

The Berean Christadelphian

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the exposition and defence of the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints, with the object of helping to make ready a People prepared for the coming of the Lord. Opposed to the unscriptural teachings of the papal and protestant churches of the world.

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

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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.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

BUFFALO, N.Y.—OF Hall, Kenmore & Myron Aves., Kenmore, N.Y. — Memorial 10:15 a.m.; Sun. Sch. 11:45; Bible Class Wed., 8 p.m.

Greetings to all brethren and sisters of like precious faith!

As pilgrims and strangers on the earth, on our way to the Promised Land, we have been refreshed and encouraged by the association and fellowship at the Lord's table of: bro. & sis. R. Philip, bro. & sis. J. Hill, and bro. & sis. Dan Gwalchmai of London, Ont.

Words of exhortation for our edification in the Truth were administered to us by bre. Philip and Gwalchmai. Their labor of love in the Truth is deeply appreciated.

With the drawing to a close of another year (which has been most eventful by reason of the fulfilling of the Signs which Christ has given whereby his servants would know when the time for his return is near at hand), may we look forward to the New Year with renewed effort and energy in the Truth to the fulfilling of his words (Luke 21:28)—

"And when these things BEGIN to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

Dear brethren and sisters, we have not only seen the things whereof Christ spake BEGIN to come to pass, but we have seen them continue in their fulfilment until all have practically been fulfilled, which instils the thought in our hearts and minds as to what the greatest event in the coming year may be—even the RETURN TO THE EARTH OF OUR LORD AND MASTER, for he said again (v. 31)—

"So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is NIGH AT HAND!"

Today the sea and waves of the nations continue to rage, but the time is at hand as foreshadowed by Christ at the Sea of Galilee, when—

"He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm."

The proud waves of the nations will be stayed when Christ returns, for God hath said of their furious raging (Job 38:11)—

"Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further."

Wherein are we concerned today? Our part in the whole arrangement of God's wonderful plan of salvation is found in the answer to the gravest of all questions by which we are confronted today as brethren and sisters of Christ—

"Who may abide (remain stedfast or faithful) the day of his coming?"

That which will materially help us in this respect is set forth in beautiful words, dedicated to exhortation, in our hymn—

"Come, let us anew our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year,
And never stand still till the Master appear;

His adorable will let us GLADLY FULFIL,
And our talents improve
By the patience of hope and the labor of love.
"O, that each in the day of his coming may say,
I have fought my way through,
I have finished the work thou didst give me to do.
O, that each from his Lord may receive the glad word—
WELL AND FAITHFULLY DONE!
Enter into my joy, and sit down on my throne."

—bro. G. A. Kling

* * *

HONESDALE, Penna.—210 Eighth Street

OUR MEETINGS are now held at the home of sis. Grace Frisbie, 210 8th St., Honesdale.

We have recently enjoyed the company of sis. Hallie Smith, of Houston. Bro. Nicholas Mammone has met at the home of bro. & sis. R. Frisbie in Baltimore. Bro. & sis. H. A. Sommerville have met with bro. & sis. D. Sommerville in Ringwood, N. J.

Among other great and dreadful latter-day signs of our Lord's advent, surely we can include the destructive disasters involved in man's present frantic, rushing way of life, as typified by the recent terrible airplane crashes here and abroad. All these things constantly remind us that we should be prepared to meet the Lord—our Master and King. —bro. H. A. Sommerville

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HOUSTON, Texas—8008 Junius St.—Sun. Sch. 10; Breaking of Bread 11; Lecture 3rd Sun. 7:30 p.m.; review of daily Bible readings 7 p.m. on other Sundays; Eureka Class 5:45 p.m. each Sun.; Elpis Israel Class 7:30 Wed.

OUR REGULAR Sunday morning meetings for the purpose of memorializing the sacrifice of Christ have been enriched by the presence with us around the table of the following visitors who, with us, wait for the apocalypse of the Lord from heaven: bro. & sis. Wayne Wolfe and sis. Ann Hill of Lampasas, and sis. Edith Scott of Corpus Christi.

The signs in the sun, moon and stars of the Gentile heavens, as the new year opens, are fast approaching that crisis when negotiations among the great powers will no longer be able to avert the clash of arms that will set in motion the "rushing of the nations" that results in their downfall at Armageddon.

Men of the World, Who do not understand the purpose of God, look with horror and apprehension as they contemplate another world war in which modern nuclear weapons will bring chaos and destruction throughout the earth and leave the present "civilization" a smoking ruin.

But we know that when world affairs arrive at this extremity, the mighty hand of God will be manifested in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who with his saints, will rebuke the nations and calm the raging seas of Gentile dominions.

May we put forth our utmost effort during the year ahead so that we shall be among the "called, and chosen, and faithful" ones who, in the power of the Spirit, bring righteousness and peace to this troubled and wicked world!
—bro. Charles Banta

EDITORIAL

What Lies Ahead?

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven"—Matt. 7:21.

MANY OF us will recognize the caption of this month's message as the title of a booklet containing two lectures relating to the times in which we live, and the time when the Kingdom of God will be established throughout the earth—a time when all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.

The two lectures, mentioned above, are based upon the revealed purpose of God which anyone may read in the Bible. Here, in this wonderful Book, we read of a glorious future unmarred by sin, disease and death—a future when the righteous will obtain glory and everlasting joy, and sorrow and mourning will be no more.

There are a great many gracious promises made to the righteous (though, at present, only God knows who the righteous are). For example—

"The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein FOREVER" (Psa. 37:29).

"In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth" (Psa. 72:7).

"The righteous shall never be removed" (Prov. 10:30).

However, these will all be revealed when the Lord comes to establish the Kingdom of God, and to give every man according as his work shall be.

"But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?"

—Mal. 3:2.

This is a pertinent question, and one that should cause us to pause and think and, having thought, to consider, and understand together that there will be only two classes who will come before the Lord for judgment—the faithful and the unfaithful. *Who shall stand?* The word rendered stand means "to continue, to endure, to remain, and to serve." Hence, the question is plain.

* * *

IN THAT decisive day *certain ones will stand*, or endure, and remain to serve the God they have loved during the days of their probation. They will pass safely through "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation," for they heard the sayings of Jesus, and *did them*. They were the wise who built their houses upon a rock—

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was FOUNDED UPON A ROCK"—Matt. 7:25.

When the storm is over, and the sun rises, and gives light to the morning, they will be made ready to partake of the work prepared for them as citizens of the Kingdom of God. But they will be citizens of the highest rank for, said Jesus—

"He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations"—Rev. 2:26.

This power will be used to rebuild the shattered fabric of human life and lead the people in the paths of peace, where there will be showers of blessing, and through them—

"God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations" (Isa. 61:11).

