

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.

CONTENTS

1961 Subscriptions	Inside Front Cover
THE BODY IS ONE	Inside Front Cover
EDITORIAL: Abiding in Him	321
A PRIEST ON HIS THRONE (Bro. Thomas)	323
FROM ADAM TO MOSES (Bro. Roberts)	327
1960 TEXAS GATHERING REPORT	334
THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH	338
STRONG CRYING AND TEARS	342
SIGNS OF THE TIMES	351
"This Is My Beloved Son"	350
<u>ECCLESIAL NEWS: Claremont, California</u>	<u>Back Cover</u>

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

1961 Subscriptions

A subscription blank is enclosed. Please send to one of the following. (It is easiest for us if sent to Detroit)—

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We are anxious to send the Berean **FREE** to any desiring it that way. Please do not hesitate to request it. If you know of any who might like it, please send us their names.

The Body Is One

"God hath set the members every one of them in the Body, as it hath pleased Him"—1 Cor. 12:18.

YES, that beautiful and true harmony is wrought in the work of the Spirit, yet one God worketh all in all. There is harmony and inter-dependence each upon the other, as Paul wrote to Philemon—

"Without thy mind I would do nothing."

THE functioning of the natural body is compared, for the sake of elucidating the subject in hand, to the Body of saints of which Christ is the Head—

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12).

AND SO it is, where these conditions prevail, such as the apostle sought, where all are doing their several works in harmonious union and love and peace, there is opportunity for growth and development in the body toward perfection of operation.

CONVERSELY, where this unity of operation does not exist in the Body, it becomes sick, as the natural body does when one of its members lacks health and vigor.

"There should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one of another" (v. 25).

IF ONE member is missing from the ecclesia in its many and various activities, the operation of the whole will be impaired. There must be the ear to hear, the foot to walk, the hand to work, the eye to see and the heart to feel, each deriving its nourishment from the Body, and the Body from it, thus making peace.

LET US remember the truth as Paul has written it for our instruction, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. In this way the proper atmosphere is provided where harmony and peace will reign, and the blessings of God will come down upon us to our good.

—W.J.P.

EDITORIAL

Abiding in Him

"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing"—John 15:5

DURING THE month of October, we were once again in the company of Jesus as a result of reading the Bible according to the plan set forth in the Bible Companion. To follow him through John's record, is to be lifted out of our surroundings, and brought close to Jesus in a manner exclusive with John, for he says in chap. 20:31—

"These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his Name."

His ministry was brought to a close by eating the Passover with his disciples, after which he instituted the memorial feast. The time had now arrived for Jesus to explain many of the things pertaining to his work that the disciples had not understood. As he spoke, they must have listened with rapt attention for Jesus "was troubled in spirit," and talked as he had never done at any time. Following a question put by Thomas, Jesus said—

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"—14:6.

They were soon to know that "the Way" was to be opened: "the Truth" was to be manifested, and "the Life" was to be conferred. Many sincere people think that any way is all-sufficient, but a careful examination of the Word soon reveals that there is no way apart from Jesus. With regard to truth, there is much to consider; but what we are deeply interested in is "the Truth as it is in Jesus." This is the Truth that "will make us free."

Life is a small but much misunderstood word. How sad it is to see so many who believe that they possess life in all its fulness, when actually they merely possess it temporarily, like the flower of the field. For, says James,

"What is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away"—4:14.

If any man would have life, *he must come to Jesus*, who is the "Resurrection and the Life." The life to be conferred is eternal life, and that *can only be attained by belief and obedience of the one true Gospel of the Kingdom.*

* * *

THEY WERE now on the way to the mount of Olives and, as they walked along, Jesus said,

"You will all be offended because of me this night."

That is, they would be perplexed, or confounded, because of what was to happen to him. Not knowing what was ahead of them, Peter assured the Lord that the others might be offended, but he would never be. But within the next few hours Peter failed, and denied that he even knew Jesus. But as the Master looked at him, he remembered what he had said and went out into the night and wept bitterly.

Tears were nothing to be ashamed of, for any brother, who is doing all in his power to walk in the Truth, will weep bitterly when he discovers that he has been overtaken in a trespass.

Among the expressive forms of speech used by Jesus, on this occasion, there is one of deep significance—

"I am the Vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING"—15:5.

Here we have that intimate relationship between Jesus and those "in him" by and through *belief and obedience of the Gospel*—a relationship unequalled in all the world.

"I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, **He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit**"—15:1-2.

Let us stop and look at this verse, and read those words again. "Every branch IN ME that beareth not fruit He taketh away." Of all the words of Jesus, those above all should bring us sharply to attention. Even though we come into Christ by the only way possible, *we will not remain IN HIM unless we bear fruit*. Should this not stir us up to a severe introspection, and a self-judging of character?

However, the other side of the picture is encouraging—

"Every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth MORE fruit."

This pruning, or chastening, says Paul, is a grievous experience which afterwards yields the "peaceable fruit of righteousness." But observe this closely, for the promise is not for everyone: it is *only* to those "who are *exercised* thereby." To be exercised is to be agitated mentally, and that is how we should react to the pruning, or chastening given us by the Father.

Let us not be content to be baptized into Christ; but let us make sure that we are "*abiding* in him." For says Jesus—

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (v. 6).

There are two ways set before us, and we have the liberty of choosing. If we bear no fruit, then all we have in prospect is sorrow, and rejection when we come before Jesus for judgment. But if we endure chastening, and thereby bring forth fruit to the honor and glory of the Father, we have a joy set before us such as Jesus looked forward to, and which enabled him to endure the cross and despise the shame.

If we would be among those who bear fruit, then let us bear in mind that in whatever way we serve God, either in our daily walk, or in our spiritual exercises on the first day of the week, it must not be considered as a matter of *self-denial*. The only acceptable way of serving God is because of *love* and *desire*, or as it was expressed in the Law of Moses, a joyful free-will offering.

* * *

IF WE would abide in Jesus, and bring forth fruit, we must do as David said in Ps. 119:11—

"Thy Word have I HID IN MINE HEART, that I might not sin against Thee."

The preparation of the heart is the work of a life-time. It is essential that it be maintained daily by reading and meditation on the things of God. "Let my words abide in you," said Jesus, and Paul expresses it this way—

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you RICHLY."

By following such a wise course, we will be able to abide in him, for "*without him we can do nothing*."

Waiting for Christ may be painful at times, but it is the course of wisdom to endure the trials of this life, for nothing can be compared to the transcendent joy that will be experienced by those who shall be found worthy to enter the Kingdom of God. Therefore—

"*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life*"—Prov. 4:23. —Editor

A Priest upon His Throne

"In the last days the mountain of the Lord's House shall be established . . . and all nations shall flow unto it . . . out of Zion shall go forth the law"—Isa.2

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

IN THE everlasting covenant made with David, the son promised him, who is to sit upon his throne and to wear his crown for ever, is also set forth as a *sacrificial victim*—

"In suffering for iniquity I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes due to the children of Adam."

So the passage is rendered by Adam Clarke. It is in strict accordance with the truth in the case; and in agreement with the testimony, which says—

"He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:4-5).

But being a *sacrifice* for sin, who should be the priest in the case, and enter into the Most Holy with his blood to make atonement, or reconciliation, for the people? Where there is a sacrifice there is also of necessity a priest.

There were priests under the Law of Moses, who went into the Most Holy with the blood of the slain beasts, and sprinkled it upon the lid of the ark called the propitiatory, or mercy-seat, upon which the cherubic faces looked.

But the blood of David's Son was not to be sprinkled *there*. It was not to be carried into the Most Holy made with hands, either by himself, or by the high priest of the Law: and wherever its memorial was presented, it could only be exhibited by a high priest.

The Son of David could not officiate as a priest on earth so long as the covenant from Sinai continued the law of the land; because it permitted only the tribe of Levi to minister in holy things. He belonged to the tribe of Judah—

"Of which Moses said nothing concerning priesthood."

He could not enter into the temple after his resurrection and present himself before the Lord in its most holy place; neither could the Levitical high priest enter heaven with the memorial of Shiloh's death.

What, then, was to be done? David's Son must appear in heaven in his own person, and as the High Priest of a new law offer himself before God.

But the covenant made with David, while it speaks of his son as a sacrifice, and, by implication, of his resurrection, and future occupation of his throne for ever; says nothing about him as high priest of his kingdom.

Hence, in order that he might enter his divine Father's presence as a high priest, and hereafter sit as a priest on the throne of David's Kingdom, "*the Word of the Oath*" (Heb. 7:28) was given for the purpose. This was necessary for—

"No man taketh this honor upon himself, but he that is called of God, as Aaron was."

David's Son was called to the high priesthood of the Kingdom, as distinctly as Aaron was to the same honor under the Mosaic Law (Heb. 5:4-6; Psa. 110:4)—

"He glorified not himself to be made a high priest; but He that said unto him, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten thee; saith also in another place, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec."

Here, then, are two *orders of priesthood*—the Order of Melchizedec, and the Order of Aaron. Melchizedec's was contemporary with Abraham; Aaron's was not instituted until 430 years after the confirmation of the covenant. Of Melchizedec, the apostle could have said much more than he did say; but he has said enough to give us an idea of his order of priesthood.

