they are the *Tabernacle of the Testimony*, witnessing for Jesus against the Apostasy enthroned in the Outer Court; and, as spirit, they are the *Nave of the Deity* with "the Ark of His Covenant" in their midst, ready to consummate the wrath of the Deity in developing "the lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and earthquake, and great hail," by which the lies, superstitions, and institutions of the Outside Arena will be swept away.

The opening of the Nave is "the apocalypse of the Sons of the Deity" (Rom. 8:19)—

"We are **now** the sons of the Deity (says John) but it doth not yet appear what we **shall be**, but we know that when he (Christ) shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2).

This is apocalyptically expressed, in the words—

"The Nave of the Deity was opened in the heaven, and the Ark of His Covenant was seen in His Nave."

It is nowhere seen in the Tabernacle of the Testimony in the apocalyptic visions, because the Ark belongs to the Most Holy, not to the Holy, heavenly ecclesia. These words of Rev. 11:19, are interpreted in Rev. 14:1, by the—

"Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with him an 144,000."

The Lamb of *this* vision is the Ark of *that*, and the 144,000, in the midst of whom he dwells, the Nave of the Deity.

But, when the Nave is apocalypsed, it is accessible only to the glorified community of the saved, each of whom is a pillar in the Nave (Rev. 3:12). When opened in the heaven of the apocalypse, it is—

"Filled with smoke from the glory of the Deity, and from His power."

The door of admission into it is closed against all occupants of the Outside Arena. Only those who are ready enter into the marriage; against all who are without light, "the door is shut." This exclusion, however, is not perpetual—

"No man is able to enter into the Nave **till** the Seven Plagues of the Seven Angels are fulfilled" (Rev. 15:8).

When the judgment given to the saints is fully executed, and they have possessed themselves of the kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven (Dan. 7:18, 26, 27), then the smoke of the power of Deity in wrathful exercise will be dispelled; and the nations shall walk in the light of it, being "blessed in Abraham and his Seed," and—

"The kings of the earth shall bring their glory and their honor into it" (Rev. 21:24).

Though this is especially affirmed of the Holy City, it is also affirmable of the Nave; for the glorified saints who constitute the other. But in respect to the saints in their relation to Deity, the Nave, as distinct from the Holy City, no longer obtains. While judgment is being executed by the saints, as the Most Holy smoking with wrath, the Kingdom is being set up; when this is established, the smoking Nave becomes quiescent, and the Holy City is apocalypsed in all its glory.

"*I saw no Nave therein,*" says John, (Rev. 21:22). If he had seen a nave in the Holy City, he would have seen a community higher in dignity, glory, honor, and nature, as the peculiar habitation of the Father, than the Holy Municipality constituted of the Lamb and his Bride, the saints glorified together with him (Rom. 8:17, 32).

He saw "no nave therein," for Jesus and his Brethren glorified are the incorporation of the Spirit of the Father, between whom and them there are no intermediates in whom He dwells. Between Him and the Tabernacle of the Testimony there is intermediation, because the Nave is not yet opened in the apocalyptic heaven, and that intermediate personage is the Forerunner into the *Nave-state*, even the Lord Jesus; but when the Forerunner and the runners after him shall meet in the glorious *Nave-Convention*, all intermediation between them and the Father will have been done away, and He will be—

"Over all, and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:6).

"The all things in all" (1 Cor. 15:28).

—so that this "*all*" will be a DIVINE UNITY, or Deity manifested in Flesh, justified or perfected by spirit. This is the great, glorious, and omnipotent *Multitudinous Unity* of the apocalypse—a Nave or unity, constituted of a *Multitude* "which no man can number."

It is in direct and intimate union with the Deity, as Jesus is at the present time. Between the Father and Son there is no intermediate, neither will there be between the Father and all His sons—Jesus and his Brethren—when the Nave is "opened in the heaven."

But John's declaration that he saw no Nave in the Holy City is immediately followed in the Common Version by the explanation (Rev. 21:22)—

"For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it."

But what John penned is preferable to this version of it; as:

"For the Lord the Deity, the Almighty, is the Nave of it, even the Lamb."

This, in harmony with Mosaic teaching, would read—

"For YAHWEH ELOHIM the Almighty, is the Nave of it, even the Lamb."

"*Not by army, nor by power, but BY MY SPIRIT saith Yahweh Tz'vaoth.*" Now, the Lamb with Seven Horns and Seven Eyes is the symbol of the Seven Spirits of the Deity, or omnipotence, that is, of the Eternal Spirit. YAHWEH ELOHIM is the multitudinous apocalypse of this the "One Spirit," apocalypsed or manifested in Jesus and his Brethren "glorified together."

They, in "the Time of the End," and in all subsequent aions, will be—

"Yahweh Elohim, the Almighty, the Nave of the Holy City."

—in which John saw no Nave, for the Holy City—being a sinless, guileless, faultless, incorruptible, and deathless municipality in all its constituents—is no longer in need of temple arrangements.

The Ezekiel Temple is a "House of Prayer for all nations" in which the "Yahweh Elohim Almighty" will officiate as the sacerdotal intermediation between Him Who dwells in light, Whom no

man can see and live, and all the enlightened, justified, and regenerated nations of the Millennial Age (Exo. 33:20; 1 Tim. 6:16).

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## God's Purpose with the Jews

By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

*"It shall be an everlasting covenant with them, and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set My Sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore"—Eze. 37:26*

### PART THREE

It is a principle in the divine economy that (Rom. 11:29)—

"The gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

Applying this principle to the proposition before us, the question may be raised, *How is it that while enjoying the privilege of a national election, Israel has been so long in a state of national alienation and adversity?* We cannot better answer the question than quoting the following (Isa. 42:24):

"WHO gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not **the Lord**, He against Whom we have sinned?

"For they would not walk in His ways, neither were they obedient unto His law. Therefore He hath poured upon him the fury of His anger and the strength of battle."

Israel is now, and often has been, under the rod. Their election did not mean unconditional blessing, but simply *divine national relationship which can never be abrogated*. Blessing is a question of obedience. Ages ago, Moses called heaven and earth to witness that curses would descend upon them if they were disobedient (Deut. 32), and *history has verified his words*.

Times without number has Israel been the prey of the robber and the butt of reproaches, and never more so than now when the enemy has had their land in possession and their persons in servitude for a long unbroken night of eighteen centuries.

*But there is to be an end to this changeful chapter of events*. The history of God's nation is not always to be a monotonous alternation of prosperity and catastrophe. There is a consummation which God has in His eye, and has had in view all along—a glorious ending in which God's supremacy will be placed on the secure basis of the nation's gladsome allegiance, and the nation's welfare on the sure foundation of the nation's God-developed righteousness.

But to the mind unfamiliar with the Word of God, it is hard to believe this. It is contrary to the present appearance of things, Israel is in weakness, exile, and disgrace. The Gentile star is in the ascendant. On sea and on land, the sword of Gentile power is gleaming. The hand of Gentile dominion is lifted high and secure.