* * *

BUT WHEN that time comes, where will those be who have not been wise, and have built their houses upon the sand? Many of them have boasted in the name they bear; they say they are rich, and their goods have increased, and they think they have need of nothing. They are mixed up in worldly affairs, wasting their time and money in things wherein there is no spiritual profit. By their walk and talk, it is almost impossible to distinguish them from the people of the world. They seem to "have forgotten that they were once purged from their old sins," and completely overlooked the sober warning of John—

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him"—1 John 2:15.

We ask again, where will those be who have but a name to live, and are dead to the requirements of the Gospel? They shall be sought for, but in vain, for they shall not be found. Why should it be so? Jesus gives this answer—

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that DOETH THE WILL OF MY FATHER which is in heaven."—Matt. 7:21.

It is well for us at this time to ask in all seriousness—*What Lies Ahead?* With regard to the ultimate purpose of God, we can answer the question quite easily, but when we attempt to apply the question to ourselves individually, we are confronted with an unsolvable problem.

However, one thing is certain, the road signs on the highway that leads to the Kingdom of God, are easy to read; the instructions are plain, and if we have an intense desire to be among those who will meet with the approval of the Lord, when he comes to be glorified in his saints, we will be "watchful and strengthen the things that remain." We will not depend upon our own judgment, for the words of Jeremiah are too deeply impressed upon our minds—

"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"—Jer. 10:23.

The reason for this is also explained by Jeremiah in chapter 17, where he says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" If we fully comprehend this truth, we will say with David—

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the Way everlasting"—Ps. 139:23, 24.

Before we learned the Truth, we were not aware that "*The heart is deceitful above all things.*" But the Truth has opened our eyes to many things, and this is one of them for which we must be on the alert constantly so that we will not become a victim of it. We all know that we can deceive others; but do we realize that we can deceive ourselves? We can do so, and it is quite easily done. A wrong course can be followed, and when we become conscious of it, instead of retracing our steps, it is possible for us to search everywhere in an attempt to justify our action, and then to console ourselves with the thought that many others have done the same, so it must be all right. It is because of this weakness that the apostle is so emphatic in his urgent warning—

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

We must be fully conscious, as Paul was, that in our flesh dwelleth no good thing, so that when we make decisions with respect to our walk in the Truth, let us be certain that they emanate from the mind of the Spirit, and not from the mind of the flesh—

The Glad Tidings of the Kingdom

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."—Luke 4:19.

IT IS ADMITTED that Jesus fulfilled his mission; consequently, in his proclamation he preached the good news of the acceptable season, or blessed era of the Lord. But what was the great focal truth of this acceptable year? Let Jesus answer the question in his own words—

"I must preach the KINGDOM OF GOD: for **therefore am I sent**" (Luke 4:43).
—and so much did he preach about this Kingdom that the people became impatient and sought to take him by force and make him King. But he would not permit it—

"And because they thought that the Kingdom of God was immediately to appear, he spake a parable to them."
—in which he gave them to understand that he must first take a journey into a far country to be presented before the Ancient of Days to receive from Him the Kingdom, and then to return; when he would bestow upon his servants power and authority over the cities of the world (Dan. 7:13, 14; Luke 19:11, 17; Dan. 7:18, 27).

According to this arrangement, Jesus rose from the dead and took his departure; when he ascended to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, where he is now. He has not yet received the Kingdom, glory, and dominion, or he would have already returned. He is waiting for this—

"Sitting at the right hand of God UNTIL his foes are made his footstool" (Psa. 110:1).

He will then appear in his kingdom and rule as King over all the earth.

* * *

THE Gospel, then, was preached to Abraham by the angel of the Lord; and it was preached by Jesus to his own nation, and to them only; for (Matt. 15:24)—

"He was not sent, save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Paul also declares that it was preached to that generation of Israelites whose carcasses fell in the wilderness; but it did not profit them because they did not believe it (Heb. 4:2). Therefore, God swore in His wrath that they should not enter into the Rest it proclaimed (Heb. 3:18-19).

Before he suffered on the accursed tree, Jesus sent his apostles, and seventy others, throughout the land to "preach THE KINGDOM of God." In recording their obedience to his command, Luke says (9:2, 6)—

"They went through the towns preaching THE GOSPEL."

—so it is clear that to preach the Kingdom is to preach the Gospel; and to preach the Gospel is to preach the Kingdom.

This is a most important demonstration; for it *enables us to determine WHEN we hear the Gospel*. The Gospel is not preached when the things of the Kingdom are omitted. And this is one grand defect in modern preaching. Either there is nothing said about the Kingdom; or a kingdom is preached which is a mere matter of speculation; a kingdom of heaven in principle, in the hearts of men, or somewhere beyond the skies!

But the Gospel does not treat of such a kingdom as this; a mere fiction indoctrinated into men's minds by "the cunning craftiness of those who lie in wait to deceive." So inseparable is the idea of Gospel from that of Kingdom that we find them, not only substituted for each other, but associated together as terms of explanation. Thus—

"Jesus went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God" (Luke 8:1; Mark 1:14).
—and in the prophecy of Mount Olivet it is written—

"This **Gospel of the Kingdom** shall be preached in all the habitable for a testimony to all the nations; and then shall come the end" (Matt. 24:14).

After he rose from the dead, he commanded the apostles—

"Go, preach the Gospel to every creature: he that believes and is immersed shall be saved: and he that believes not shall be condemned"; "Lo, I am with you always, until the end of the world."

In view of these texts, can anyone be so mystified as not to see that salvation is predicated on believing THE Gospel of the Kingdom, and being baptized into Jesus Christ?

They were to preach "THIS Gospel of the Kingdom" in the Name of Jesus. How did they execute the work?

"They went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following" (Mark 16:20).

They began at Jerusalem, passed throughout Judea, then went to Samaria, and lastly, to the end of the earth. They began on the day of Pentecost, and preached only to the Jews for several years; at the end of which, Peter and Paul began to proclaim the Kingdom to Gentiles also.

The labours of the apostles were indefatigable. They filled the Roman empire with their doctrine, and made such an impression upon it that tumults were excited; and they were charged with treason against the state, because they proclaimed another king than Caesar (Acts 17:7, 31), who should rule the world in righteousness as the sovereign Lord of all the earth.

"They spake the Word of God with boldness."

"The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."
—and great kindness was among them all. In about thirty years, the Gospel of the Kingdom was proclaimed in all the world, to every creature under the heaven (Col. 1:6, 23). They finished their work, and fell asleep, the Lord having abundantly fulfilled his promise of co-operating with them to the end of the world.