In this he was without predecessor, or successor, without sacerdotal genealogy, and without beginning of official days, or end of life; but, assimilated to the Son of God, abideth a priest continually; of whom also it is testified he liveth.

The Aaronic priesthood was the reverse of all this. Its priests were descended from Aaron, their mothers were of the tribe of Levi, their fathers in office before them, upon which they entered at 30 years, and vacated it at 50.

But the priesthood of Shiloh is not like this. His pedigree is royal, and not sacerdotal. He had no predecessor, nor will he ever vacate the office that another may take his place.

It is probable that Shem was the personage to whom Abraham paid tithes on his return from the slaughter of the kings. Abraham died 35 years before Shem reached his 502nd year, after the flood. At this date, Isaac was 110, and Jacob 50; so that they were contemporary with Shem for these periods of their lives.

Now, Melchizedec is a word expressive of the character of the person who bore it. It signifies "King of Righteousness," or "Righteous King." He was the greatest king in Canaan, and reigned in Salem, which signifies "Peace," and is afterwards called Jerusalem; so that this righteous king was king of Peace. Melchizedec, king of righteousness, and king of peace, and priest of the Most High God, is the type, contemporary with the holder of the promises, of the Seed, or Christ, on the throne of the Kingdom of God.

The word of the oath, saying—

"I have sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec."
—having changed the priesthood of the Kingdom—

"There is made of necessity also a change of the law."
—of the State. No revolution was more complete and radical than that necessitated by the substitution of the Melchizedec for the Aaronic priesthood of the commonwealth of Israel. Under the Mosaic code the regal and pontifical offices were divided, and held by two distinct orders of men. The regal was hereditary in the family of David, and the pontifical was hereditary in the family of Aaron.

But when the new code shall be promulgated, that, namely, which is to "go forth from Zion" when Christ shall give peace to the world, and judge among the nations, the kingly and priestly offices will be united, and their functions be exercised by one person, even Jesus, "who is King of Righteousness and King of Peace, the Priest of the Most High God," as Melchizedec was.

Jesus the High Priest will inherit the throne of David by virtue of the covenant made with him. If there had been no other oaths than that with Abraham, and this with David, *David's Son could not have been a priest upon his throne*. But the Word of the oath coming in, the throne and priesthood become the right of Christ, the Lord.

* * *

IN THE everlasting covenant made with David it is declared of his immortal son by the Lord, saying—

"He shall build a house for My Name."

David wished to execute this great national work, but was forbidden. It was afterwards accomplished by Solomon, and in this he eminently typified the "greater than Solomon," who is to construct a similar edifice, only on a vastly more magnificent scale. This will appear from the following testimony.

After Solomon's temple was laid in ruins, and while the Jews, after their return from Babylon, were erecting a new one upon the site of the old, the Word of the Lord came to the prophet, saying—

"Behold the man whose name is THE BRANCH: and he shall grow up out of his place, and HE SHALL BUILD THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD;

"And he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and shall be a priest upon his throne.

"And they that are far off shall come and build in the Temple of the Lord" (Zech. 6:12-15).

Let the reader turn to the following texts, and he will have no doubt as to the person styled the Branch—Zech. 3:8; Isa. 11:1; Jer 23:5; 33:15; Rev. 22:16.

The Melchizedec Son of David, then, is to build the Millennial Temple in Jerusalem to the Name of Jehovah; and as the Tyrian Gentiles aided Solomon to rear his edifice, so those who are far off from Jerusalem, where the prophecy was delivered, are to co-operate in the erection of Shiloh's which is to be "a House of Prayer for all people" (Isa. 56:7), when the Lord shall—

"Plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art My people (Isa. 51:16).

If the reader wish to know more about the temple to be built by Shiloh in Jerusalem, he can consult Ezekiel. The description comes in between the battle of Armageddon, in which Nebuchadnezzar's image is broken to pieces on the mountains of Israel, and the earth shining with the glory of the Lord. Vs. 1-9 of ch. 43 show that the era of the Temple described is when Shiloh—

"Dwells in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and His holy Name they shall defile no more."

This is conclusive; for ever since their exodus from Egypt until the present time, *they have incessantly defiled the Lord's Name*; but the prophecy contemplates a period when they shall do it "NO MORE."

When the Lord Jesus shall sit upon the throne of his father David, as high priest of the nation, and has dedicated the Temple to the Most High, what then?—

"Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the House (or Temple) of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." (Isa. 2:3).

* * *

"The sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the Name of the Lord, to be His servants—every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant; even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make joyful in My House of Prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon Mine altar.

"There shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts." (Isa. 56:6-7; Zech. 14:21).

* * *

From Adam to Moses

"Consider how great this man was to whom even Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils . . . King of Righteousness and King of Peace"—Hebrews 7:2

By **BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS**

TO SEE the Law of Moses in its right place, we must look at the circumstances going before. We must not imagine that the world was without law from God in the times before the Law of Moses. *There is the clearest evidence that law, commandment and statute were in force*, and that men were righteous or wicked according to their attitude towards these during that time. Thus of Abraham God said to Isaac (Gen. 26:5) that he kept—

"My charge, My Commandments, My statutes and My laws."
—which was centuries before the giving of the Law, So, of Abraham's contemporaries it is testified, in the case of the subjects of Abimelech, king of Gerar, that they were "a righteous nation," and the king a man of integrity (Gen. 20:4-6); and in the case of the Sodomites, that they were—

"Sinners before the Lord exceedingly" (Gen. 13:13).

The abstract possibility of finding righteous men in Sodom was admitted in the Lord's response to Abraham—

"If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes" (18:26);

And the existence of godlessness as the prevalent quality of man at that time is recognized in the remark of Abraham to Abimelech—

"Surely the fear of God is not in this place" (20:11).

Indeed, *the entire history of the world before that time, as given in the Bible, is a history of man's relation to God*. When Adam was driven out of Eden, his relation to God was not suspended, though changed by the sentence of death affecting all mankind. Man was under command to walk in the way of God, but, at the end of over 1,600 years—

"The wickedness of man was great in the earth . . . all flesh had corrupted HIS WAY upon the earth" (Gen. 6:5, 12).

And God said—

"I will destroy man whom I have created" (v. 7).

There were exceptions to this state of things besides Noah in his day. Not only Abel, in the day when the human race was limited to Adam's family circle, but afterwards, in the days of Seth, we read that—

"Men (in a communal capacity) began to call on the Name of the Lord" (4:26).

Enoch also was a prominent example, of whom we read—

"He walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."
—on which Paul's comment is—

"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God"

(Heb. 11:5).

In the days of Noah, things had attained a bad development. There was a complete abandonment of the restraints of divine law among the population, and God saw fit to remove them by a flood, saving "only Noah." *The flood was not an ending of the Lord's law among men, but the assertion of submission to God as the divinely desired rule of life for all men.* The reason of Noah's exemption from the universal destruction was expressed thus (Gen. 7:1)—

"Thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation."

And the continued life of himself and family was to be on the basis of submission to God (Gen. 9:9, 17)—

"Behold, I establish My covenant with you, and with your seed after you . . . between Me and all flesh upon earth."

* * *

THE DIVINE claims upon human submission as the law of human life became more manifest as men again multiplied upon the earth. They proposed to make themselves a name by building a great tower as a rallying point which should prevent their weakening through dispersal. But they were not allowed to carry out their ideas. God interfered with their enterprise, confounded their speech, and—

"Scattered them abroad upon the face of all the earth."

After this scattering, the activity of divine law becomes luminously visible in the office of "Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God," who blessed Abraham on his return from the rescue of Lot.

We should not have known from the casual mention of him in Gen, 14:18-20 how great and REAL a man he was, if he had not been referred to in Psa. 110 as exemplifying the nature of Christ's priesthood, and if he had not been the subject of extended comment by Paul in Heb. 7, where we are asked to—

"Consider how great this man was unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils . . . first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace" (vs. 4, 2).

We know very little as to the details of his position, his origin or his work: but there he stands before us, in the centre of human life as it was in those days, representing the claims of divine law among Noah's descendants who— though far declined from the standard of Noah's righteousness— had yet 470 years to run before the cup of their (the Amorites') iniquity was considered "full"

(Gen. 15:16).

* * *

WHEN WE come to the case of Abraham, we do not come to the introduction of a new principle, but to the *beginning of a new form of the same principle.* The call to separate himself from his ancestral kindred and to leave his native country and depart to another country that God would show him, and the promise that God would make of him a great nation and should ultimately bless the whole family of man in him, required a faith special to himself; but did not begin the operation of the law of faith.

Paul traces this law right back to Eden, introducing Abel as its first exemplification (Heb. 11:4), Abraham standing only fourth on his list of illustrations. He was the root from which faith and obedience expanded into a national form, embodying the system of the law of Moses. But the law was operative towards the race generally before his time.

The reason of a new start in him appears to have been that the procedure employed when mankind were few in number, and comparatively tractable, was no longer suitable when they were developing in extensive populations on all hands, and sinking slowly into a state like that which prevailed before the flood. The altering circumstances required the creation of a national kernel of divine operations in order that God's ultimate purpose to bring the human race into reconciliation with Himself be accomplished.