The daughter of Zion is prostrate and lifeless under the heel of the great giant of Nebuchadnezzar's vision, and it seems as if the times would never change—as if the vision of the ancient seers would always remain dumb—as if the enemy would always triumph. But there is consolation if there is also trial in waiting (Hab. 2:3)—

"The vision is yet for an appointed time. At the end it shall speak. Though it tarry, wait for it **BECAUSE IT WILL SURELY COME**, it will not (always) tarry."

God has declared (Isa. 43:21)—

"This people have I formed for Myself; THEY SHALL SHOW FORTH ALL MY PRAISE."

*Here is a guarantee of Israel's restoration.* They have NEVER shown forth His praise yet, but rather on the contrary, have, in the words of Ezekiel, "profaned His Name among the heathen wherever they have gone" (Eze. 36:21).

But some may say that this statement does not refer to Israel after the flesh. Struck with the apparent incongruity of making a people so mean and sinister and grovelling—as the Jews *appear* as a whole to be in their present state—instrumental in developing the praise of Jehovah in the earth, they come to the conclusion that it is applicable to some sort of spiritual antitype in whom they conceive God's original intention with Israel will be realized.

The reasoning is plausible, but the mistake is evident. *The context conclusively shows that it is the NATIONAL Jew that is spoken of—*

"But thou hast not called upon Me, O Jacob; thou hast been weary of Me, O Israel.  
"Thou hast not brought Me the small cattle of thy burnt-offerings, neither hast thou honoured Me with thy sacrifices . . .  
"Thou hast made Me serve with thy sins. Thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities"  
(Isa. 43:22-24).

*It is the people against whom these complaints are made, that are ultimately to "show forth all Jehovah's praise."* Could such things be said of a spiritually perfect antitype? But the argument is clinched and closed beyond all dispute by the statement with which the chapter closes—

"Therefore I have profaned the princes of the Sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse and Israel to reproaches" (Isa. 43:28).

*How, then, IS Israel to "show forth all Jehovah's praise"?* The reply, which we shall give in the words of Scripture, is an unanswerable demonstration of the future restoration of the Jews—

"Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land they defiled it by their own way, and by their own doings; their way was before Me as the uncleanness of a removed woman.

"Wherefore I poured My fury upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it; and I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way, and according to their doings I judged them.

"And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned My Holy Name, when they said to them, These are the people of the Lord and are gone forth out of His land.

"But I had pity for Mine holy Name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen.

"Therefore say unto the house of Israel: Thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for Mine holy Name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.

"And I will sanctify My great Name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, WHEN I SHALL BE SANCTIFIED IN YOU BEFORE THEIR EYES.

**"For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land"** (Eze. 36:18-24).

The answer then is: *the Jews are to show forth the praise of God BY BEING RESTORED.* This is the proposition of the testimony quoted, and cannot be gainsaid if the Word of God is true. But lest a single testimony should be considered a doubtful settlement, we shall make a few other quotations:

"And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and **bring them into their own land.**

"And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.

"Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will **CLEANSE THEM: so shall they be My people, and I will be their God.**

"And David My servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments, and observe My statutes, and do them.

"And they shall  **dwell in the land** that I have given unto Jacob My servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children **FOR EVER.**

"And My servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them, and I will place them, and multiply them, and will **set My sanctuary in the midst of them** **FOR EVERMORE.**

"My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I **WILL BE THEIR GOD AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.** And the heathen shall know that I the **LORD** do sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for **EVERMORE**" (Eze. 37:21-28).

\* \* \*

"So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward. And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against Me, therefore hid I My face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies; so fell they all by the sword.

"According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid My face from them. Therefore thus the Lord God;

"Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel and will be jealous for My holy Name; after that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against Me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid.

"When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, **AND AM SANCTIFIED IN THEM IN THE SIGHT OF MANY NATIONS;** then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but have **gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there.**

"Neither will I hide My face **ANY MORE** from them: for I have poured out My spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God" (Eze. 39:22-29).

Let the following testimonies be read in connection with the foregoing—

"The word that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

"And it shall come to pass **in the last days,** that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and **ALL NATIONS** shall flow unto it.

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

"And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, **NEITHER SHALL THEY LEARN WAR ANY MORE** (Isa. 2:1-4).

\* \* \*

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the **LORD** of hosts: I will go also.

"Yea, MANY PEOPLE and STRONG NATIONS shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts:

"In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, "We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you." (Zech. 8:20-23).

\* \* \*

"In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack, the Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty.

"He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will joy over thee with singing. I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the approach of it was a burden.

"Behold at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will get them **praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.**

"At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord" (Zeph. 3).

It is scarcely necessary to say, after the reading of these testimonies, that *God will make Himself known among the nations by interfering among them for the recovery of His people, the Jews,* and by afterwards settling them in righteousness in their own ancient land, under Christ, as a great nation and as the instructors and illuminators of all the earth.

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

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## Let Not Your Hands Be Weak

### PART THREE

*"Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The Lord is with you while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you.*

*"Be ye strong therefore and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded"*

(2 Chron. 15:2).

This statement coming at such a time had several facets in the purpose of the Creator. It would show the nation that the work which Asa had begun was a Divine work, accomplished in the "Name" of the Lord. It would strengthen those who worked with Asa in this undertaking. It would overcome the resistance of those who were opposed to Asa.

And most important, it would impress Asa himself that the work he had set his hand unto was God's work. More than ever it now appears that the bold resolution with which Asa took up God's service at the start of his reign was waning, that the opposition to reform was very strong.

We are impressed with the fact that the service of God is not completed until the day of one's death, or until the call goes forth to the meeting with the judge of all the earth.

"Let not your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded."

How frequently we read of the necessary strengthening of weak hands! The strength must be Divine. Goodspeed renders this passage—

"Be strong, and let not your hands slacken."

Apparently a slackening had been in evidence, which the general narrative does not on the surface reveal. By seeking the Lord He will come near unto us and help us. He will be found of us. But we have to come to that spontaneous urge of needing God's help and sovereign aid.

Think of Samson, brought to blindness and imprisonment and ridicule because of failure of the flesh. But in his extremity he *sought the Lord* (Jdg. 16:28)—

"O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me."

Samson took hold of the pillars or foundations of the Philistine idol temple, and God strengthened his hands and the house fell upon the lords of the Philistines, and upon all the people that were in the temple.

The word *weak* implies, "to slacken, abate, cease, fail, be faint, wax feeble, forsake." The work of overcoming the opposing forces is never easy. *It requires the combined assistance of ALL who will set their hands to the task.*

When Amalek smote Israel at Rephidim in the wilderness, Moses went up into the mount with Aaron and Hur, to supervise the battle. But Moses' hands were heavy as the battle see-sawed back and forth. Israel winning when his hands were held up, but losing as they hung down. Moses was then seated upon a rock (the rock was a type of Christ). Aaron (representing the *Jews*) held up one hand, Hur (of Gentile descent—1 Chron. 2:20—representing the *Gentiles*) held up the other hand until the going down of the sun, and Israel overcame the symbolic sin-power, the Amalekites.