* * *

THUS, THE same Gospel that was preached to Abraham was preached also to Jews and Gentiles by the apostles after the ascension of Jesus to the right hand of power. There was, however, this difference: when it was preached to Abraham and to the generation which perished in the Wilderness, *it was altogether a matter of promise*; but when preached by the apostles to the Roman nations, *some things connected with the promise were fulfilled*: so that the Gospel of the Kingdom, as they preached it, was partly a matter of promise, partly a matter of history, and partly doctrinal. It was thus presented to mankind in a threefold point of view, which may be stated in this form:—

1. Promises to be fulfilled: or, things concerning the Kingdom of God.
2. Promises fulfilled already; or, things concerning Jesus.
3. The doctrinal import of the fulfilled promises; or, things concerning his Name.

A man might believe all the promises and the doctrinal import, but if he did not believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the subject of them, he would make a very good believing Jew under the law, but he would not be a Christian under grace. This is the great turning point in the faith of an enlightened Jew, and Christian. *Is Jesus of Nazareth the personage described in the Law and the Prophets; has he right and title to the throne of David, and to the dominion of the world?*

The Jew says, "No, we look for another": but the Christian replies, "He unquestionably is the person: we look for no other; but assuredly expect the re-appearance of 'this same Jesus' on earth, to restore the throne and kingdom of David; to occupy them as the King of the Jews; and to be the Melchizedec High Priest and the Ruler of the nations."

Hence, it is the foundation truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Anointed King, the Son of the living God. He is the Rock, or Strength, of Israel, whose power will never be restored till he sits upon the throne of their Kingdom, and is acknowledged as King by the nation.

On the other hand, a man may believe that Jesus is the Son of God; that he was sent of God as a messenger to Israel; that there is remission of sins through the shedding of his blood; that he is the Saviour; and that he rose from the dead:—if he believe these things, but be ignorant, and consequently faithless, of "the things of the Kingdom," he cannot obtain glory, honor, incorruptibility and life in that Kingdom.

The condition of salvation is the belief of the WHOLE Gospel and obedience to it. It is not, "He that believes in Jesus Christ, and is immersed, shall be saved"; but (Mk. 16:15-16):

"He who shall believe **the Gospel**, and is immersed."

Simply to believe in Jesus is to believe no more than in "THE MESSENGER"; but, he was sent to preach the Gospel to the poor; to show the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God: this was his MESSAGE, the message of God to the Jew first, and afterwards to the Greek. Let it be remembered, then, that salvation is predicated upon *belief in the MESSENGER and in the MESSAGE he brings from God.*

The unhappy condition of the professing world at the present time is, that they have no faith in the message of God, but rather ridicule it, and heap insult upon those who contend for it. "I CAME TO PREACH THE KINGDOM OF GOD," says Jesus.

"Oh! we believe that thou earnest from God, because no man could do the miracles thou doest unless God were with him: but we do not believe a word in a kingdom in Judea under thy rule. We have no idea of thy coming to this cursed earth again to reign in Jerusalem, and to sit as a priest upon a throne there.

"This is nothing but the day dream of those who take thy words, and the sayings of the prophets, as if they were to be understood in the carnal, or literal sense. It would be derogatory to the interests of God to suppose or desire such a consummation.

"No, no; we believe thou art at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, now reigning over mankind; that we are thy ministers and ambassadors on earth; and that in enriching us, the world is giving its substance and doing homage to thee; and when we die, we shall come to thee, and kingdoms rule beyond the skies!

"Our churches are thy kingdom here, and it is our deep and pious conviction, that the more they confide in us, and the less they trouble themselves about the millennium, the better it will be for them, and for the peace of the denominations to which they belong."

This is in effect the language of the religious leaders of the world, and of those who surrender their understandings to the traditions with which they make of none effect the "word of the Kingdom of God". But these traditions are sheer nonsense, and without any foundation in Scripture.

* * *

WHEN THE apostles preached on the day of Pentecost, they announced that God had raised up Jesus to sit upon the throne of David (Acts 2:30). In the porch of the Temple, they told the Jews that God would send Jesus Christ to them at the time of the restitution (Acts 3:21). When Philip preached concerning Christ to the Samaritans, he announced:

"The things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 8: 12).

In the convention of the apostles and elders, James invited their attention to Peter's narrative and the prediction of Amos. He stated that the work to be done was to *take out of the nations a People for the Name of God*, as it is written—

"After this I will return, and raise up the dwelling place of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will built it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the heathen which are called by My Name.

"And I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.

"And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord" (Acts 15:14-18).

In Athens, Paul announced that God intended to rule the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ; and that He had raised him from the dead as an assurance of its verity (Acts 17:31). In the Ephesian synagogue he disputed 3 months, persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God (Acts 19:8). He stood at Agrippa's bar, and was judged:

"For the hope of the promise made of God to the fathers; to which promise the 12 tribes of Israel, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come" (Acts 26; 6-7).

Hence, he preached the hope of Israel's twelve tribes, as set forth in Amos, and all the prophets; and directed their attention to Jesus as the personage whom God had raised up to accomplish their desire. Indeed, he told the Jews at Rome plainly, that he was a prisoner in chains on account of the hope of Israel; and in illustration of it (Acts 28:20-31):

"He expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, both out of the Law of Moses and the prophets, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ."

According to the Law and the Testimony he spoke, diffusing the light of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, for two whole years in Rome,

"The great city which reigns over the kings of the earth."

To understand the relations of things, it must be known that the Gospel stands related to Abraham's descendants before the preaching of John the Baptist; to Israel from John to the day of Pentecost; from this epoch until the calling of the Gentiles; and then to the Gentiles at large.

"The Law and the Prophets were until John; then the Kingdom of God was proclaimed . . ."
—to Israel by John, Jesus, the 70 and the 12.

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

The Law of the Nazarite

By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

"Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? Whosoever shall do the will of my Father Who is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother"—Mark 3:33-35

UNDER THE Law of Moses, a provision was made for the special expression of gratitude in the form of free-will and thank-offerings. But there was a higher form of this privilege. It was made possible for a man to give himself entirely to God for a stated time, or to dedicate anything belonging to him perpetually.

All Israel belonged to God, as Moses so frequently declared (Deut. 7:6; 14:2). But opportunity was provided for individual consecration to God, on the part of such as might feel moved in that direction under special circumstances. Man or woman was at liberty to vow a vow of separation for a certain time: that is, they might resolve to dedicate themselves exclusively to God for a specified time.

This was the case of the *Nazarite*, which may repay special consideration, as regards the rules laid down for their guidance, both in their literal bearing and typical significance.

* * *

THE NAZARITE, or "separated one," was not to drink wine during the time of separation, nor to eat anything yielded by the vine, whether grapes or raisins, or vinegar, or husk or kernel. Nor was he or she to touch strong drink of any kind (Num. 6:3).

There must have been a reason for this. A similar injunction was laid on the High Priests while they ministered in the Tabernacle; and we get a slight clue to its reason—

"Do not drink wine, or strong drink, thou (Aaron) nor thy sons with thee when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die.