This gradual transition from a general to a national administration of divine law—this narrowing of already active divine operations with the descendants of Noah to relations with a particular family organized into a nation—enables us to understand the apparently anomalous circumstance that there were "commandments, and statutes, and laws" before the laws of Moses (Gen. 26:5), and that there were "priests that came near to the Lord" before the consecration of Aaron or the separation of the tribe of Levi (Exod. 19:22).

Divine law and priesthood were in fact as old as Eden. They came into operation immediately after Adam's expulsion on account of disobedience; but in a form suited to the extremely limited circumstances of human life when Adam's family circle for centuries formed the only population of the earth. A public and official priest was not required when every obedient man offered his own sacrifice. *Every obedient man was his own priest, as appears in the case of Abel, Noah, Melchizedek, and Abraham.*

In the same way, Levi, the son of Jacob, before Jacob had become a nation, appears to have acted as priest, and to have received divine recognition in the matter, by reason of the special aptitudes referred to in Malachi 2:5-6. His sons would be likely to take after him in the matter, and appear to have acted for the other members of the family and afterwards for the tribes before the formal separation of the Levitical tribe in the wilderness.

* * *

THESE CONSIDERATIONS throw light on the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and on the circumstances filling up the period between the confirmation of the covenant with Abraham and the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. They account for the appearance of Melchizedek as a priest during the life of Abraham. They account for Abraham building an altar and offering sacrifice when he came into the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:6-7), and for the recognition of God among those with whom Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob came in contact during their sojourn in the land, such as Abimelech, King of Gerar (Gen. 20:4), Eliezer of Damascus, Abraham's eldest servant (24:35), Laban and Bethuel (24:50), Ahuzzah, one of Abimelech's courtiers, and Phicol, captain of his army (26:28): also for such lingering traces of the knowledge of God (though mixed with superstition) as exemplified in the case of Balaam, and even the Egyptian priests (Num. 22:8; Exod. 8:19).

There were everywhere the perverted remnants and dying memories of the law of God which had come through Noah from previous times. The very idolatries and ritualisms and sacrifices of the Egyptians, Hittites, and other nations were vestiges of the divine "Way" which had again become "corrupted in all the earth." Religion had degenerated from a thing of enlightenment and obedience to a system of tradition and slavish compliance.

The first promulgated revelation had spent its force, so far as man was concerned, and if the race was not again to be a failure (fit only to be swept away by a second flood), the divine work had to be placed on the basis of a national organism which would generate a sufficiently constraining influence to develop suitable individual units, though it might not thoroughly affect the mass.

Nothing was to be done with the national organizations extant. A new start had to be made, new ground cleared, a new nation made. This was done in the call of Abraham and his posterity. There was a necessary preliminary of 430 years which gave scope not only for the multiplication of Abraham's descendants, but for the perfecting of prominent individuals among them for a part in the final and permanent upshot of the work (in the immortal age beyond)— Luke 13:28. Among those are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph Levi, and Moses, of whom we are expressly informed, and probably many others whose cases are not recorded.

By faith were all these exercised and developed, *but not to the exclusion of obedience*, which has always been the corollary and test of acceptable faith. Of Abraham, the most distinguished of them all, James exclaims—

"Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?"

(Jas. 2: 22).

They were all of them obedient to the (unrepealed) "statutes and commandments and laws," which Abraham kept to God's well pleasing (Gen. 26:4-5).

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off."

* * *

AS REGARDS the bulk of Abraham's posterity, by the time they had become numerous enough to be a nation for rescue from the Egyptians who enslaved them, they were in little better condition than the Egyptians themselves. We learn this from God's message to them by Ezekiel (20:8), from which it appears *they were addicted to the worship of the idols of Egypt*. God had said (v. 7), "Defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt . . . But," He says—

"They rebelled against Me, and would not hearken unto Me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt."

It is a question insoluble, on all human principles of action, why God should have redeemed Israel from Egypt under these circumstances. Human thought can imagine a fitness in the rescue of a deserving nation; but why should God have interfered for a nation to whom Moses said—

"Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess the land . . . for thou art a stiffnecked people" (Deut. 9:5).

To whom David said (Psa. 106:7)—

"Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt."

And concerning whom Isaiah was commanded—

"Write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever, that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord" (Isa. 30:9).

There IS an answer; *but it is an answer whose force is not felt till the mind has learnt in the furnace of deep affliction that man is nothing but a transient appearance, and that God is the only intrinsic reality*. God gives the answer through His prophet Ezekiel (20:9)—

"I wrought FOR MY NAME'S SAKE, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt."

This answer is identical with what we read in Psa. 106:8—

"He saved them FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE that He might make His mighty power to be known" (Psa. 106:8).

* * *

IT IS A first principle of the subject, therefore, that *Israel's deliverance from Egypt and organization into a nation was irrespective of Israel's state, and was wholly a measure with divine aims*, with the promotion of which Israel as a nation in the first instance had very little sympathy. Yet it was needful that (1) they should be brought into a state of willingness to co-operate, and (2) finally into a state of fitness for use as an instrument in the work.

These two objects were secured by admirable methods adopted. As regards the first, Israel was brought into great affliction. Egypt's jealousy was excited in reference to Israel's increase and prosperity; and Pharaoh's suggestion found a ready response among his people that they should "deal wisely" with the alien race and set over them task-masters to afflict them—

"And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor, and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service."

Finally, they ordered the destruction of all male Hebrew babies in hope of stopping their increase. No wonder that—

"The children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God."

The persecution continued at least 80 years for we find Moses himself cast out as a baby under the edict for the drowning of the children, and we find the oppression in full rigor when he stands before Pharaoh at 80 years of age to demand their release.

Such a prolonged experience of extreme hardship was well calculated to humble and predispose the nation for what was to come with the arrival of Moses, and it was probably also a punishment for the state of practical apostasy into which Israel had sunk.

However this may be, the moment Moses presented himself along with Aaron with the commission received at the burning bush and the signs attesting his authority—

"The people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that He had looked on their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshipped."

We pass over the six months or so during which the resistance of Egypt was gradually broken in the ten successive plagues, and behold the children of Israel—after the first Passover, and after the appalling visitation of death in every Egyptian house—leave the country in orderly array, and march from Rameses to Succoth, and thence in a series of marches to the shore of the Red Sea, where they are caught as in a trap, pursued by Pharaoh, and delivered by the miraculous opening of the sea, through which they march to the opposite shore, while Pharaoh and his following host are drowned.

Safe on the eastern side of the sea, they unite in the magnificent song of deliverance set forth in Exo. 15. Afterwards they pursue their way to Horeb, which they reach in about two months. Here in the rock solitudes of the wilderness and under the shadow of the frowning heights of Sinai, they encamp at the end of what may be termed the first act in the national drama.

Miraculously delivered at the end of about a century of oppression, *they are in the best circumstances in which a multitude could be placed for receiving that communication and impress of divine law for which it was the object of all these experiences to prepare them.*

* * *

EVERY MEASURE was now adopted which was calculated to turn the situation to the best possible use for the object in view. First, Moses, the mediator or intermediary in the whole operation, is called to the top of the mount to receive a message for the mustered multitude. Nothing more appropriate could be conceived.

God could have spoken to Moses in the presence of the whole congregation, or He could have spoken direct to the whole congregation, as He did presently for a particular purpose; but there were reasons against both of these modes at this moment.

A message to Moses in their hearing would have been lacking in the dignity and impressiveness that always accompany well-timed reserve, and there could not indeed in that case have been any object in limiting the communication to Moses. A message direct to themselves was out of the question on many grounds. They were an assembly of unenlightened, faithless and rebellious men, though for the moment in the interested and grateful mood that is produced in the least intelligent of men by the conferring of a great benefit. They were not such as it was possible that God could have any direct dealings with. With Moses, it was different: he was "faithful in all his house," as God Himself testified a short time afterwards, adding—

"With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold" (Num. 12:7-8).

It was therefore beautiful and appropriate that the first thing done on completing their journey from Egypt should be to call Moses to the solemn privacy of the top of Sinai.

"*And Moses went up unto God.*" The first communication he received was most natural to the situation. He was directed to fix Israel's attention on the events of the last 9 months, with a view to their divinely-intended purport—

"Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself.

"Now therefore, IF ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure Unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine" (Exo. 19:3-5).

What a suitable opening to the most wonderful negotiation that ever took place upon the earth! Moses went down to the people with the brief but pregnant message—inviting them, on the basis of what had happened in their sight and hearing during nine exacting months to offer a voluntary subjection of their own wills to God, as the condition of their selection. What answer could the people make but:

"All that the Lord hath spoken we will do."

Thus was the foundation of the first covenant laid, in knowledge and consent, to be presently ratified by sacrifice.

Moses took back the answer to the Lord. Next we have a step characterized by all the reasonableness and majesty that always appertain to divine procedure. God would manifest Himself in a sensible manner in the presence of the whole congregation so there might be no room for doubt hereafter as to the reality of His part in their transactions.

They had seen the miracles performed in Egypt, but it had been as yet a matter of faith with them that they were the works of God. Moses had told them so, and in all the circumstances, their belief was reasonable; but God would now put the matter beyond all doubt by *speaking to Moses in their hearing*, so that faith in the work of Moses might not be a matter of reasonable tradition, but might be established for ever upon the *actual evidence of their senses*—

"Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever."