*The victory did not come until the "going down of the sun."* The hands had to be strengthened until the end of the day. So it was in Asa's case—his hands had to be strengthened, he had to be encouraged. The lesson is for us. Our hands constantly have to be held up by *mutual effort*—

"Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart—

"BE STRONG, FEAR NOT; behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you" (Isa. 35:3).

Likewise in the case of Gideon. He had to be taken down to the camp of the Midianites and hear what was said there—

"A cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian; and came unto a tent, and smote it and overturned it . . .

"This is the sword of Gideon, for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host." (Jdg. 7:13-14).

God had said to Gideon—

"Thou shalt hear what they say, and afterward shall thine **hands be strengthened**" (v. 11).

The work has to be done by or through the hands of God's servants. It is the way the Creator operates. But it is God Who giveth the strength. Nehemiah pleaded (Neh. 6:9)—

"O God, STRENGTHEN MY HANDS!"

There must be this recognition of the power of God in all our ways. The name of the man of God that met Asa returning from the battle with Zerah, was designed to impress the overruling hand of God in Israel's affairs—

"Azariah, the son of Oded."

*Azariah* means "God has helped or aided." To this time God had been helping Asa. Now the Creator placed the outcome upon the future actions of the king. Thus the implication of the name Oded the father of Azariah. *Oded* means "to warn, to protest, to exhort."

The action of Asa shows his humility at this Divine exhortation. He immediately set about that wherein his hands had slackened (2 Chron. 15:8)—

"He put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities, which he had taken from Ephraim . . . He renewed the altar of the Lord, that was before the porch of the Lord."

The result of this zeal for the Lord was that many throughout the twelve tribes could now see force and resolution in his actions. His reforms were known far and wide—

"He gathered all Judah and Benjamin and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, **when they saw that the Lord his God was with him.**"

How important that our actions in the service of God be such that all people will be impressed that "The Lord our God is with us"!

*The reference to renewing the altar of the Lord shows that the temple service of God during former years had sunken greatly.* It appears to have taken three years for the repairs and preparations for the dedication to take place, for the temple service to be restored and provide time for the cleansing of the land on a wide scale.

It illustrates that to this point the cleansing of Asa had only taken the course of idol removal in a limited scale. *It does not seem that any thing had been substituted in its place.* It was necessary that the basis for the cleansing be set in motion, and this now appears as being effected.

Separation from the world alone is not enough in the eyes of the Creator. *There must be a moving ever upward.* Stagnation will only result if the zeal is not maintained. The apostle Peter exhorts (2 Pet. 1:5)—

"Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, (brotherly kindness, charity . . .

"For IF these things be in you, and ABOUND, they make you neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .

"He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

The dedication of the altar took place in the third month. This would be the Feast of Weeks, or Firstfruits. It was the feast which later became known as *Pentecost*, the firstfruits of the New Creation, the resurrection. It was with much joy and singing that the people of the kingdom renewed their covenant with their Father (2 Chr. 15:15)—

"All Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with ALL THEIR HEART, and sought him with their WHOLE DESIRE (not a half-way measure now—no misgivings), and **He was found of them.**"

The reforms went to the highest level. Even those of the royal family were involved. For now we find that—

"Maachah, the grand-mother of Asa the king, he removed . . . from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove:

"And Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron" (v. 16).

The command to serve the Lord was mandatory. The penalty of death was to be inflicted upon any failure to adhere to the covenant of the Law. The Law had said—

"He that sacrificeth unto any god save unto the Lord only, he shall be **utterly destroyed**"  
(Exo. 22:20).

The meaning of *Maachah* and its application to the purpose of God are significant. It illustrates the basic principle of the destruction of the flesh and the constant battle to that end. The appearance of the name in various places and the surrounding events are preserved for our guidance and instruction, if we are not forgetful hearers of what we read.

The name is first mentioned as a child of Nahor the brother of Abraham. Later we find the Maachathites dwelling in the north east, in the land of Syria. This nation became a scourge unto God's people (Isa. 9:11-12). God placed them in this position to chastise His people because of waywardness.

Actually *these descendants of Nahor later comprised the nation of Syria*. The characteristics of Laban the Syrian, were a type of these people. Today we see the same animosity toward the people of God's choice. They will be on the side of the enemies of the Lord in the time of the end.

The name *Maachah* means "to pierce, to press down, to bruise, to be stuck." The thought in these words manifests the nature of these people who became a thorn in the eyes of God's people.

The name appears amongst those giants who were famous in the land of Canaan when Israel possessed the land. They had to be driven out the city of Hebron by Caleb. Again they are the enemy that had to be overcome.

The sad aspect of this subject, and one which had far reaching effects, was *the marriage of King David into such a family*. The effects of the marriage do not immediately appear, but it left a mark upon his own reign, and brought the enemy right into the camp of the Lord. This was the very thing against which King Asa was having to fight—

"And unto David were sons born in Hebron . . . the third, Absalom, the son of Maachah, the daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur" (2 Sam. 3:2-3).

The name *Geshur* or *Geshuri* means, "to bridge over, to join." Here we find a joining together of the piercing power of sin with the son of truth. The result could only be a departure from the truth of God. The product as we know was an *outwardly* very fair son, Absalom; delighted in by all who do not look below the surface.

*But there could only be one answer to such a union, that was sorrow and grief*. Absalom we know stole the hearts of Israel from David and led a serious revolt against the man chosen by God.

Painfully we recognize the same picture illustrated in the departure from the Truth after the death of the apostles. The line of demarcation between the truth and paganism was "bridged" over, the two persuasions were joined together to form the Catholic power, and the true saints were caused to flee for their lives. *David in flight from Absalom shows us what can be expected in any such failure to remain separate from the world*.

The mother of Absalom was Maachah. Absalom also named his daughter Maachah. This woman became the wife of Rehoboam, mother of Abijah, and grandmother of Asa.

The lesson is of great importance to us. We are impressed with the evil effects of alien marriage, whether in the natural or spiritual aspects. The result can only be the bruising of the heel of the righteous. But if not repented of will lead to final death.

These incidents concerning the destruction of the idol worship of Maachah have an important and instructive application to the time of the end, when the wickedness of the Mystery of Iniquity shall be removed. Christ as the antitypical physician shall destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations (Isa. 25:7).

This covering over the eyes of many nations is the deceptive doctrine of the Roman church and the Protestant offshoots. This is it that was typified by Maachah as queen in Jerusalem; a false system of pagan religion brought into the Sanctuary of the Lord, causing a breaking down of the altar of the Lord.

Of the Roman system, the Apocalypse records (18:7)—

"She saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow."

And again (Rev. 17:18)—

"The woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

Such was the development of the Roman system of Iniquity, an admixture of idol worship with the Truth, deceiving the hearts of the simple. *The only cure is utter destruction.* The day foreshadowed by Asa's reign is not far distant.

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

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## The Prayers of the Saints

*"He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God"*—Luke 6:12

THE SUBJECT of prayer is one of great importance, and which we should approach with the deepest reverence. Prayer is one of the greatest privileges that we have associated with the Truth.