"It shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations: and that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean" (Lev. 10:9).

It is the nature of strong drink to dull the mental eye, and to render the mind insusceptible to spiritual considerations. It does this by the artificial and sensuous glow which it kindles in the faculties. It is this feeling of electrical elation that gives drink its charm with all who are prone to its use.

That it should be forbidden to the high priest on the act of officiation, and to the Nazarite during the days of his separation, is proof that the things done under its inspiration are not acceptable to God.

Which of us cares for a cordiality that is plainly due to the fumes of the whisky-bottle or wine-cup? The love we appreciate is *the love that is due to the pure action of healthy reason*. Could anything more abhorrent be imagined than a jocose high priest? Or a high priest artificially strung up with strong drink for the performance of his duty? "Doth not nature itself teach us" that the pure and unbiased discernments of reason, acting on the commandments of God, could alone be acceptable in such a relation of things?

We may here understand why Jesus, the great antitypical Nazarite, refused, before crucifixion, to drink of the "vinegar, mingled with gall" (Matt. 27:34), which would have dulled pain, and enabled him to go through the ordeal of pain with an endurance not derived from faith, but from mere physical stupefaction.

The bearing of this interdict of wine or strong drink on the Nazarite cannot be obscure. *The essence of a Nazarite's separation was the mental attitude of such an one toward God*. The separation was a separation "unto the Lord." Such a man's or woman's separation would be a merely nominal

affair if they were at liberty to relieve the tedium of their separation by exhilarating potations, or by the use of any substance calculated to elate by mere physical action.*

*This applies with similar force to tobacco addiction

Their minds could not in such a state be fixed on God, but would be floated in the turbid sensationalism of artificially stimulated faculties—pleasant, it may be, to the person, but not to God, Who delights to be the object of intelligent, humble and thankful contemplation.

What may be the *typical* significance of this institution of the law? We have to be careful in the application, because wine is used with such a variety of significations. It is used to represent the *fruit of obedience* which God desired at the hands of the house of Israel (Isa. 5:1-4; Matt. 21:33-41). It is used to represent the *blessedness* which God will dispense from Zion to all nations in Abraham (Isa. 25:6). It is used to represent the *blood of Christ* shed in righteousness and in sorrow (Matt. 26:28-29). It is used to represent the *false principles* ministered to all nations by the False Church of the Seven Hills (Rev. 18:3).

It could not possibly represent any of the first three in the case of the Nazarite. God could not mean to signify by type that there must be no obedience in the Nazarite's life, or no foretaste of the coming blessedness, or no self-sacrifice for righteousness sake. Neither could He mean the doctrines of Rome in the historic sense, which had not yet become historic.

Is there any other sense? There is another sense that blends with the fourth of those already enumerated. We may discern it in the Bible description of wine as "wine that maketh glad the heart of man." The gladness that comes from this source is gladness without a reason—a mere chemical ecstasy—a gladness resulting from the quickening of the action of the heart by artificial stimulant.

There are various ways of inducing this kind of gladness. There are theological ways we may take as illustrated in the exertions of "revival meetings." A man who is the slave of sin goes into one of these whirlpools of excitement, in which the air is electrically surcharged by the currents given off by hundreds of excited nervous systems. The preacher of the moment is the operator. The sinner comes into the "circuit." He has been cuffed and kicked in the cold world outside: here he gets melted in the gratification of finding himself declared an object of love: an experience so different from his wont that it gradually thaws him. He is told he has only to believe that Christ died for him, and he will become as precious to God as the angels.

The shouting and the praying lashes the electrical atmosphere into waves and pulsations that at last overwhelm him, and he surrenders, and is led in tears of self-pity to the penitent bench, where he reaches the climax of an ecstasy which is generated by the action of animal magnetism stimulated by contributory nerves in the room, and wrought into action through the powers of a thought in which there is barely an element of truth.

The application of this to the matter before us would seem to be this—that *there must be no working up into mere animal excitements in those who wish to be acceptable to God*. The dancing dervish and the inebriated sectary of every description are alike odious to God—as all rhapsodical self-centred friendships would be to man. The separation of the Nazarite, in being dissociated from the possible action of wine and strong drink, must be a separation founded on *quiet reason*, producing gratitude for benefactions calmly discerned; a *holiness*, from beauty and obligation intellectually perceived; and *praise*, from total dependence on the wisdom and power of God recognized. ALL men now called by the Gospel in separation, are antitypical Nazarites.

"Come out from among them, and be ye separate" (be ye Nazarites) "and I will receive you"
(2 Cor. 6:17).

Their Nazariteship is uncontaminated with the wine of sectarianism, with its howlings and shoutings and spiritual inebriations in general. They are quiet, calm, though fervent men of enlightened reason, like Christ, the great Nazarite-in-Chief. They do not think to be heard for their

much speaking in prayer (Matt. 6:7-8). They do not cry out and shout and cut themselves in the excess of superstitious devotion, like the priests of Baal, but are like Elijah, in his few, quiet, effectual words of truth (1 Kings 18:26-38). They do not cover the altar of the Lord with weeping and crying out—thinking to make up for their iniquitous practices by the excess of pietistic genuflexions (Mal. 2:13-14). In understanding, they are not children: in understanding, they are men (1 Cor. 14:20).

They are to be distinguished from theatrical religionists of all kinds, as the true is always to be discerned from the false: the natural from the artificial: the sincere from the hypocritical and the superstitious. They are Nazarites—unexcited by spiritual wine—uninflamed with strong drink, but *radiant only with the calm brightness of rational and devout consecration to God.*

* * *

"NO RAZOR shall come upon his head until the days be fulfilled in which he separateth himself unto the Lord: he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow" (Num. 6:5).

It is possible we see the explanation of this in the reason given for cutting off the hair in the case of God's expostulation with Jerusalem—

"Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation in high places; for the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of His wrath" (Jer. 7:29).

To cut off the hair is the reverse of an act of self-exaltation: it takes away from a man's dignity: it is the natural token of personal abasement, and this token was exacted because of transgression. But in the case of a man separating himself to the Lord—not transgression, but the reverse—obedience—consecration—was the normal state. Therefore, uncut hair was a suitable adjunct of Nazariteship. There are times and connections when (1 Cor. 11:14)—

"If a man have long hair, it is a shame to him."

But in the case of the Nazarite, it was otherwise. It was both the token of consecration, and the condition of God's succouring presence with the wearer, as Samson found, when he told the secret of his strength to Delilah (Jdg. 16:17-21).

The anti-typical significance may be discerned in those spiritual characteristics that are enjoined upon those who have become, in Christ, "an holy people to the Lord." It does not belong to them to be always in the hair-tearing remorse of the wicked—

"How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?"