Not only so, but what He should say should also be addressed to the congregation themselves, and should be a declaration of the first principles of the covenant He should make with them as a nation—a compendium of the whole law He should deliver to them—as we discover from the speech divinely delivered from the summit of Sinai in the hearing of "600,000 men, beside women and children."

1960 Texas Gathering Report

"Despise not the chastening of Lord, for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth"—Hebrews 12:5

PART TWO

SOME TIME has transpired since our previous notes were written, but the passage of time impresses upon our minds the great value of these assemblies around the Living Word The human

mind is ever in need of refreshing and we can rejoice in the strength which we gain from the words of God as set before us under the Tabernacle at Hye.

Moving into the last half of the Gathering, we had our minds directed to the life of Christ in association with his disciples, particularly with reference to the sad events leading up to the Master laying down his life for his friends.

For 3½ years this faithful band of followers had listened with glowing hearts to the words of the prophets at Christ's mouth concerning the Kingdom being restored. **They had completely failed to make the personal application of what was necessary to get into the Kingdom.**

But as the crucifixion drew near, the Door into the kingdom was more clearly impressed, as the Saviour repeatedly referred to the fact that he had to suffer and die. Such language did not fit into their picture of the Kingdom and they were bewildered when their leader was apprehended and crucified.

As the disciples contemplated these dark events, they were caused to review the happenings which appeared to be the end of all their hopes. This appearance of things was only because they had failed to observe closely and believe all that the prophets had spoken.

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24 26).

These lessons were to teach that the cross must come before the crown; that humility precedes exaltation. It laid the foundation of faith in God and His Son Jesus—

"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth"
(Heb. 12:6).

Gradually the dawn of the first day broke the darkness of their understanding. One by one the eyes of the disciples were opened to a new horizon. Until then "They knew not the scripture that he must rise again." The weight of evidence turned sadness to unending joy—

"HE IS RISEN . . ."

"The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

Our trials are designed by God to the development of faith in Him. When we have clearly understood the working of the Divine providence in our lives, the darkness will be passed; a new day will dawn and we shall rise to newness of life and joy.

The Scriptures are preserved to instruct us, as we face daily problems. A diligent search will prepare us for the trials necessary for our development.

* * *

WEDNESDAY EVENING again was a call to those who have ears to hear the way to everlasting life. Our lecturer clearly illustrated "what we must do to be saved." The order of the steps to God's Kingdom were shown to be—BELIEF, BAPTISM, OBEDIENCE.

Abundant Scripture was adduced to show that the first requisite is **Belief**. This is preceded by an acquaintance with God's purpose sufficient to bring conviction of the truth of what God proposes. Belief is the natural sequel to this knowledge and a desire to conform to the will of God.

The next step was shown to be **Baptism**. Again an understanding of the scriptural mode of baptism was illustrated by apostolic example. Complete immersion, rather than sprinkling, was shown as the only acceptable method to teach the Divine principle of being buried with Christ, and rising to a newness of life, a confession on the part of the believer of relationship to death because of sin, and a voluntary obedience to God after the answer of a good conscience before witnesses.

While Belief and Baptism relate us to the Way of Salvation, **Obedience** to God's will is the subsequent description of the life of God's children. Indeed the whole tenor of Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, is that Eternal Life can only come by A LIFE DEVOTED TO THE SERVICE OF GOD.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

These lectures, while an opening of the Gospel to the world, were a good exhortation to those who have believed and have put on the Saving Name of Christ in the prescribed manner.

* * *

THURSDAY MORNING, following the daily spiritual feast at the Word of God, we turned our attention to the Waters of the Great Sea, as we witnessed the prophet Jonah in flight from the will of God. We were instructed that we cannot escape the piercing eye of God, but once having put our hand to the plow, we cannot turn back.

Through the events which transpired, we had our vision focussed on the love and mercy of God, that while we are yet sinners Christ died for us. Jonah, "the dove of God," was caused to pass through a typical death and resurrection to teach the principle of salvation. This teaching was not limited to the Jews, but as God said to Abraham—

"In thee shall ALL nations be blessed."

God is no respecter of persons.

So with resurrection from a watery grave, as an experience of Jonah, widely known by all the world of Assyria, the prophet in obedience proclaimed God's mercy to the kingdom of men—

"They repented at the preaching of Jonas."

"As Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites so shall the Son of Man be unto this generation"

(Luke 11:3).

Nineveh repented at the message of the prophet—the rulers of Judah crucified their prophet, their Saviour. Jonah, a symbol of God's mercy, is a sign for all to see and read. His life's experiences graphically illustrated the Divine character of mercy and love. We, as servants of God, must benefit by the lives of these men of old, that others may see the sign of the prophet Jonas as the only way to Salvation.

Reflecting upon God's mercy and love, the Psalmist encourages the faithful to utter forth the praises of Him who has so graciously contemplated our low, helpless estate—

"Who hath humbled Himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth"

(Psa. 113-6).

* * *

OUR AFTERNOON speaker drew attention to the duty of all God's children to praise His holy Name.

Our praises must be much more than lip service; they must be from the depths of the heart. This praising of God is comprehended in a life of joyful service to His will and commands.

Verse 2 of Psa. 113 was shown to have a full meaning of a lifetime of service, not ending with death, but (if acceptable) carrying into the hidden period of the Kingdom of God.

"Blessed be the Name of the Lord from this time forth and for evermore (the hidden period)."

Praise to God must be with gladness and joyfulness, from a willing and spontaneous overflowing of gratitude to God.

Our lives were contrasted with the sun rising and setting each day. Our service has a beginning, and is terminated by our falling asleep in Jesus. This period of labor for God is to be bounded by praise—

"From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the Lord's Name is to be praised."

The closing verses of this Psa. 113 illustrate the reason for praising God. Those who are the humble and meek of the present age, who tremble at the Word of God, who—because of their strong desire—serve God to their present disadvantage, will be exalted above all the rulers of the earth. While speaking of exaltation, it also speaks of glorious resurrection—

"He raiseth the poor out of the dust."

They are raised to association with princes—not the princes of the world who rule by pride and oppression, but the princes of God's people, the kings and priests who form the company of the redeemed serving God forever and ever, and ascribing the praise for evermore to Him Who hath saved them.

"PRAISE YE THE LORD!" (v. 9).

* * *

THE FINAL address of the day was a clear message concerning the responsibility to serve God, when once the good news has sounded in our hearts. The speaker illustrated that the earth's inhabitants are divided into 3 classes, the Just, the Unjust, and the Ignorant. Knowledge of God's will was scripturally shown to be the ground of responsibility to obey God.

Those millions of mankind who wander apart from the way of understanding, who know not God and who please the will of the flesh, are no different from the animals who roam as denizens of the forest or are slaughtered daily for food—

"Man being in honor abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish . . . Like sheep they are laid in the grave: death shall feed on them.

"He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light" (Psa. 49:12-14-19).

The world generally walks in darkness, in the vanity of its natural mind. They are strangers to the life that is in God. Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. Many have lived who knew nothing about God. God will not call these to judgment. They have lived and died in ignorance.

Daniel tells us that many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. He divides this group into two classes (Dan. 12:2)—

"SOME to everlasting life . . . SOME to shame and everlasting contempt."

This statement sets before us the just and the unjust. A knowledge of the will of God makes a man amenable to awaking out of the sleep of death or RE-surrection; an emerging from the dust of the ground to appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Adam and Eve, placed in the beautiful garden of Eden, were given a specific command and told that a failure to conform to the Divine law would surely bring death. The Divine command was not to eat of a certain tree. **When knowledge came, they became responsible.**

If God had not given law, they would not have sinned. The law determined whether they were just or unjust. God's principles of operation never vary. All are accountable to God who become responsible—

"Many are called, but few are chosen."

God has issued the command to many. They are responsible.

Paul stressed this point of responsibility when speaking to the Roman believers (Rom. 7:9)—

"When the commandment came, sin revived and I died."

And verse 12—

"The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just and good."

Nevertheless, the holy commandment will be found **unto death**, unless we become justified. This law is intended to illustrate that sin is exceedingly sinful. When a man becomes aware of his condition, sin becomes clearly sinful. Christ said—

"The words I speak to you are spirit and life (John 6:63).

"He that rejecteth me and my words hath one that judgeth him—the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day" (John 12-48).

Repeatedly we are shown from cover to cover of God's Word that responsibility to God is based on a knowledge of the will of God, that this knowledge requires action on our part to conform to the will of the Creator, that **we are not at liberty to reject God's offer of life**.

Justification can only come by strict obedience to God in the means provided, through baptism into Christ and a lifetime of service to God's requirements. If we wilfully disobey God once having received the call and a knowledge of what God wants, we remain unjustified.

"The entrance of Thy Word giveth light."

Every man receives the command to obey God when the light of His Word shines in his heart.

The just man is justified—he is the one Who lives a life of obedience. All others who have been called are responsible. The warning was clearly sounded in the lecture's final note—

"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more, we, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven"

(Heb. 12:25).