The subject of prayer is high and sublime, yet let us not turn from it, feeling that it is beyond our reach for profitable study and meditation. James says—

"The **effectual fervent** prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

This truth—that *prayer has real and actual power with God*—is seen in the prayers of Elijah to whom James refers.

Prayer must not be a mere form of words, but an expression from the heart, by which we offer unto God our adoration, and deep thanksgiving, and make our requests that we feel are lawful and needy in our lives, and in which we express our humble confidence to obtain our needs *in accordance with God's will*, as we present our causes to Him.

As an example of prayer, we may turn to the Lord's prayer, wherein Jesus taught his disciples to pray, and which will give us much to meditate upon.

So also the prayer of Jesus to his Father, as contained in John 17, is a prayer we can study with great advantage. One is a model prayer for all occasions, while the other was made to suit the occasion in the life of the Lord Jesus, and the circumstances that confronted him and his disciples.

Prayer has always played a large part in God's dealings with man, especially as He revealed Himself regarding His purpose in the past, and what He required in man's service unto Him. When the Tabernacle and Temple were set up, provisions were made in the Altar of Incense from which smoke arose at appointed times, and sweet incense burnt thereon, and we have not far to look to see the true significance of what is meant, for John, in Rev. 8:3-4, writes:

"And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with prayers of all saints.

"And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."

Bro. Roberts wrote in the "Law of Moses," pg. 116, that—

"Prayer, then, is indicated by the presence of the golden censer in the Holiest of all. It is on this basis that mercy is dispensed—the cloud of the incense was to cover the mercy seat that he (Aaron) DIE NOT. **For a prayerless man there is no mercy.**"

Thus the Altar of Incense and the Golden Censer constitute a symbol of prayer, which is to be offered *daily without ceasing*, as in Luke 1:10 we read—

"And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense."

Yet prayer recited with little or no thought, is not true prayer, neither is it from the heart. We are warned against *expressing our self esteem in our prayers*. Because of the deceptiveness of the flesh it is very easy to do this unconsciously, by self-pleasing oratory, or by veiled references to our accomplishments. Such are likened unto the heathen and condemned as being of little worth, merely wanting to be heard for their much speaking.

*Words on our lips, but our heart not in it*—and thus Israel was condemned, as they spread forth their hands in prayer, at the same time they were full of blood.

Yet what a privilege, as well as a great responsibility, is ours when asked to pray or give thanks! Shall we shrink from it because of its responsibility and the reverence that should be attached to it? By no means, but (Heb. 13:15)—

"Pray without ceasing, and IN EVERYTHING give thanks, offering the sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks unto His Name."

Yet the first and foremost requisite on our behalf in our prayer to God is to *obtain God's recognition*, which can be done as we read in Heb. 11:6—

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

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THERE ARE different *kinds* of prayer, it is true, and our prayers should be in accordance with the circumstances of our lives. Christ was a prayerful man, sometimes choosing the sanctuary of the mountains, as also the Garden of Gethsemane. *Prayer in his life was such an important feature that slumber and sleep were set aside, that he might pray to His Father in heaven.*

Prayer is high and lofty. It is an entering into the holy presence of God, and should at all times be approached with deepest reverence and godly fear. It should never be done lightly or thoughtlessly. In our seeking help and comfort by it let it be with chosen words coming from our heart, and on the behalf of our brethren and sisters. Likewise on behalf of kings and rulers, that we might live a quiet and peaceable life, giving thanks unto God (1 Tim. 2:2).

As our prayers ascend unto the throne of God's grace, may they be such as to be sweet-smelling incense to our heavenly Father, as the Scriptures declare—

"Pray ALWAYS, and **in everything to give thanks.**"

Yes, let us pray unto God with that fervent desire, that we may open His heart, and that His ears may be open to our cry. Another point we must keep in mind is that—

"God is in heaven, and we are upon earth, therefore let our words be few" (Eccl. 5:2).

This is a thought we should never lose sight of, a lesson in which we may call to mind the incident of the Baal worshippers, to whom Elijah said they should pray louder, for either Baal was "talking, or pursuing, or on a journey, or peradventure was sleeping" (1 Kings 18:27).

But our God is the God of all the universe Who slumbers not, but is ever-watchful and needs not arousing by our much speaking, but He sees and hears as Solomon declares—

"The prayer of the upright is His delight" (Prov. 15:8).

God Who "sitteth in the heavens" is not in a position of being inactive by such a statement. He knows our desires, and every requirement, even before we ask or think. But we must recognize His greatness, and our smallness, like Abraham of old, and though we take it upon ourselves to speak to Him, we are but "dust and ashes."

David was a man of prayer, as was Daniel, and the apostle Paul, likewise the dutiful Son of God, so that as we lift up our voices in prayer, we are but following a divinely prescribed way, God's appointed way, whereby we might approach unto God's throne of grace.

Prayer—how gracious is that privilege! And what a reverent thought is manifested to us, as we look at Solomon as he prayed at the dedication of the Temple, pleading that God may have respect unto his prayer, and that the house of God may be blessed, together with God's people.

The will of God is that we "pray always"; likewise in everything we must give thanks. We must perceive the love and wisdom of God in *everything*, as Paul, in writing to the church in the first century, said—

"Pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus" (1 Thess. 5:17-18).

And if we want to be taught *how* to pray, we have but to study "The Lord's Prayer," in which we find the Lord Jesus teaching his disciples. As we meditate upon that prayer we find much food for thought and study. The opening words are, "*Our Father*"—a true recognition of the greatness of God Who IS our Father, IF we are of those who have become such by obedience. How deep and high are the thoughts associated with the words, "our Father," and what great reverence such words really and truly command! Truly, if we are actuated by them, our prayers and thanksgiving will be of that kind like our speech—

"ALWAYS with grace, seasoned with salt."

As we ask, "*Teach us to pray*," thus we receive due instruction in Eph. 6:18—

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

Let us then "Watch unto prayer" that God may hear and grant us our petitions if it be according to His will.

Coming to "Thanksgiving" for food, or for the bread and wine, this is a little different from prayer, though they are closely related. Both must be approached with great reverence. How sad it is to listen when there is clearly no thought or feeling in the utterance!

Whether it be Prayer or Thanksgiving, the time should not be used for a demonstration of the first principles of Truth, but the thoughts should be in harmony with the circumstances. As when thanksgiving must be offered at the table—thanks should be given for the blessings we are about to partake of, and that strength may be derived from those blessings, that in turn our association of the Truth might receive its full share.

Likewise when we are asked to give thanks in the meeting for the bread or the wine, let thanks be given to the Source of our blessings, and especially shall we give thanks for the bread or the wine. What a great lesson we have in what is said of Jesus when he instituted the Memorial feast—

"He took bread and gave thanks, likewise also the cup."

As we think upon these words we may be sure that Jesus did give thanks in heartfelt words directly related to the occasion. It is not necessary that we attempt to be heard for our much speaking, but the briefer the better, remembering always that God hears our prayers and our thanksgiving, knowing even before we speak, and as the apostle Paul informs us, as he wrote to the Corinthians, upon the feast of memorials, how Jesus gave thanks for the bread and wine.