"Let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works" (Heb. 6:1).

The answer of a good conscience will impart to them that "spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," which Paul speaks of—

"What communion hath light with darkness? What concord hath Christ with Belial?"

Uncut hair speaks of faithfulness intact.

* * *

"*HE SHALL come at no dead body.*" That is, in the ordinary relations of life—

"He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die, because the consecration of his God is upon his head. All the days of his separation, he is holy unto the Lord" (Num. 6:6).

The Nazarite would therefore be inconveniently placed sometimes in his domestic relations. Funerals of relatives happening during the time of his separation could have none of his attention: and he would appear in the light of a person without natural affection.

It would not really be so; the Nazarite would be none the less a lover of his friends, because he could not take part in the usual demonstrations of sorrow; it would merely be the case of *one love being overridden by a greater one*.

Duty to God sometimes interferes with what we would do for man. The duty to God in this case was the duty of separation from the defilement connected with death. It does not seem possible to miss the meaning of this, in its typical bearing.

Jesus, the great Nazarite, made light of natural relationship in spiritual connections. A young man whom he called to follow him, wished to go and first say farewell to those that were at home. Christ's answer has *appeared rough to those who cannot judge by any higher rule than the flesh*—

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

To another he said (v. 59)—

"Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father."

Christ's reply was of the same character as in the other case—

"Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."

Jesus would not have us unmindful of natural duties, but he asserts the superior claims of those that have to do with God. He affirms a *stronger* connection and a *higher* relation in the case of those who are related to God, than those who are connected in flesh (Mark 3:33-35)—

"Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

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

This declaration had all the greater point from the circumstances that drew it forth, namely: the circumstance of his mother and his brothers, calling for him to take him home. One of the crowd said to him—

"Thy mother and thy brothers without seek for thee."

Why should Jesus have thus made light of the ties of natural friendship? *Because of what natural friends are, in the light of the Nazarite law*. They are **DEFILED BY DEATH**—mere fellow-buds on the Adamic tree, which is a tree of death. Those who are truly sanctified by the Truth are delivered from this defilement. Though physically the same as their relatives, it is only for a time they will remain so. In their mental relations, they stand new men in Christ, "chosen of God and precious"—

"Chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and **BELIEF OF THE TRUTH**"
(2 Thess. 2:13).

—and this alteration in their mental relations will lead to a complete alteration in their physical state in due time, when that takes place which Paul variously calls—

"The redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23);

"The swallowing up of mortality in life" (2 Cor. 5:4);

"Putting on of immortality by 'this mortal'" (1 Cor. 15:54);

"The changing of this vile body by the Lord that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21).

Because therefore of the great difference between those who have come to belong to God by the belief and obedience of the Truth, and those who are mere sons of Adam unwashed from their sins, *it is not for the former to have close dealings with the latter.*

The anti-typical application of the Nazarite law forbids it. They are not to be *defiled by the dead*. They are not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. They are not, as the children of Light, to have communion with darkness. They are not to love the world, nor the things that are in the world, for ALL that is in the world (being pursued in disobedience to God), is *displeasing to God*; and is the mere—

"Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."

The children of this world are inspired by the flesh in all their ideas; and—

"They that are in the flesh cannot please God."

All these things are testified (2 Cor. 6:15; John 2:15; Rom. 8:8) and nowhere more forcibly than in this object-lesson of the Nazarite holding aloof from all contact with the dead during the days of his separation.

* * *

BUT IT might happen that some person might "die very suddenly by the Nazarite" (Num. 6:9), and thus the Nazarite would involuntarily contact the defilement which he had been taking pains to avoid. What then? The Nazarite was reckoned in that case as having "sinned by the dead" (verse 11), and he was required to "offer two turtles or two young pigeons" at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation. If such a thing happened before the period of his Nazariteship had run out, it was to be considered that all the days that had gone before were "lost" (Num. 6:12), and that the days of his separation had to be begun over again.

Several important things are suggested by this. It shows the extreme scrupulosity of the divine law when a Nazarite could "*sin by the dead*" *without intention* on his part. We may be affected by this in the antitype. One "dying suddenly by us" would be one who had been alive—consequently a brother falling away from the faith. Yet the occurrence must be "by us"—near us—in contact with us—before it can have a defiling effect. That is, there must be intimacy and toleration and perhaps more, a co-operation amounting to saying "God-speed," and so a "partaking of their evil deeds" (2 John 11).

Personal friendship often interferes with a clear and healthful discrimination of duty in divine matters, and so the guilt of an offender against God may cleave to us. Eli, though disapproving of the wrong ways of his sons, sinned in "restraining them not" (1 Sam. 3:13). Jesus told the brethren at Thyatira that though they were not behindhand in "works, charity, service, faith and patience," he had this against them, that (Rev. 2:20)—

"Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants."

There is such a thing as being "partakers of other men's sins" (1 Tim. 5:22). We may "sin by the dead" while not sinning in our own action. Jude indicates the line to pursue—

"Of some have compassion, making a difference: others save with fear, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."

If there were no remedy for the defilement arising from "one dying suddenly by us," the occurrence would be fatal: but here the type comes to our aid. Though the preceding days of separation are "lost" by defilement, in harmony with what is written in Ezekiel, that—

"When the righteous man turneth from his righteousness... all the righteousness he hath done shall not be mentioned."

—there can be renewal and resumption, except in the cases reserved in Heb. 10:26, where we are informed that in case of *wilful sin after enlightenment*, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." The defiled Nazarite was to bring a sin offering and a burnt offering to make atonement, after which he might resume the days of his separation, repeating those that had been lost.

What is this, but the typical inculcation of confession and supplication in the Name of Christ—the antitypical sin offering and burnt offering—

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity."

We must not forget God's kind disposition towards even the wicked, as when He says:

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:7).

If God is ready thus to favourably receive unrighteous men (saying, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?"), what may not those hope for who walk in His fear all the day long, but it may be, stumble occasionally out of the right way? The question is answered in the beautiful declaration of Psalm 103—

"As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy towards them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."

It might be thought that the scrupulosities of the law were inconsistent with these wide-sweeping declarations of God's kindness: but this feeling disappears when we remember the constant provisions for sacrifice and forgiveness.

And when we discern in those sacrifices (taken in connection with the sacrifice of Christ, which they all foreshadowed) the maintenance of God's supremacy as the foundation of His grace, we can but exclaim with Paul:

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For of Him and through Him and to Him, are all things: to Whom be glory for ever" (Rom. 11:33).