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

Thy Will Be Done on Earth

"God shall send Jesus, whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, spoken of by all the prophets"—Acts 3:30

THAT CHRIST will return to earth, no one who believes in the inspiration of the Scriptures can deny. As he ascended to heaven before the eyes of his wondering disciples, hardly had his form disappeared from view, when two angels suddenly appeared and told them:

"This same Jesus . . . SHALL SO COME in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—Acts. 1:10-11.

The hope of the reward to be received at his return became the outstanding desire and expectation of the true Christians of every age. This hope is stated by Paul in Col. 3:4—

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, THEN shall ye also appear with him in glory."

To the earnest, enlightened watcher for Christ's return, this hope is more than a mere expectation of a marvellous event; it is a *burning, impelling desire*, not only that he come, but that such a one be fully prepared, *waiting and longing* for that coming.

The purifying effect of this hope is shown by one of Christ's beloved apostles in 1 John 3:2-3—

"We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him . . . And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

The apostle Paul tells us that—

"Christ, was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation"—Heb. 9:28.

* * *

IT SHOULD be evident to all, that if we are to look for him in the true scriptural sense, we must know the PURPOSE of his coming. That purpose is explained by Peter—

"And He (God) shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the TIMES OF RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:19-21).

From this scripture testimony we note the following facts—

1. Christ is to remain in heaven until a DEFINITE TIME, then to return to earth.
2. This return is to occur at a time fixed in the purpose of God for the restitution or restoration of certain things, a restoration promised through ALL God's prophets.
3. This restoration of things spoken of by the prophets is to be accomplished by Jesus Christ when he returns to earth.

To determine what Christ is to do when he returns, we need only to discover *what it was the prophets said would be restored*. To say a thing is to be RESTORED, it is evident that it once existed and is now in a state of decay or dissolution. What did the prophets predict would be restored?

In the beginning God created everything "very good," Peace, purity and contentment reigned supreme. Man, in a state of innocence, was in perfect harmony with his Creator. The earth and all that it contained, was just as God intended.

But sin entered. The earth and man upon it were cursed. The scheme of things God had provided for man was wrecked. Man was estranged from his Maker and became a sinful, dying creature, without hope, except God should provide a way for his redemption.

God provided a way of redemption in the Seed promised to the woman, which should "bruise the serpent's head," or *destroy sin and its consequences*. But this restoration was not to be accomplished by sending individuals to heaven at death; not by sending the bulk of humanity to roast in hell fire for eternity, transporting the good to heaven and then burning up the earth! God by his prophet Isaiah (45:18) shows He has a different purpose—

"God himself that formed the earth . . . He created it not in vain. HE FORMED IT TO BE INHABITED;"

And, as we shall see, His final purpose is that it be inhabited by immortals.

* * *

TO RESTORE the earth to Edenic blessedness by removing the curse which was placed upon it because of sin, is, in general, the purpose for which Christ is coming, for we are told in Rev. 22:3—

"For there shall be no more curse."

But the removal of the curse will involve *the establishment on earth of a divine government with Christ as King*. Through his rule over the nations of the earth for a thousand years, this purpose will be accomplished (1 Cor. 15:25-26)—

"For he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

At the end of this reign, Christ's work having been fully accomplished, when all enemies, even sin and death, have been abolished, Christ will deliver up the Kingdom to the Father that "God may be all in all," as at the beginning—

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power (1 Cor. 15:24).

The setting up of this kingdom requires the restoration of a number of things, the fulfilling of certain promises which God made by the mouth of His prophets:—

1. It involves the restoration of His ancient kingdom of Israel which is to be the "first dominion" of that kingdom. Christ had taught his apostles to expect this for they asked:

"Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

In fact, he had told them (Matt. 19:28) that they would—

"Sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Moreover the angels told Christ's mother that God would—

"Give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever."—Luke 1:31-32.

2. This purpose involves the restoration of David's throne and kingdom as promised to David.—2nd Sam. 7; Acts 2:29-30; Eze. 21:27; Amos 9:8-15.

3. David's people, chastened, purged of the rebels, purified and sanctified, will be "planted in a place of their own to move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them ANY MORE (2 Sam. 7:10; Eze. 37:21-22).

Ezekiel, chap. 48, describes this "place" where the restored tribes of Israel will be settled, where a magnificent Temple, a "House of Prayer for all people," will be located, with Christ's twelve apostles reigning over them.

4. Jerusalem will be restored as the capital city of Christ's kingdom, which means that it will be the capital city of the world—Isa. 65:17-18; Jer. 3:17.

5. The land of Canaan, promised to Abraham, Christ and all that are Christ's will be restored forming the territory for the "first dominion" of the kingdom, which will eventually fill the whole earth.— Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; Gal. 3:27-29; Rom. 4:12-25.

* * *

LET US note this work of restoration in the order in which it will occur at Christ's return:

1. Christ returns to the earth "as a thief."—Rev. 16:15.
2. The dead are raised.—1 Thess. 4: 13-17.

3. Christ sits in judgment upon all the responsible of mankind, when the righteous will be separated from the unrighteous.—Matt. 25:31 -46.
4. Immortality conferred upon the righteous; the rejected driven away in shame and contempt to suffer punishment, ending in eternal death.—Matt. 25:46; Dan. 12:2.
5. Christ will organize the accepted and immortalized saints into an army of world-conquerors to subdue the nations of the earth.—Rev. 2:26; Psa. 149:6-9.
6. Christ and the saints destroy the great confederacy of nations that come against the Holy Land at this time— Eze. 38; Dan. 11:40-45; Zech 14:1-12.
7. The "Everlasting Gospel" is proclaimed to all the world, calling upon all people to—

"Fear God and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; worship Him that made heaven & earth."

8. Many will submit (Eze. 38:23) immediately, but apparently the greater portion of earth's inhabitants must be subdued by fiery judgments, or else suffer destruction.

Many world rulers, Papal and Protestant apostate leaders, influenced and abetted by the false prophet, the Pope of Rome, will naturally oppose him who proclaims himself the imperial and ecclesiastical head of all the nations of the world. But their utter destruction is the reward of their folly. All opposition ceases, and the whole world submits to Christ. He is now "king over all the earth," the true "Pope" or spiritual Father, of all people—Is. 9:6; Rev. 19:11-21; Ps. 72:11.

9. Peace and righteousness now bathes the earth from pole to pole. The nations will convert their weapons of war into implements of husbandry, and will study war no more, for the Prince of Peace is here.—Isa. 2:1-4.

In contrast to the injustice, inequality and oppression of human rule, will be justice, mercy and righteousness.—Isa. 11.

Instead of a multitude of sects, ignorance and superstition:

"They shall all know the Lord from the least to the greatest."

With one language and one religion, all will call upon the Name of the Lord with "one consent."—Zeph. 3:9-9-

Crime, corruption and violence will be suppressed, even ferocious animals and poisonous serpents will be tamed or eliminated, for saith the Spirit (Isa. 11:9)—

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain."

Poverty and misery will disappear, for there will be an abundance for all, equally distributed.—Psa. 72:1-4, 12-14.

Life will be not only delightful but greatly prolonged: one will be considered a child at 100 years old—Is. 65:20-23.

* * *

"*Then cometh the end.*" In the 20th chapter of Revelation we have a symbolic picture of the beginning and the ending of Christ's reign. At the beginning Satan is bound, or sin, in its various manifestations among men, is restrained, to bring about that state of righteousness to which we have previously referred.

As Christ's rule nears the end "Satan is loosed a little season," which permits the exposure of what smouldering opposition to Christ remains. The last rebellion against divine authority is wiped

out. There is a resurrection and judgment of those who had died during the Millennial reign. Every vestige of sin and its works is destroyed—

"There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things have passed away."—Rev. 21:4.

God will then be all in all. At the beginning there was only God; at the end—God. A thousand years' reign to make the world divine. This is what Christ will do when he comes.

What a glorious hope! May we now make our calling and election sure that we may have a share in the work of fulfilling God's glorious purpose on earth! —O.B.

Strong Crying and Tears

"Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit, returned from Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness"—v. 1.

Matthew adds, "to be tempted of the devil"—the diabolos.

He was led there for this purpose by the Spirit of God. This testing and trying and proving was an essential part and step in God's purpose in and through him.

Now these things are written for our admonition. Temptation is our great problem. Paul felt this keenly—

"I find a law in my members that when I would do good, evil is present with me."

"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom. 7:21-24).

The more we learn about temptation, the better equipped we are to combat it. In our reading to-day is the most important temptation that has ever occurred—the typical temptation, the typical defence, the typical victory—that of our great Forerunner and Example.

We *must* realize its *reality*—the realness of its effort, its attraction and appeal. The more we can see the basic principles and significance of this temptation, the better we shall be able to cope with all temptation.

* * *

We NOTE from v. 2 that Jesus was tempted, or tested, not just at the end of the 40 days, but throughout the 40 days. We note, too, that this testing fittingly occurs at the beginning of his ministry, just after he had been announced to the nation as the Lamb of God, and had received the power of the Holy Spirit without measure. This temptation gives clear testimony and emphasis to a vital aspect of Truth—that Jesus was a real man, subject to human weakness, and not an "co-equal" part of an omnipotent divinity, as the doctrine of the "Trinity" teaches.