Jesus prayed to his Father that his disciples might be one with him and his Father. Let us pray and give thanks unto the Father always in his Name, that we in turn may be one with them, that in the midst of this present evil world, we may be taught to—

"Deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly righteously, and godly" (Titus 2:12).  
—*praying the Father that His Word may dwell in us richly, that we in turn fulfil the law of Christ in the developing of a true character, and stand approved before the Lord Jesus at his coming.* —W.J.P.

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## They Shall Be Turned Unto Fables

### PART TWO

*"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine . . . but shall be turned unto fables"*  
—I Tim. 4:3

THE FIRST of these fables, as we have mentioned, is the denying of the great central promise of Scripture—the return of Jesus Christ, and the setting up of God's Kingdom on the earth.

The prophet Daniel, interpreting the dream of the king of Babylon, said (Dan. 2:28)—

"There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be IN THE LATTER DAYS."

Tracing through the vision, we find that the *concluding phase* is this (v. 44)—

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall **break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms**, AND IT SHALL STAND FOR EVER."

If we believe Scripture, this verse establishes one fact clearly and inescapably, in plain words that cannot be mistaken. That is, that the final chapter in the history of this earth will be the destruction of all human rule and kingdoms and the forcible establishment of a divine government, administered by those who have been found faithful in this dispensation. The following is further proof:

**Dan. 7:27**—"And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, shall be given to the people of the **Saints of the Most High**, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

**Rev. 2:26-27**—"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give **power over the nations**: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father."

**Rev. 5:10**—"Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign ON THE EARTH."

TO ILLUSTRATE the gradual departure from the Truth of the Scriptures by the early church (as was prophesied), we wish to quote from the ecclesiastical historian, Mosheim, who wrote about 200 years ago. The value of his work to us will be in the fact that we shall use him as a witness against himself. He was a learned and highly esteemed Protestant dignitary, and the historical facts which he faithfully records are often, when compared with Scripture, very destructive of his own Protestant theology. Of him the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says—

"The scientific period of church history may be said to commence with the great work of Mosheim in 1755 . . .

"His history is constructed in the interests of science and not of party, with the sole view of stating the facts, fully and exactly as they occurred. His fidelity to his principle is conspicuous."

It was the third century when Christianity became both completely triumphant and completely corrupt. Of this century Mosheim says—

"In this century the **doctrine of the Millennium** fell into disrepute, through the influence especially of **Origen**, who opposed it because it contravened some of his opinions" (pg. 103).

Of this same Origen, whom Mosheim's Protestants, as well as the Catholics, follow in rejecting the coming millennial reign of Christ on earth, Mosheim says (pgs. 99-100)—

"The doctors who cultivated literature and philosophy deemed it proper and becoming to subject Divine wisdom to the precepts of their philosophy.

"At the head of this class was Origen, who, being **fascinated with the Platonic philosophy**, ventured to apply its laws to every part of religion . . .

"The same Origen stands unquestionably at the head of the interpreters of the Bible in this century. But with pain it must be added, he was the first among those who have found in the Scriptures **a secure retreat for all errors and idle fancies** . . .

"He taught that the words in many parts of the Bible convey no meaning at all; and in some places where he acknowledged there was some meaning in the words, he maintained that under them was contained a hidden and concealed sense, which was much to be preferred to their literal meaning."

Speaking of what was known as the "Neo-Platonic" philosophy, promulgated in the second century by one Ammonius, Mosheim says (p. 60)—

"The grand object of Ammonius was to bring all sects and religions into harmony . . . This new species of philosophy, imprudently **adopted by Origen** and other Christians, DID IMMENSE HARM TO CHRISTIANITY."

*Such is the accepted "Head of the interpreters of the Bible in this century"!*—The man who was chiefly responsible for the rejection by the church of the scriptural teaching of the millennial reign of Christ on earth.

The historian Edward Gibbon, whose work is ranked among the masterpieces of literature and history, and who was a complete unbeliever, confirms Mosheim's account of the gradual rejection of this original basic doctrine of the early church. He says (Vol. I, p. 404)—

"The assurance of a Millennium was carefully inculcated by a succession of fathers from Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, who conversed with the immediate disciples of the apostles, down to Lactantius, who was preceptor to the son of Constantine . . .

"But when the edifice of the Church was almost completed, the temporary (support was laid aside.

"THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S REIGN UPON EARTH WAS AT FIRST TREATED AS A PROFOUND ALLEGORY, WAS CONSIDERED BY DEGREES AS A DOUBTFUL AND USELESS OPINION, AND WAS AT LENGTH REJECTED AS THE ABSURD INVENTION OF HERESY AND FANATICISM."

We wonder *how* these things could be, until Paul's words again come to our mind, "*They will not endure sound doctrine, but shall be turned unto fables.*"

Note how gradually, and subtly, and "respectably" it was accomplished. The first small and apparently harmless step toward "fables" is the most serious.

\* \* \*

MOSHEIM says (p. 42)—

"Jesus himself established but two ordinances, which it is NOT LAWFUL EITHER TO CHANGE or to abrogate, namely, baptism and the Lord's supper."

This can be easily verified by Scripture, and his remarks should be noted that "*It is not lawful to change them,*" for on his own testimony we shall see that Mosheim's Protestants, as well as the Catholics, have done just that.

Regarding baptism we find first, in examining the Scripture, that knowledge and belief of the Gospel (the rejected Gospel of the millennial Kingdom) is an *essential prerequisite to a valid and acceptable baptism*. Peter says (1 Pet. 3:21)—

"BAPTISM is the answer of a good conscience to God."

Jesus said (Mark 16:16)—

"PREACH THE GOSPEL . . . He that BELIEVETH and is BAPTIZED shall be saved."

Obviously, then, a baby is not a fit subject for baptism, having neither conscience, knowledge or belief. Infant baptism is an invention of men, made necessary by another invention, the *supposed "immortality of the soul,"* which condemns unbaptised babies to eternal torment. All scriptural example and teaching indicates the *necessity of belief* before baptism to make it mean anything. Paul says—

"He that cometh to God MUST BELIEVE" (Heb. 11:6).

"The gospel is the power of God to salvation **TO EVERYONE THAT BELIEVETH**"

(Rom. 1:16).

Such is the testimony of the inspired Word, and Mosheim says, in complete harmony with this—

"In the first century, NONE WERE BAPTIZED UNLESS PREVIOUSLY WELL INSTRUCTED IN THE PRIMARY TRUTHS OF RELIGION."

A very candid admission for an orthodox Protestant! And he further quotes Justin Martyr, who lived in the early part of the second century, as follows—

"Those who BELIEVE and are persuaded that the things we teach and inculcate are true, and who profess ability thus to live, are directed to pray . . . then we conduct them to where there is water, and they are baptized."