On the completion of the days of his separation, the Nazarite was to offer at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation, through the priest, one he lamb for a burnt offering, and a ewe lamb for a sin offering, and a ram for a peace offering—all without blemish; and also a basket containing cakes and wafers of unleavened bread, with their appropriate meat offering and drink offering. He was then to shave off his hair and put it in the fire on the altar, under the peace offering being consumed. The priest was then to take the shoulder of the ram and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and put them in the hands of the Nazarite, and then wave them for him before the Lord—after which, the Nazarite was free from his vow of separation, and at liberty to drink wine (Num. 6:13-20).

The closing ceremonies of Nazariteship, in their literal bearing, were a convenient and impressive termination to the special time of consecration which godly Israelites might desire now and then to impose upon themselves.

But *that* use is now passed away, and we have but the *typical* significance to apply. Taking the whole period of the Nazariteship's separation to stand, in parable, for the life of probation to which the Gospel calls men, we may discern without difficulty the meaning of a ceremonial that proclaims the essentiality of sacrifice to the final acceptability of the most faithfully kept time of separation.

Though the grace of God proposes the acceptance and glorification of *faithful* men—faithful in their separation from the evil world in which they "pass the time of their sojourning" (and will not accept those who are otherwise than faithful in this) yet it is not on account of their own righteousness that the glorious gift of immortality is bestowed. It is on account of their deferential and grateful and humble submission to what has been accomplished in Christ. If God dealt with them on their own ground merely, they could not be saved, for all, without exception, are "under sin" in the first case: sinners by extraction and character.

It is the act of grace to forgive, and while this act of grace takes the shape of "counting" certain things for righteousness imparting a "right to the tree of life," it never for a moment abates its character as an act of grace. It is true to the last (and for ever) that "*by grace* are ye saved through faith" (and obedience thereof).

The saving contains *forgiving* as its essential feature. Without forgiving, saving could not be;—and this forgiving is "for Christ's sake"—Christ, the obedient; Christ, the crucified; Christ, the risen; Christ, the intercessor. We are "justified by faith," and so have "peace with God" (Rom. 5:1). "It is of faith that it might be by grace" (4:16): "not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8).

Consequently, when the days of separation are all over for God's Nazarites—when the days of their successful conflict with evil are done, and the time has come at the Lord's return to (1 Cor. 3:8)—

"Give every man his own reward, according to his own labor."
—it will still be as forgiven men—not as faultless men—that they will enter into life—forgiven because of their submission to the divine institutions appointed with that view. They will all be eligible to take part in the song which proclaims the chosen saved through him who hath washed them from their sins in his own blood.

Their recognition of this fact will not cease with their attainment of the immortal nature. Rather will they recognize it with a distinctness and rapture unknown in the days of their flesh. They will then see with a clearness not possible in the dim days of mortal faculty, that they owe it all to Christ—his life, death and resurrection—that they have their immortal place under God's glorious sun. They will be ready to say with David:

"Not unto us, O Lord; but unto Thy Name give glory."

This is doubtless the typical counterpart of the ordinance requiring the faithful Nazarite, on the completion of the days of his separation, to bring all the sacrifices that prefigured Christ; present and wave a representative part through the priest; burn his hair (surrender mortal nature for the transformation that waits by Spirit); and then go forth to drink freely of that wine which in flesh-nature tends to disorder, but in Spirit-nature will be drunk as a harmless exhilarant, and as the symbol of the feast of gladness that God will yet spread for men upon the earth.

Are we "filled with the knowledge of the Lord's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding"? This is Paul's wish and prayer, and it will be our desire and aim, in so far as we are in sympathy with Paul.

To each of us there is doubtless a different measure of attainment in this matter; but TO ALL OF US THERE IS A COMMON STANDARD AND A COMMON DUTY OF AIMING AT ATTAINMENT—a common salvation to be reached—a common fearful looking for of judgment in case of rejection as out of harmony with the Divine image. —R.R.

Babylon Is Fallen, Is Fallen

PART TWO

"Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus"—Rev. 14.12

At this great epoch in human history, when the terrible judgments of God are breaking forth like lightning upon "those that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," the wisdom, faith and patience of those of all ages who have rested in confidence on the promises of God, and have "kept the faith," will be openly manifest.

This is the time they have waited for—

"The time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy Name, small and great; and that Thou shouldest destroy them that corrupt the earth" (11:18).

When this time comes, the truth of Paul's words to the Hebrews (10:36-38) will fully apply to the saints who have been obedient to them—

"Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him."

* * *

V. 13: *"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me: Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."*

This does not mean that the dead are blessed while they are in the grave, for there the worm feeds on them, and they "know not anything" (Eccl. 9:5). The word says, "from henceforth," that is, from *that time* onward.

Not until the coming of the Lord do they enter upon their blessedness, first as spectators and executioners of the divine judgments that will precede the glorious establishment of the kingdom of God in all the earth. Then they will enter the "rest that remaineth for the people of God" (Heb. 4:9.)

They will be blessed as in the words of the Lord Jesus in the closing verses of the last chapter in the Bible—

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

* * *

V. 14: *"And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle."*

The symbols here in this verse are not hard to understand by those who are instructed in the things of the Kingdom and the Name. In Hebrews 12 Paul calls the saints a "cloud of witnesses." The whiteness of the cloud speaks of righteousness and immortality with which the saints are invested.

The Son of man crowned, sitting on the cloud, shows us the Lord Jesus enthroned in the midst of his brethren. The sharp sickle in the hand of the Son of man indicates the mission of the multitudinous Christ-body at the time when judgment is given to the saints, and they usher forth in immortal power to destroy those that corrupt the earth.

* * *

V. 15: "*And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap: for the harvest of the earth is ripe.*"

Since the angel of this verse comes out of the temple, and since he implores the "one like unto the son of man" sitting on the white cloud, to thrust in his sickle and reap, we are led to understand that the actual execution of judgments on the nations, in the first instance, though a matter of purpose, will be initiated at the petition of the glorified equal-to-the-angels multitude who are constituents of the white cloud.

They are the heirs of the Kingdom of God, and judgment having been given to them, they plead for direct and immediate action to the sickle holder against those powers, systems and forces of evil that stand in the way or hinder the establishment of their righteous reign over all the earth.

"The time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe."

The time is definitely fixed in the mind and purpose of God for these world-shaking events that will "break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms" of the world with all their humanly devised systems in church, state and society; so that the ground may be cleared for the new and glorious age during which Christ and his saints will bring righteousness, peace, well-being and the glory and honor of God to a world where all that is evil has been purged out.

"The harvest of the earth" will then be ripe for destruction. "Her grapes are fully ripe." In Joel 3:13 we read of the same future crisis in human affairs—

"Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, and the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great."

The harvest of the earth will be ripe at this time in the sense that there is no other recourse—no other alternative—than the letting down of the heavy hand of the sickle bearer that will result in the "slain of the Lord" being from one end of the earth to the other.