It is the very essence of the Truth that Jesus suffered under the burden of the same defiled nature, the same law of sin in his members, the same pulling of the flesh, as his brethren. The whole meaning and value of his work and victory was his real, complete, perfect, continuous unflinching overcoming.

He never sinned. He never failed. Truly he was strengthened and helped for the tremendous work he had to do—the work of *completely*—perfectly—without one flaw or failure—resisting and overcoming and crushing, by the power of the Word of God, every moment-to-moment tendency of the flesh during every moment of his responsible lifetime.

Truly he was strengthened; because what he accomplished is—as are all other things—in the ultimate, the work of God. Jesus said himself, "I of mine own self can do nothing."

* * *

HERE, in this account of the temptation, are the inner workings of how he overcame. And we note that there was no prolonged or complicated argument — just the clear, simple and ideally appropriate quotation from the Word of God. *One passage of Scripture is worth more than all human writing of all ages combined.*

There is a great lesson here in dealing with temptation. The closer we can get to the *simplicity* of the Word, the closer we are to the way of Christ and the mind of the Spirit. We are clearly warned that—

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked who can know it?" (Jer. 17: 9)

If we give the flesh any scope to twist and argue and confuse the issue, we are lost. There is Scripture for every occasion. It is our wisdom and our life to devote ourselves intensely to seeking these and knowing them as a shield against all temptation.

* * *

"*If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.*" The utter simplicity of this temptation is deceptive, for actually, the principles involved are very deep and embody *all temptation*.

John speaks of the *lust of the flesh*—the desire to enjoy things; the *lust of the eyes*—the desire to get things; the *pride of life*—the desire to get power and admiration. He says these things are all of the world and not of the Father.

We may be surprised to learn that the principal word for "lust" in the New Testament is translated "desire" when applied to the feelings of Jesus and the angels, and "concupiscence" and "covet" when used in a bad sense elsewhere. The point is, *there is no sin in desire or lust itself*; it can be good or bad. The sin is in *what* is desired and *why*.

The reason why the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life are of the world and ungodly is because they are all aspects of *selfishness*—desires to *get*, and to gratify self.

We must get at the *root* of the desire. Is it a desire to GET, or a desire to GIVE?—a desire to gratify ourselves, or a desire to please God?

We must desire to give; seek opportunity to give, center all our pleasure and satisfaction in giving; be thankful of any opportunity, however small and insignificant, of giving, for—said Jesus—it is more blessed, more happy, more satisfying, more enjoyable to give than to get.

We must put aside all desire to get as evil, deceptive, self-destroying misdesire. Temptation, if traced to its roots, always works through the desire of getting something—wanting something—not being satisfied—not being willing in thankfulness to accept God's way and God's provision.

* * *

"*If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.*" This is so simple that it almost seems childish, but let us not be deceived. Here are the lessons of life. Remember the simplicity of the temptation of Adam and Eve. Like any other study, we must learn the basic facts of simple examples. All complications and secondary details must be eliminated so that the basic principles stand out.

It is put in childish form for us because we are but children, for all our assumed maturity and wisdom. Only as simple children can we find the simple, childish way of life. *Worldly wisdom and knowledge and learning and education are a tremendous—almost an insuperable—obstacle in the discernment of the narrow, simple way of life.*

* * *

WE MUST first realize that Jesus was physically exhausted, and experiencing the continual pressure of the pangs of hunger in its extremest form. He had been 40 days and nights without food—40 days and nights in a wilderness, among wild animals, sustained only by faith and prayer.

We must endeavour to fully realize the reality, the extremity, the intensity of the temptations—not just as bald and obvious invitations to disobedience, but *subtle, disguised enticements* to deviate from the narrow path of faith and obedience and seek right ends by wrong means.

Jesus was the Son of God, of quick understanding, yet these temptations were real and powerful. What then of ourselves, in our own waste, howling wilderness filled with all the pitfalls of the dark deceptiveness of the mind of the flesh? What safety or hope is there in any course short of constant prayer and study?

Hunger was a constant, gnawing pressure upon him, and he knew he had at his fingertips unlimited power to satisfy it—he possessed without measure the power that sustains the universe. Only a moment's effortless willing would have produced bread before him.

One small loaf of bread. Was he being wise or foolish, reasonable or unreasonable, to just do nothing for himself, and leave everything to God? Hadn't God given him the means of sustenance? Shouldn't he use it at least just to the extent of bare necessity—just a little plain bread? Why all this fuss, this pantomime of self-denial about such a simple little thing?

So the temptation would be presented—“*You are being stubborn, you are being foolish, you are being 'holier-than-thou' about trifles. You need the bread to do God's work. The Spirit was given for this work. If you follow this course, you'll be hurting and restricting the very work you were given the Spirit to do.*”

Jesus, a mortal man, a man subject to all the natural weakness of mortal flesh, had been entrusted with the Spirit without measure. He had to be perfectly clear in his mind and in his determination as to the use of this power. Carrying the burden and responsibility of this awful power, he still had to work out his salvation with fear and trembling. He had to see the picture with perfect clearness and not deviate from it to the right hand or the left.

He had to clearly discern the motions of sin and the deceptions of the diabolos in all their dark variety and confusion. He had to discern right down to the finest points the distinction between right and wrong—thou shalt and thou shalt not.

We are, in all this, being taught *the absolute necessity of as much knowledge and comprehension and discernment of the Word of God as we can possibly acquire* within the limits of our capacity and opportunity. Jesus, the Head, required this discernment to the utmost degree for the work he had to do.

We have just finished reading together the 119th Psalm. One hundred and seventy-six times, in one hundred and seventy-six verses we have read the same message in one hundred and seventy-six different ways—

"O how love I Thy Law!"

"Thy Law is a light to my path."

"Give me understanding, and I shall keep Thy Law."

"Teach me Thy statutes."

"Through Thy precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way."

This same simple (yet profound) thought—over, and over, and over again—that our *only hope* lies in a constant seeking a FULLER UNDERSTANDING of God's Word.

The answer, too, is repeated over and over—

"It is my meditation all the day."

"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

This is the beautiful lust of the Spirit, that lusteth against the flesh—the righteousness of God—the good and perfect gift from above—the lust to *give*—to give *love*—to give *goodness*, to give *comfort* and *help*, to give happiness and pure divine measure.

* * *

"*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.*" What bearing does this answer of Jesus have on the suggestion to make a loaf of bread to satisfy legitimate hunger? The tempter did not suggest "living by bread alone." Couldn't Jesus have found a scripture more to the point?

We know that this scripture must be the one above all others that is most truly and deeply to the point, and it is our wisdom and our life to try to find out why. What is the *background* of this scripture? On what occasion was it recorded? What does it apply to?

We find that Jesus is quoting from the words of Moses in Deut. 8:2-3, and we note throughout how *perfectly* it applies to Jesus' circumstances, and the purpose for them. In fact, it helps to explain them. These two portions are providentially related as type and antitype—

"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these 40 years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart.

"He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live."

And verse 5—

"Thou shalt also consider in thine heart that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee."

* * *

"*He learned obedience by the things that he suffered.*"

Wasn't he obedient before? Did he have to *learn* obedience? He was never disobedient, but he had to learn by trial and testing and experience the full and beautiful depths of faithful, trusting obedience under tribulation and suffering.

How—in the face of this clear picture of the loving purpose and operation of God—how could Jesus presume to make bread on his own by the Spirit-power, and spoil the whole arrangement of God's operation?

This whole chapter 8 of Deut. is so much to the point. See verse 18—

"Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is He that giveth thee power."

Jesus must never forget that the power he had was of direct divine gift, and for divine use only. Dare he then use it to sustain himself directly, and thus cut himself off from the sweet dependence upon God that he shared with all his brethren?

"It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful."

—and Jesus was the steward of an infinitely greater treasure than any man has ever held. How careful, then, must we be, as faithful stewards, to "Render to God that which is God's." And *all* is God's except for the little which—for the present—He instructs us to give to Caesar for the accomplishment of God's purpose.

Caesar's part is very specifically defined by the law of the land in which we live, and we must take care in the sight of God that we give it honestly and in full measure. Beyond that, all must go to God.

* * *

THE ORDER of the next 2 temptations is different in Matthew and Luke. There must be a reason. We know that God does not make mistakes. We know He does nothing without a reason, and we know that this is the Word of God.

It has been suggested that this variation of order is to indicate that there was a doubling of the temptation series, and that actually there were six—first the 3 recorded by Luke, then the 3 by Matthew. This is not unreasonable, for we know the whole 40 days was a period of temptation.

And there is a certain fitness in this suggestion, for doubling is a significant aspect of important divine things, to signify certainty and establishment. It would lay, at this vital crisis in Jesus' ministry, a broader basis to his victory, showing that he was unmoved and unshaken by repeated assault. It would introduce, too, the very fitting symbol of 6.

* * *

"And the devil (the diabolos) taking him up into an high mountain, showeth him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and saith,

"All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."

The 'diabolos' is sin-in-the-flesh, in all its forms and manifestations—from within, from without, personal, social, national, political.

The particular identity of the diabolos—tempter—deceiver—in Jesus' case is not revealed, as it is not in the very similar case of Job. Therefore it is not important that we know. The value of the record for us lies in other aspects of the matter, and God leaves out the unimportant parts that our attention may not be distracted from that which is important.