As to what the ordinance of baptism consists of, we find from Scripture, and none will deny it, that *the only form recognized there is complete immersion in water*. This is so obvious and generally admitted that it hardly requires proof. And surely it should be equally obvious that calling *an entirely different ceremony* by the same name *does not make it baptism in the sight of God*. It is absurd to expect it to.

*SPRINKLING IS NOT BAPTISM.* It is an unscriptural and unauthorized invention of man. *Baptizo*, the word used in the original, means "dip, immerse, plunge, submerge," and *nothing else*. Consult any lexicon or concordance.

Sprinkling is a different thing altogether and has no relation to it. The type of burial and rebirth, which baptism is said to be, is only fulfilled by complete immersion. Paul says (Col. 2:12)—

"Ye are BURIED with Christ in baptism."

And all the scriptural examples given for our instruction clearly indicate *complete immersion in water* as the ordinance as first given. We read (Acts 8:39-40)—

"They WENT DOWN INTO the water—they CAME UP OUT OF the water."

**Matt. 3:6**—"They were baptized IN (the river) Jordan."

Turning to Mosheim again we find his record in harmony—

"In the **first century** baptism was administered by immersing the candidates WHOLLY IN WATER."

To conclude our consideration of the apostasy in this respect, we would like to quote from a very well known and much more recent high Protestant dignitary, the late "Dean" Stanley of the Church of England. For those who value the integrity of Scripture, and deplore the presumptuous meddling of men with the commands of God, his remarks require no comment.

*Let us mark his words well, for they contain the whole secret of Christendom's complete departure from the true, original faith and practice.* He says—

"For the **first 13 centuries** the almost universal practice of baptism was **that of which we read in the New Testament**, and which is the VERY MEANING of the word baptize—that those who were baptized were PLUNGED, SUBMERGED, IMMERSSED into the water.

"With few exceptions the whole of the Western Church have now SUBSTITUTED for the ancient bath the ceremony of sprinkling a few drops of water on the face.

"There is no one who would wish to go back to the OLD PRACTICE. It had, no doubt the SANCTION OF THE APOSTLES AND THEIR MASTER. (But) . . . the whole Christian world has decided against it.

"It is a striking example of the triumph of **common sense** over the bondage of form and custom. The CHANGE from immersion to sprinkling has SET ASIDE THE LARGER PART OF THE APOSTOLIC LANGUAGE REGARDING BAPTISM, AND HAS ALTERED THE VERY MEANING OF THE WORD."

What an arrogant, shameless disregard for the ordinances of God! Do we need wonder that sprinkling and the application of baptismal ceremonies to uncomprehending babies are now the common practices of an apostate Christendom? "*They shall be turned unto fables.*"

\* \* \*

THE POPULAR doctrine of the Trinity, rightly styled by its exponents "incomprehensible," reduces the scriptural account of the life of Jesus Christ to meaningless absurdities. The Trinity presents us with the conception of God and Jesus Christ as both almighty, eternal, co-equals, neither greater or less than the other. That is the Creed's wording.

The *Scriptures*, on the other hand, show us Jesus praying to God, saying that his Father was greater than he, being led into the wilderness to be tempted, being anointed by God with power, confessing ignorance regarding things his Father had not revealed to him, receiving commandments from his Father, dying and being raised to life by his Father, being elevated to glory and told to sit at

God's right hand until God should make his enemies his footstool, being sent again by God to the earth, and finally, when all his work is accomplished, being subject to God, that God might be all in all.

*How did the Trinity originate?* One of its supporters, writing in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, says—

"The propositions constitutive of the dogma of the Trinity were not drawn directly from the New Testament, and **could not be expressed in New Testament terms.**

"They were the products of reason speculating upon a revelation to faith. They were only formed through centuries of effort, only elaborated to the aid of the conceptions, and formulated in the terms of **Greek and Roman metaphysics.**

"The evolution of the doctrine of the trinity—(note the expression well)—**THE EVOLUTION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY** was far the most important fact in the doctrinal history of the Church during the first five centuries of its post-apostolic existence."

If we are not prepared to go into Greek and Roman metaphysics, its supporters tell us, we cannot hope to understand or define the doctrine of the Trinity. It "cannot be expressed in scriptural terms," they tell us flatly, for it is a step further advanced than the scriptures.

"*To US*," says the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 8:6), that is, to the simple believers in Scripture—

"To us there is but **ONE GOD, and** one Lord Jesus Christ."

And again (1 Tim. 2:5)—

"There is **ONE God, and** one mediator between God and man, the **MAN** Christ Jesus."

\* \* \*

WE FIND that Mosheim ascribed much of the corruption of Christian doctrine to the powerful, pervading influence of Platonism, the leading philosophy of the civilization into which Christianity was introduced. Here again we find him witnessing against himself, for examination clearly reveals that *Platonism was responsible for the introduction into the "Christian" Church of the doctrine of the immortal soul.* Mosheim says (p. 99)—

"Its originators—he is speaking of mystic theology—Its originators assumed that **WELL-KNOWN DOCTRINE OF THE PLATONIC SCHOOL**, which was **approved also by Origen** and his followers, that a portion of the divine nature was diffused through all human souls."

Here again, as with the Trinity, we must go to paganism for our sources. *The Scriptures know nothing of immortal souls.* The doctrine is wholly foreign, and wholly contrary, to the revealed Word of God. Pope Leo X said he knew the soul is immortal because Pope Clement V said so, but, as one writer has said—

"We have not found anyone who seriously endeavours to prove that the immortality of the soul is taught in the Bible."

The Bible gives the same simple, clear and consistent picture throughout that all consciousness and being ends at death, and that the dead know not anything (Eccl. 9:5); that in the day of death man's thoughts perish (Psa. 146:4); that death is a sleep, a complete oblivion, from which some—the vast majority—will never awake (Prov. 21:16)—

"The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead."

"Like sheep are they laid in the grave, death shall feed on them . . . Man that is in honor and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish" (Psa. 49:20).

Whether *we* shall be among the number that "sleep a perpetual sleep," or whether we shall be called forth from the grave at the return of Christ to enjoy glorious immortality, depends upon the course we follow now. Paul said—

"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine."

If we blindly follow an apostate Christendom, and remain ignorant of the ways of God, we shall—with them—remain in the congregation of the dead.

\* \* \*

OTHER outstanding features of orthodox Christianity could be similarly compared with Scripture, and examined as to origin. But sufficient has been brought forward, we believe, to demonstrate that Christendom as a whole is, *on their own admission*, not founded on the pure teachings of Scripture but upon philosophy and speculation.

"The time will come," said Paul, "when they will not endure sound doctrine." But his words of exhortation to Timothy outline the course to be followed by those who by a patient continuance in well-doing, would seek for glory, honor and immortality—

"Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned . . . from a child thou hast known THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, WHICH ARE ABLE TO MAKE THEE WISE UNTO SALVATION"  
(2 Tim. 2:14-15).

Truly as we survey the gross darkness that engulfs Christendom, we are grateful for the unchanging Word of God, which (2 Pet. 1:19) calls the—

*"Sure word of prophecy; whereunto we do well that we take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place."*

—G.V.G.