God has for a long time holden His peace; He has given scope and every possible opportunity for man to honor and glorify Him by obedience to His will, but at the time of which we read in the closing verses of this 14th chapter the patience and forbearance of God have reached their limits. Wickedness and dishonour to the great Majesty of the heavens must come to an end. It is written in Apoc. 4:11—

"Thou are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and FOR THY PLEASURE they are and were created."

The purpose of God to give pleasure and honor and glory to His Name by filling the earth with an immortal population conformed to the image of His Son and with characters answering to the holy attributes of the divine nature, is the theme of the Scriptures from beginning to end. This purpose is to be worked out through Jesus Christ, of whom it is said:

"He shall prolong his days, and the PLEASURE OF THE LORD shall prosper in his hand" (Isa. 49:10).

* * *

THE CLOSING verses of this 14th chapter which we are considering today, though they present a picture of much destruction of human life, and a time of trouble such as never was on the earth before, yet the outcome is eternal and glorious. After the storm is over God's glory will fill the earth and mankind will find peace, joy and fulness of life.

"*The earth was reaped.*" Literally, in the old days, a sickle was used to cut down or reap grass or other similar crops. Now it is written in Isa. 40:6-7—

"The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry: ALL FLESH IS GRASS, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field:

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people are grass."

This is the grass that will be cut down by the sickle in the hands of him that sat on the cloud. The earth as it is constituted today, exalts man and dishonours God. The work of the reaper will be to *reverse the condition*, as we read—

"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down, and the LORD ALONE SHALL BE EXALTED in that day.

"For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low" (Isa. 2:11-12).

When this is done—when GOD is exalted in the earth, *His* Name honoured, *His* commandments obeyed—heaven's blessings will come down on the mown grass (subdued nations)—

"He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth"

(Psa. 72:6).

But as we consider this v. 16 together with 19, we notice that there are stages or phases to be considered in connection with the reaping of the earth; for in v. 19 *another* angel is said to thrust in his sickle into the earth and—

"Gather the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God."

While the angel here, no doubt, is representative of the same agency as the cloud-invested Son of Man by which the earth is said to be reaped in v. 16; yet the indication is that vs. 16 and 19 refer to *two separate phases* of the judgments to be brought upon the nations during the course of the "wars of the great day of God Almighty," which breaks up the present Gentile dominion, preparatory to the righteous reign of Jesus and his brethren over all the earth.

This can be understood as we consider the work to be done by the Rainbow Angel Power *after* its manifestation at Sinai and *before* the Lord "speaks peace to the nations" and the saints are able to enter into the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

The throne of the Lord is to be at Jerusalem; but we know from the prophetic word that when the Great King arrives there with his saints, he finds the city in the hands of the Russian forces from the north (Eze. 38:16; Zech. 14:2).

So the *first* reaping to be done at this point is to break the power of the Gogian spoiler upon the mountains of Israel and save the tents of Judah that will be in great affliction at that time. When this is done, the remnant of the Jews will be glad to receive him with the acclamation—

"Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord."

Then the gates of the city will be thrown open to "the kings who are out of a sun's risings" and the way prepared for the setting up of the throne of the Lord in the City of the Great King. With the City safely in the hands of the newly manifested divine power from Teman, the hand that wields the sickle of God's judgment is stayed for a time. This gives time for the organization of the kingdom; for the cleaning up of the debris and wreckage of human life resulting from the overthrow of the Gogian armies.

But the Rainbow Angel does not rest upon its laurels with the conquest of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. There is more work yet to be done before—

"The Lord will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent" (Zeph. 3:10).

It is written in the 2nd Psalm, addressing the Son—

"I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

The promise to Abraham was that ALL families of the earth would be blessed in him and his seed, the Christ. We can see then, that there is another long-continued phase of the judgments of the last day by means of which all nations will be made willing to serve God's King on Mt. Zion.

But God is righteous and merciful in all His dealings with mankind; so before the sickle of the reaper is brought to bear upon the dominion of the fourth beast and the outlying Gentile nations; the angel of v. 6 is sent out from Jerusalem with the Everlasting Gospel to preach to all peoples, calling upon them to submit to the new order of things, centered in Jerusalem. Bro. Thomas believed that the fulfilling of this mission would occupy about ten years.

This would be the period of quiet and stillness preceding the storm that breaks upon the dominion of the beast, kindling that lake of aionian fire "prepared for the devil and his angels." In the mercy of God this space of time would be provided in which the people of the world would be granted *the opportunity to choose between Rome and Jerusalem*—between obedience to the mid-heaven proclamation or allegiance to the papal power.

We know from abundant scriptural testimony that the "Great City Babylon," "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," will set themselves to overthrow the new Kingdom in Judea. The ten kings belonging to her patrimony will unite under the papal banner for this purpose; for we read in 17:14—

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

* * *

THE WHOLE 40 year period of these sanguinary judgments by which the world is subdued and the groundwork laid for the administration of righteousness to its peoples seems to be summed up in the last verse of this chapter 14—

"And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand, six hundred furlongs."

May we, brothers and sisters, be among those "called, and chosen, and faithful" ones who will follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, not only in putting down all evil and resistance to God; but also may it be ours, when the smoke of these judgments has cleared away, to lead the mortal populations that are left into the ways of righteousness and obedience to God! —E.W.B.

1960 Texas Gathering Report

PART FOUR

"A book of remembrance was written for them that feared the Lord"—Malachi 3:16

SATURDAY morning the brethren and sisters assembled for a review of the week's activities. The orderly execution of the daily necessities to ensure the comfort and upbuilding of all those assembling was discussed and approved, and we expressed thanks to our Heavenly Father that brethren and sisters were provided to arrange the details of this large gathering of the ecclesias. Plans were effected also for future assemblies, if the will of God permits.

The morning's address drew our attention to the source of all our hopes, "THE BOOK OF LIFE." We were first directed to consider the words of the hymns we sing, as embodying the teachings of God's Word. Our lives are bound up in the Book of Life, God's Word. As we receive strength from the daily food of God's blessings, so we must draw from the words of God the spiritual imperishable food for our eternal well-being.

We can go very deeply into this source of spiritual strength. We can receive much food. But having had this eternal purpose opened unto us we should not try to show how clever we are as we extend the message to others.

The glory belongs to God. We must submerge ourselves with the knowledge that God works in us to will and to do His good pleasure, for His glory. Nevertheless having received the light of the Word, we must let it shine forth for all to see.

We were shown that we have not escaped eternal death by being baptised. Baptism is not enough. It is only the first step upon coming to a knowledge of God's will. From the Scriptures we were informed that there are two books of life referred to by God. The first is mentioned by Paul in Phil. 4:3—

"My fellow-labourers, whose names are in the Book of Life."