Bro. Thomas and bro. Robert were both firmly convinced that there was an external, personal tempter, whoever he may have been. We believe that the more we study the matter scripturally, the more we will be convinced that this is the soundest and safest view.

When God's purpose requires it, He can make sure that the necessary adversary is in the right place, as in the cases of Adam, and Moses, and Job and so many others.

We know Jesus had to battle and overcome the diabolos *in himself*. This was the whole essence and power and meaning of his victory. Bro. Roberts points out that the mere impulse to do something God had prohibited is not in itself transgression. But the slightest entertaining of, or giving in to, that impulse—even only in thought—is transgression.

And Jesus was absolutely sinless in thought, word and deed. That basic fact we must preserve inviolate, and *no interpretation can be entertained which even hints at undermining it.*

The idea is abhorrent that Jesus would ever voluntarily entertain, or toy with, or soliloquize within himself upon a course of sin, even for a moment. To his pure mind all sin was repugnant and hateful, immediately upon recognition.

He had to examine all suggestions and desires and impulses in the light of God's Word, immediately rejecting them without thought of compromise, as soon as their unscripturalness was perceived—

"Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savourest not of the things of God, but of men."

* * *

WHAT A jump from a loaf of bread to all the glory and authority of the kingdoms of the world! What a vast range temptation covers! The *first* was the desire of the flesh in its simplest and most harmless-seeming form. *This* is the pride of life in its fullest and highest possible attainment.

The first was plausible, but we may wonder how this offer of the Kingdoms of the world could in any way be a temptation to him who knew the mind and purpose of God so well.

Let us fully realize that there is much we do not understand, much we shall never understand during this day of weakness and of "seeing through a glass darkly." But *this does not bar us from*

getting the practical guidance and instruction and comfort and warning and mental transformation that these things are designed to give us. Even Paul said:

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do—I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Let us extract the utmost value we can from the vast amount that *is* revealed, and not speculate or be troubled about what is not revealed. There is always danger and division in hazy speculation in the secondary areas, where the light shines but dimly. Let us keep our minds out in the safe bright middle of the beam.

Let us consider a few facts that will help us understand this temptation a little better—help us realize that the battle Jesus fought and the victory he won were very real indeed.

First consider some of his sayings during his ministry:

"I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straightened till it be accomplished!"
(Luke 12:50).

("Straitened" here is the same word as "sick" in "sick of a fever"—Acts 28:8. It means to be pressed down, continuously distressed and afflicted.) Jesus said (Matt. 26:39)—

"Father, save me from this hour" (John 12:27).

"Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me"

Again we read (John 11:33)—

"Jesus groaned within himself, and was troubled."

"In the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears"
(Heb. 5:7).

"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Why art Thou so far from helping me?"

"I am a worm, and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn" (Matt. 27:46; Psa. 22:1-7).

Truly we *must* realize the greatness of the struggle. *He learned obedience by the things that he suffered.* And these 40 terrible days in the wilderness stand out with his crucifixion as the beginning and ending of his suffering for men, two great crises of struggle and affliction.

He was the second Adam, being tested to the uttermost. Once again mankind stood at the crossroads of life and death, and all their destiny was laid upon the shoulders of this one man, alone in the wilderness, famished and physically exhausted after 40 days and nights of danger and privation.

The tempter suggested an *easier way* of establishing the kingdom—of beginning Christ's reign on earth. The essence of the temptation seems to be the questioning the necessity, yea, questioning the rightness and justice of the struggle and sorrow and suffering involved in *God's* appointed way. Why must this terrible suffering be?

Let us not forget that even 3 years later in Gethsemane, on the eve of his crucifixion, he pleaded—

"My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

These things are recorded to show us the terrible reality of the struggle and the glorious magnitude of the victory and sacrifice.

"And Jesus answered and said: "Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

* * *

"And he set him on a pinnacle of the Temple, and said unto him. If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: for it is written—
"He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee."

"*It is written.*" Here was a new and subtle approach—"It is written." We can always find Scripture to justify anything that the flesh wants to do—

"Shall we call down fire from heaven as Elias did?" (Luke 9:54).
"We have a law, and by our law he ought to die" (John 19:7).

They quoted God's law to condemn God's Own Son.

* * *

WHAT IS the temptation in this case? Why would it be a temptation to Christ to cast himself down from a great height? We get light on this from the answer Jesus made—

"*Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*" The Rev. Vers. has "Make trial of." From the beginning, men had said in their weakness and frailty—

"Whereby shall I know this? . . ."
"How can the thing be? . . ."
"I shall not believe unless . . ."
"We trusted that it should have been he . . ."
"Art thou he that should come? . . ."

God is patient and gentle with weakness of faith and perception, but Jesus tells us that—

"Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

And—

"Where much is given, much is expected."

Jesus, too, must be tested, and made strong in the testing.

* * *

"Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

What is the lesson for us? Do we tempt God? Put Him to the test? Question anything He does? Presume to force His hand? Set conditions for Him to meet? This is a common presumption, rooted in the pride of life, as if He were our private God, bound to do our private bidding.

How common it is for men to question His ways, and set their own standards to measure Him by! Judge Him on the basis of what *they* think He should do!

"Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."
"A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh a sign, and no sign shall be given it."

The signs that God Himself has provided according to His own judgment and wisdom are all-sufficient. If they cannot stir us to obedience and zeal, nothing could.

"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

"*Moses and the Prophets*"—there is the key. All the power of salvation is there, if we will make the effort to acquire it. We cannot expect God to work a special miracle for us, and save us from the final "casting down," if we do not lay zealous hold on the means He gives—constant study of His Word.

* * *

"*The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.*" The Jews wanted something spectacular to glorify their nation, and lead them to triumph. They laid down the course that God should follow, instead of humbly seeking God's way. They wanted to put God to their test.

This casting himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple would be just the kind of thing that would have appealed to them and impressed them. Should he use some means like this of gaining notoriety and favor? It would be so easy!

The Greeks, on the other hand, wanted everything explained to *their* satisfaction, to gratify their philosophy and glorify their wisdom. They set down *their* rules for God.

"But, says Paul, "We preach Christ crucified in weakness, the scorn of the worldly wise, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to them that are called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

Christ tempted, Christ suffering, Christ mocked and rejected, Christ crucified—the power of God, and the wisdom of God, and the love of God, and the righteousness of God, and the salvation of God!
—G.V.G.

"THIS IS MY BELOVED SON"

Christ himself—what he was in himself, apart from all extraneous aspects of the case — is quite sufficient to carry conviction with every mind capable of true reflection. Who can explain such a man apart from the record that he is the Son of God?

There never was such a man before or since. Look all through the ages, search every history, ransack every literature, and you will find no figure that can stand by the side of Christ — a man of whom his enemies bore witness that—

"HE SPAKE AS NEVER MAN SPAKE"

—a man who combined such humility of deportment with such sublime self-assertion: such compassion for the erring with such intolerance of the wicked; such incorruptible fidelity to truth with such commiseration for human weakness; such zeal for God with such kindness for man; such abnegation of self-consequence with such proclamation of self-greatness; such adroit independence of speech to his enemies with such sweet and condescending simplicity of language to his disciples; such fire with such meekness; such austerity with sociality and kindness; such greatness with such lowliness; such dignity and power with such tenderness and benignity.

There never was his like before him, as he stands displayed in the consummate narrative of the "gospels"; and there has never been his like since. —**Bro. Roberts**

Signs of the Times

THE 15TH session of the United Nations Assembly brought together the greatest array of world leaders ever to assemble in all U.N. history. Moreover, never before in world history has there been assembled such a company of heads of state to discuss the many problems affecting and perplexing the nations. Because of the presence of so many government heads gathering together at this session, it has been referred to as a "semi-summit" meeting.

To the optimistic, the very willingness of these heads of state to agree to so assemble is looked upon as a good omen of a time to come when a great "parliament of the world" will settle all world controversies. But such optimism considers not that—

"The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men."

—and they know not that His purpose is otherwise than that planned by these little men whose purposes will come to naught

From a purely temporal standpoint, there might be some reason for such optimism **if it were not for the fact that this 15th Assembly has demonstrated more clearly than ever before the irreconcilable nature of present world controversies.**

In this Assembly, composed of representatives of most of the nations of the world, as the WESTERN BLOC and those favouring the recent actions of the U.N. Then the SOVIETS and the nations directly under their control or influence. Also a third, or "NEUTRAL" group which tried to steer a middle course, taking an attitude of "a plague on both your houses" in relation to Russia and the U.S., blaming both for the break-up of the Paris summit meeting and the continuance of the cold war.

Of course, this neutral bloc can only exist temporarily, for, in case of a great crisis involving the whole world, these weak nations would of necessity have to join themselves to one or the other of the powerful groups.

SOVIET PURPOSE STILL IN DOUBT

MR. KHRUSHCHEV'S antics at the U.N. Assembly led some to believe that his purpose is to completely wreck the U.N., but general opinion is turning to the idea that his purpose is not to destroy, but **to weaken the organization so as to strip it of any power to enforce sanctions against Russia or her allies and to eventually pack the U.N. with voting nations sympathetic to Communism.**

There is no reason to believe that the Soviets have any intention of starting a war in the immediate future, but they are willing to go very near the brink of war if necessary to the accomplishment of their purposes.