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## Draw Nigh to God

*"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ"*  
—Ephesians 2:13.

COULD THERE be a greater privilege for mortal human beings, subject to sickness, pain, sorrow and death, than to be brought near into family relationship with the Great Fountain and Source of all power, life, wisdom, mercy and love? Could we find any other friend so able and willing to help, so very near to us at all times, and so discerning of our every need? David could say of God—

"My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber.

"Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand" (Psa. 121:2-5).

With this calm assurance of the *reality* of the over-ruling hand of God in his life, David could confidently say—

"Thou hast put **gladness in my heart**, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.

"I will both lay me down in peace and sleep: for Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety"  
(Psa. 4:7-8).

Now this close relationship to God that animated and brought stability and purpose into the life and actions of David, may also be ours if the desire of our hearts is fully directed to that end. David said—

"I entreated Thy favor **with my whole heart**" (Psa. 119:58).

God's favor, His love and care are *rigidly restricted by the principles He has revealed unto us*—

"Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up" (James 4:8-10).

This is a principle that stands out clearly throughout the Scriptures: that God will not accept us as His children, nor bring His infinite power to bear on our behalf, "as a Father doth his children" unless our hands are clean and our hearts are pure toward Him—

"Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity nor sworn deceitfully. "He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation" (Psa. 24:3-5).

But of those who obey not the will of God it is revealed—

"The face of the Lord is **against them that do evil**, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth."

This principle is illustrated many times in the history of Israel. As an example we may cite the words that God sent to Asa, one of the good kings of Judah, by Azariah—

"And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; the Lord is with you, **while ye be with Him**, and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you" (2 Chron. 15:2).

The way to God's favor, is the way of life and hope, as set forth in the Gospel of salvation. Upon a full understanding of this, and repentance toward God, we become, by baptism into Christ, the sons and daughters of God, in covenant relationship with Him, and heirs with Christ of the glorious things that God has put in store for His people.

We are then said to be "in Christ" and members of his Body, and of the Household of Faith. In this position, with God as our Father, we have the consolation—

"Like as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him" (Psa. 103:13).

Such is our relation to God and to the Lord Jesus as we enter upon the way of life; but *to maintain this relationship throughout our lives is the great work that lies ahead of us*. To constantly remain in God's favor and under His loving care depends upon our staying close to Him from day to day to the end. Otherwise it had been better for us had we never known God (2 Pet. 2:21)—

"It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them".

We read that "*God is love*," but we also read in another place that "*Our God is a consuming fire*." This we can understand from the passages quoted above. His love toward His children who are brought nigh by the blood of His Son, and who continue in this position, steadfast and unmovable, is said to be so great that it "passeth knowledge" (Eph. 3:19).

It is so great that the whole course of things on the earth is always directed and controlled for their sakes: kingdoms have been overthrown, the earth has shook and the sun has stood still as the power of God moved on behalf of those He loved.

But the earth has swallowed up His enemies, and consuming fire has destroyed those that rebelled against Him.

*We want to be the object of His love, and not the victim of His consuming anger; for there is none that can deliver out of His hand those that rebel against His Word.* —E.W.B.

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## Signs of the Times

MORE THAN a century ago bro. John Thomas wrote down a conclusion, based upon his understanding of prophecy, that —

**"There cannot be the shadow of a doubt that the Autocrat of Russia, when he shall have attained to the plenitude of his power and dominion, is the subject of the prophecy contained in the 38th and 39th of Ezekiel."**

Many times these words have been quoted as evidence of the depth of understanding which this pioneer in modern exposition of prophecy displayed in all his writings, but never were his conclusions proved more correct than in the present international developments, with particular reference to Russia.

It was impossible 100 years ago for the writer of the above quotation to have had more than a faint idea as to the details of just **how** this Northern Colossus would or could "gather unto himself many people" and amass that gigantic aggregation of military forces described by the prophets Ezekiel, Daniel and Joel. But his overall picture of the Russian confederacy and its role in international affairs in the time of the end has proved correct and unerring, and we, in this advanced era, are privileged to witness the detailed development of this latter-day phase of the Nebuchadnezzar vision which the royal dreamer was told would have its climax "in the latter days."

By devious methods, but always according to a definite pattern and policy, the Soviet Union has succeeded in bringing under her direct influence **more than a third of the Earth's population**, a group which is **still growing** despite the efforts and huge expenditures by the West to prevent it.

In addition to the many peoples which the Soviets have been able to bring directly into their organization, numerous "fifth column" Communist organizations are planted in every country, ready, at Moscow's bidding to seize every opportunity to stir up the populace against their own governments in favor of the Soviet policies to "divide and conquer."

Recently we called attention to the obvious fact that the Soviets now have Iraq firmly in their clutches, giving the Russian Bear a firm foothold in a highly strategic area of the Mideast. Recently it has come to light that Russia has her eyes on another peoples who under Soviet influence and dictation, could be the key to the opening up of a vast area that would form a land-bridge into the very heart of the Mideast and easy access to the Persian gulf and the Indian ocean.

### A Plum Ripe for Soviet Plucking

RECENTLY a small news item told of 900 Russian-trained and armed Kurdish warriors passing through the Suez canal on their way, supposedly, to Iraq. No further mention, so far as we have seen, has been made of the disposition of these troops. But recently the Kurds, that ancient, fierce and mysterious people, have been drawing the attention of news commentators, especially so in view of their having become connected with Soviet intrigue and propaganda. The Kurds were described in a recent news magazine article as follows:

**"They are men without a country, who in recent weeks have been on the world's front pages. There are nine million Kurds, spread over an ill-defined, Texas-sized wilderness of jagged mountains and wind-whipped plateaus. Their land curves like a 600-mile dagger across the heart of the Mideast."**

It is noted that this Kurdish domain is chiefly confined to Turkey, Iran (Persia) and Iraq, but many Kurds are to be found in southern Russia, Syria and other Mideast countries.

The Kurds are an ancient people, of whose racial origin little is known, but their beginnings as a distinct race date as far back as 2000 B. C. They have been noted as a fierce, war-like people, independent and resourceful, with an inborn desire for independence and a government of their own, a goal to which they have never attained fully, and what government of their own they have had has been for only brief periods.

Taking advantage of this long-suppressed desire of the Kurds for self-government, and the situation surrounding the Kurds in general, Soviet Russia and other Communist elements in the Mideast are seeking to fan the smouldering desires and prejudices of the Kurds into a flame which could, with Russian backing, **establish another Soviet base of operations in the Mideast in the very location most convenient for a Russian onslaught on the entire area.**

The Kurds have for centuries been cruelly subdued and oppressed by the Turks and other peoples of the Mideast area, and they have a double reason for grasping at any opportunity to gain their own independence and at the same time take vengeance on their age-old oppressors. The wily Soviets are now offering them that opportunity.