RUSSIA MUST CONSIDER CHINA ALSO

THE SOVIETS must keep Red China in mind in all their operations, not only as an ally, but as a **potential enemy** as well. Even now Russia may fear China as much as she fears the West. For, what the NATO nations might do is predictable; what Red China might do is not.

It is becoming evident that Communist China will soon be capable of producing atomic weapons, and it doubtless causes both Western and Soviet knees to quake at the prospect. With her unlimited manpower armed with nuclear weapons and all modern equipment, she is calculated to intensify the condition already existing of "Men's hearts failing them for fear of what is coming on the earth."

And this prospect of a nuclear-armed China is by no means mere apprehension. It is now known that German scientists have perfected a method of producing cheap nuclear material and that this process is being offered to all who wish to buy it.

There are good reasons for believing that Russia already has this new process, and fears are growing that small nations, having the cost of nuclear weapons brought within reach of their limited resources, the prospect of a whole world, including irresponsible petty dictators, armed with nuclear weapons is appalling.

AFRICAN MENACE GROWS

IN AFRICA there are nearly 30 new nations having independent governments or ready to receive such. There are now 99 nations in the U.N. Thus **African nations will soon hold nearly a third of the seats in the U.N., each with a voting voice equal of any of the great powers.**

The struggle in Africa now between East and West is not for territory, but a battle to see who will control the minds and the economy of these 250 million people.

At present the Communists have a decided advantage. Both Russia and Communist China have for some time been infiltrating the whole of Central Africa with both technical and political experts who are leaving no stone unturned to win the goodwill of both leaders and people.

The task given these representatives of Communism is obviously to create a Communist-style federation of African states, and they are having remarkable success in laying the foundation for this enterprise.

Conditions in these new African nations makes fertile soil for the growth of Communism. The population is 90 per cent illiterate, poverty-stricken and disease-ridden, with pitifully few teachers or doctors, and with the driving out of the white man this condition will be intensified.

And with the chaotic political situation in most of these nations allowing no opportunity for bettering this condition, Communism has a fertile field in which to flourish.

Africa contains enough potential wealth to arouse the avarice of not only Communist Russia and China, but that of investors throughout the world. **The Continent produces 98 per cent of the world's diamonds, 55 per cent of its gold and 22 per cent of its copper.** In addition many areas are rich in virtually all valuable metals and uranium, while geologists claim that only the surface of Africa's mineral wealth has been scratched.

A recent newspaper survey clearly indicated that, not only have Communists gained a firm foothold in Africa and are already wielding powerful influence in political, economic and industrial affairs, but **in several nations prejudice against Western nations, particularly the U.S., is fierce and outspoken, even in their newspapers.**

LATIN-AMERICA STILL RESTLESS

AT THIS writing a state of tension exists in Cuba which appears to have been purposely created as a propaganda move against the U. S. and an attempt to win sympathy for the Castro government. Large shipments of arms from Communist countries are arriving in Cuba and the U. S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay is on alert and conducting precautionary manoeuvres

An air of tension prevails with a feeling that something is going to happen, but nobody knows just what. This is just what the Communists want, as this tension is transmitted to all Latin-America where 50 per cent of the people are in sympathy with Castro and ripe for Communism.

The overthrow of the El Salvador government, where an oligarchy of wealthy land owners ruled a people steeped in poverty, may be **a straw in the wind indicating what is taking place in Latin-America,** a movement which is in almost every way favourable to the Communist cause.

A CATHOLIC PRESIDENT

THE ELECTION of a Catholic to the office of President of the United States poses many questions as to its relation to the signs of the times, and this is hard to appraise at this time.

This election indicates that there is now less antagonism existing between Catholics and non-Catholics than in former years, in line with the present trend toward the merging of religious groups, **a trend which will have its culmination when Christ comes and the harlot Mother and her daughters will unite to fight against Christ,** erroneously concluding he is the anti-Christ.

The election of a Catholic to the Presidency at this time is also hard to appraise in its relation to the cold war between Russia and the U.S., but in view of the bitter prejudice and rivalry between Communism and Catholicism, it would not appear that a Catholic president would help relations with Russia.

While it is not at all likely that Mr. Kennedy's religion will in any way affect his official actions, **It is certain that the elevation of a Catholic to the office of President of the U.S. will not only increase Catholic prestige in U.S., but all over the world.**

ISRAEL AFFAIRS

THE MIDEAST has been unusually quiet for some time, but it would be unwise to conclude that this is evidence that causes of tension have been removed. However, it is becoming evident that Nasser's dream of uniting the Arab world under his leadership has been exploded. Even his ties with Syria have been greatly weakened during the past few months.

Meanwhile, Israel continues to progress, and her relations with several of the Arab states appears to have improved.

A barren torrid desert, the Negev, which, when the state of Israel was formed was wholly undeveloped, is becoming an asset to the little nation so much in need of territory and the means of providing homes and employment for an ever-expanding population.

The Israeli Ministry of Commerce has blueprinted plans for 6 southern Negev towns, with 70 industrial plants employing 15,000 workers and an estimated population of 60,000. Work on these projects is expected to start immediately.

Meanwhile, development of Negev mineral resources is moving along on a large scale. The output of potash, bromine and salt from the Dead Sea operations has grown until it is estimated that, within a few years, 400,000 tons of Dead Sea products will be sent annually to the port of Eliat for shipment abroad. A new railroad is being built from Sdom linking up with the road to Eliat at Nahal Gofrit.

"The people shall dwell alone" (Num. 23:9), is still true of latter-day Israel. A Jerusalem Post article reports that "Foreign Minister Golda Meir recently reiterated that Israel was maintaining her position of non-alignment with the world's major power blocs."
—O.B.

Say not in thine heart, "It is too good ever to be realized." Rather look into thine heart, and say, Poor, weak, stupid heart, thou art considerable of a fool. Thou thinkest thyself wise in judging by what thou hast felt and seen during seventy years or so, or hast read of for a longer time: knowest thou not that the longest time that man has been upon the earth, is but as one tick on the great clock of the aion of God, who is from everlasting to everlasting? Why should thy brief moment be a standard wherewith to judge the ages? Thou thinkest thyself prudent in estimating existence by the sensations of thy marred and mortal humanity: knowest thou not there was life before thy life? power before thy puny strength? wisdom before thy blundering skill? songs and satisfaction before thy wintry joy? Why should thine afflicted experience be the measure of the best that can be?

Ecclesial News

CLAREMONT, California—141 Princeton.

THOUGH "few and despised" we endeavour to cling tenaciously to the holy precepts of God and the Truth in its purity, striving to keep the lightstand of scriptural truth burning and praying that some who have strayed away from the old foundation of Christadelphian principles may find their way back to the "good way and walk in it."

We would greatly appreciate visits from those of like precious Faith. Our last visitor was Sister Icle Osborne of Denver, who spent two weeks with us last May, whose company greatly cheered and comforted us. —bro. Oscar Beauchamp

* * *

HAMILTON, Ont., Can.—Sherwood Rm., Wentworth Arms Hotel, Main St.—Breaking of Bread, Sunday, 11 a.m.

WE ARE in the closing months of another year, and are constantly watching the signs around us. Certainly we are living in an age of expectancy, and are blessed to have the revealed Word of God.

With this Word in our hands we can confidently follow the events of the nations, knowing that our Heavenly Father rules in the kingdom of men. These events act as signposts on our journey Zionward. We know the road is not smooth, so we must keep a watchful eye in order to avoid the pitfalls.

It is encouraging to have the association of our fellow-pilgrims and in our small meeting we appreciate the company of those of other ecclesias who have been able to visit us, and also others who have written.

We have had brethren Fred Higham of Detroit, and Joseph Jackson of Toronto who have rendered a service in ministering to our needs by way of exhortation. These helps are appreciated.

Also we have had the company of sis. Clara Sparham of London, sis. Joseph Jackson of Toronto, and sis. Fred Higham of Detroit, around the Table of our Lord.

Recent events at the U.N. clearly show the impossibility of man to gain lasting peace. Only by the coming of the Prince of Peace will the world experience the security it desires but cannot obtain. Let us keep our lamps burning while the Bridegroom tarries, and so be ready at his coming. The night is far spent surely the day is at hand! Let us hold fast. —bro. C. Cope

"ABLE TO SAVE TO THE UTTERMOST"

How unspeakable is the comfort we may find in the consideration of what Jesus is and what he will be. All power is in his hands (Matt. 28:18).—God hath given him "to be head over all things to the ecclesia, which is his body" (Eph. 1:22, 23).—God hath exalted him to the glory of His own eternal nature—"angels, authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pet. 3:22).

Is there not a mighty comfort in having thus a friend at the Highest Court? For consider: his present exaltation has reference, among other glorious things, to the requirements of his brethren. He is their priest and mediator. "He ever liveth to make intercession for them" according to the will of God (Heb. 7:25).

He is touched with the feeling of their infirmity; and having suffered like them—being tempted—he is able also to succour them that are tempted (Heb. 4:15; 2:8).

All this means an invisible care-taking and guidance in this present darkness, which must be a source of comfort and confidence to every one whose heart opens in faith to the attested and demonstrated fact. —**Bro. Roberts**

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