### **Soviet Political Magic at Work**

THE FOLLOWING facts demonstrate beyond question that Russia's courtship of the Kurds is no trifling matter:—

The Communist influence has been at work among the Kurds for at least 15 years. In 1945, through Stalin's offices, a Kurdish republic was organized in northwestern Iran, and, although this attempt to form a nucleus for a Kurdish-dominated government lasted only a year, it firmly implanted the idea in the minds of Kurds everywhere that **Communist Russia was the patron, backer and benefactor of this oppressed and restless people.**

And so it is now highly significant that the Kurds provide half the Communists in Iraq and Syria, giving the Soviets direct control over 10 to 25 per cent of the population of Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria, in many instances constituting a balance of power which could easily sway these countries in favor of a Soviet-dominated government.

The stage is set and the door is opened wide for another Soviet conquest in the Mideast, as the Western powers view the situation with alarm, but are powerless to prevent its development in favor of Russian policies and designs.

### **Communists Gain in Southeast Asia**

REGARDLESS OF a deluge of propaganda recently released in an effort to show that Communist China had received a number of setbacks lately in their efforts to monopolize the trades and indoctrinate the people of Southeast Asia, recent happenings in that area would seem to indicate that this propaganda is more wishful thinking than fact.

In the first elections for independent government on the island of Singapore, the Communist-dominated People's Action Party captured **43 out of 51 legislative seats**, ousted the "moderate" chief minister and elected a minister who had the full support of Singapore's Communist party.

The new minister in his campaign advocated release of pro-Communist leaders and the **closing of Britain's huge military base on the island.** It is generally admitted that the British now fear that their great naval base in Singapore will soon become untenable.

Communist leaders are now boldly proclaiming that "The winds of Asia will soon blow away the white man forever." **A rapid switch of allegiance from Nationalist to Communist China is**

**noted among the Chinese who compose 80 per cent of the population of Singapore**, and the amount of money being collected and sent to China for the support of the Peking government is steadily increasing.

### **A Look Beneath the Surface**

AS ANOTHER good will ambassador from Russia, Deputy Premier Koslov, tours the U.S.A., and Khrushchev and other Soviet leaders express their desire for better relations with America and good will toward all peoples—an attitude to which Western diplomats would heartily agree if they could have any confidence in such peaceful overtures—a look beneath the surface of things reveals a different picture. For, the good words cannot completely cover up the intrigue, prejudice, fear and suspicion which lurks behind the curtain of peace and good will, things which form an impassable barrier against the possibility of "peaceful coexistence."

The U. S. State Department has recently compiled and released an analysis of Soviet notes in which Russia at different times has set forth her claims, accusations and intentions. It is a long story of distortions, false charges, broken pledges and threats against one and all (especially the U. S.) who might dare to stand in the way of Russian "progress."

These notes go back as far as the Russian revolution, the rise of Hitler to power and the events of World War II, and every evil thing that occurred during these times is chargeable to the West, so say the Soviets, while the Russians come forth as white and clean as lambs from the washing.

The State Department declares that "Russia has rewritten history by omission and distortion," and a review and analysis of Russian history since the formation of the Soviet is a history of aggression against the weak, undermining political intrigue and broken promises in dealings with the strong.

All of which leads to the inevitable conclusion that no worthwhile agreements can be consummated between the great powers by foreign minister conferences or summit meetings. The nations are mad; honor and reliability are absent from the conference tables; every proposal and suggestion is met with doubt and suspicion, while fear of loss of prestige and diplomatic advantage is of far more concern than constructive international agreements. All hope of lasting, peaceful international agreements has vanished from the earth.

The lines are drawn taut and the flip of a finger could break the slender cord that separates the contending factions from armed conflict. How close we are to the final act is a divine secret. We can only be prepared to meet it when it comes by heeding the divine admonition, "Be ye also ready." O.B.

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### **Correspondence**

Dear brethren and sisters, Greetings.

A few years ago an article of mine appeared in the Berean entitled "Filled with All the Fulness of God."

I received many comments on it, mostly favourable, but a few were strongly critical on the ground that the article gave the impression of teaching a present possession of the Holy Spirit—that it would encourage unsound theories on this subject—that it would obscure the basic truth that only by constant prayerful study and meditation upon God's revealed Word is there any hope of attaining to salvation—that it would encourage the false and fatal tendency (very prevalent in the religions of the world) to depend in pride and presumption on supposed "direct guidance" rather than that healthy, essential "Searching the Scriptures" so strongly enjoined upon us.

The commendations were encouraging, but I believe under the circumstances the criticisms were more useful and beneficial, and I can truthfully say I appreciated them.

Time has proven that their fears expressed were to some extent justified, especially as regards members of other groups. Theories were, and still are, being advocated in other groups of which, I was totally unaware at the time—false theories on this matter, coupled with worldliness, "new" thought, "science," the exaltation of the wisdom of the world and of the world's church leaders, and false theories about the Creation. These theories are now a matter of prominence in another group.

I am extremely anxious to avoid any appearance of alliance or sympathy with this development.

I can very frankly say that if I were to write the article again I would be much more careful and concerned to choose words and expressions that would not distress sound brethren or carry impressions that I did not intend.

My whole desire and purpose was to emphasize the marvellousness and wonderfulness of our holy calling in Christ Jesus—that God has condescended to promise to strengthen and guide and teach and transform and work in us to change us from natural, earthy, perishing creatures to the glorious destiny of possessors of the divine nature and members for ever of the divine family.

In retrospect, I can see that in the enthusiasm of this attempt I was not sufficiently wise or careful to avoid expressions that could encourage false theories.

Actually, far from desiring in any way to encourage neglect of by-passing of the Word of Truth, my whole desire and intention was to inspire to a deeper appreciation and study of it. I believe such a constant, lifelong application to the Word is absolutely **vital to salvation**—the only thing that can "transform us in the spirit of our minds" and change us from the ignorant, perishing mind of the flesh to the glorious, pure mind of the spirit—and that we all sadly fall short of what could and should be done in this respect.

In view of all these considerations, I would therefore ask that this article be considered as withdrawn.

This is written principally for the sake of an elderly brother who has been deeply concerned with the maintenance of the beautiful simplicity of the Truth, and fearful of the introduction of any element that may confuse or obscure that simplicity. I truly regret any concern or sorrow that has been occasioned. Sincerely your brother,

G. V. Growcott

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### **Ecclesial News**

**HONESDALE, Penna—O. F. Hall, Main Street—Bible Class and Sunday School 10:45 a.m.; Exhortation and Memorial Service, 11:45 a.m.**

Since last report we have been visited by bro. & sis. Russell Frisbie & sis. Patricia Frisbie of Baltimore; bro. & sis. Braden Edwards (Canton); sisters Hallie Smith and Hunt (Houston).

It is always a great pleasure to be visited by brethren and sisters of like faith and fellowship, to partake with them of those emblems which keep the memory of Christ's loving sacrifice for his faithful followers and to converse with them on the glorious Hope of living and reigning with him when present trials and troubles shall vanish away.

To speak of signs of Christ's coming is like reciting the many prophecies in Luke 21, and saying, "Now we are seeing them all being fulfilled." May we be found faithful when he comes.

—bro. H. A. Sommerville

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