This book was illustrated as the everyday book of the deeds of those who have come to a knowledge of God's will. The article in Greek is indefinite and is correctly rendered "A" book of life. It is from this book that Christ will judge each person who stands before him. The other is referred to in Rev. 21:27, as—

"The Lamb's Book of the Lives."

This is a record of the good deeds of those who have been faithful unto God, and who are crowned with everlasting life.

These are not two literal books, but the Spirit's metaphors to illustrate the Divine remembrance whereby we shall receive just and equitable judgment.

We were given two clear illustrations by way of exhortation to impress upon our minds the care with which we should think and act at all times. Likening the recording of our works and speeches to a tape recorder or a camera, all our actions were shown as being easily accessible to God and can be called forth to present a perfect record of our lives.

How important that we are careful what is inscribed on the tape or picture! Will we be ashamed of the record of our voice or of the series of pictures photographed upon the Spirit's mind?

We shall not be saved by our works or deeds. It will be only by God's mercy. But we ARE called upon to show our faith in God BY WHAT WE DO—

"Faith without works is dead, being alone."

Malachi frames the pleasant picture of those who serve God with a true heart in encouraging words (Mal. 3:16-17)—

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His Name.

"And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My Jewels."

These are the ones whose deeds are recorded in 'THE' Book of the Lives of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

* * *

SATURDAY AFTERNOON brought us to a major part of the week's activities, that portion of the program allotted to the children of our ecclesias. From the oldest to the youngest we saw and heard what could be accomplished by directing the young minds in the admonition of the Lord.

Many sound exhortations and warnings were expressed by these young lips, suitable for old and young alike. May these lessons not be forgotten and that in God's mercy they may lead to a full comprehension of the will of God.

The necessity of a continued effort to see that our children receive instruction in God's will was impressed by our presiding brother. This is the most fertile field for us to work in as we proclaim the Word of God. How important that as shepherds we lead these young sheep by GOOD EXAMPLES, patterned after the life of the Good Shepherd!

* * *

THE FINAL public lecture brought us up-to-date with world happenings in the light of God's Word. "The Harvest of the Earth is Ripe—These are the Last Days of Human Rule."

The clearest sign of the end of human rule over the earth was illustrated as the **return of the Jews to Palestine**, the pivot point of the prophecies of God for the latter days. All other predictions of the end hinge upon this reversal of Jewish destiny. For 2520 years there has been no independent state of Israel. God's prophets had foretold their dispersal and down-treading but also of their signal revival at the time of the end.

These same prophets stated without fear of being proven wrong (because they spake by Divine instruction) that **Gentile ascendancy would run out when the Jews started to return**. The Gentile star sets in the West when the Jewish star rises in the East.

The king of Babylon was shown the tree of human nations cut down and banded with brass and iron, **influences of Greece and Rome**, and a period of 7 times passing over it. 7 multiplied by 360 (a Hebrew cycle or time—there are 360 degrees in a circle) is equal to 2520 years. This period has just about elapsed since the lesson of God ruling in the kingdom of men was impressed on the Babylonian monarch in 570 B.C.

Through the messages of the prophets of God we were taken to see the time periods allotted to mankind and the ultimate destruction of world powers (represented as beasts) by the Hand of God and the establishment of His Kingdom over all.

When the Jews are returning, Joel tells us the **war proclamation** is issued to gather all nations to their destruction on the mountains of Israel (Joel 3:9).

Many world leaders see the break up of world powers as they struggle together, a leaky vessel unable to weather the storm. With nuclear power in reckless hands it would only take one madman to start an annihilating conflict. But God will intervene before this happens.

While the madness of world powers holds the limelight, the **indifference and godlessness** of a world bent on pleasure confirms the truth of Christ's words—

"As it was in the days of Noah . . . in the days of Lot . . . so shall it also be in the days of the coming of the Son of Man."

The warning was laid that we should come out and be separate, a distinct and holy people. Daniel the prophet also stated that at the time of the end of human rule **vast increase in knowledge**

should be evident. There has been 1000 times more development in human enterprise during the last 100 years than in all the 6000 years of human rule.

The most sinister sign today is the irresistible march of Communism and its influence throughout the world. And the prophets of God have declared that thus it must be. Ezekiel and Daniel tell us of a **great Northern Power gathering many nations around her and invading God's land** and people the Jews.

This cannot refer to any other than RUSSIA. In 1920 Russia was practically destroyed by revolution. By 1944 she was able to defeat the world's strongest military power, the German army. Such is the power ready to defy God on the land of Israel.

While Russia and the world powers prepare for this end, God's people are returning rapidly to their own land. Moses had said their land should be oppressed for 7 times, a period equal to Gentile rule. The coming into existence of Israel as a nation in Palestine surprised the whole world. But Dr. Thomas by diligent comparison of the prophets of Israel stated over 100 years ago, that there would be **a colonization of Palestine by the Jews** prior to the Advent of Christ from the heavens.

Only with Divine control was this possible, and behind the startling events of our time we can discern by a knowledge of God's Word an Almighty Hand moving men and nations to a predetermined end. Palestine is developing by great strides, while the rest of the world prepares for war. **THE STAGE IS SET FOR THE GREATEST EVENT OF ALL TIME.**

Are we ready for the coming of Christ to rule the world and break all human government? Our brother's message was urgent that we be watchful and strengthen the things which remain during the few days that are left. Said Paul (I Thess. 5:6)—

"Let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober."
(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH, IF THE LORD WILL)

The BIBLE Meaning of Soul

PART TWO

"He that killeth the soul of a beast shall make it good—soul for soul"—Lev. 24:18.

NOW A few passages to show that "soul" (Hebrew: *nephesh*) is not some immaterial essence, but is applied to the ordinary, natural functions of living creatures—

Prov. 6:30—"Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul (**nephesh**) when he is hungry."

Isa. 29:8 — "A hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul (**nephesh**) is empty—a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh, but he awaketh, and his soul (**nephesh**) hath appetite."

Lev. 17:10—"I will set my face against the soul (**nephesh**) that eateth blood, for the life (**nephesh**—soul) of the flesh is in the blood."

Deut. 12:20-23—"Thy soul (**nephesh**) longeth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul (**nephesh**) lusteth after . . . "The blood is the life (**nephesh**—soul); and thou mayest not eat the life (**nephesh**—soul)."

It is clear that the immortal soulists' only solution is to do what they have done, and *regard the Bible as merely the speculations of partially enlightened men*. They could not possibly agree with Peter's statement (2 Pet. 1:21), that—

"Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

* * *

NOW WE reach what perhaps may be termed the climax of the subject—the soul's *relation to death*. The term "immortal soul" expresses one side of the argument. "Immortal" means "*not* subject to death." That is the stand of Plato and orthodox Christendom.

Let us look at what *GOD* says. Now it would have been quite possible for the Scriptures never to have mentioned soul in connection with death. Many other terms and expressions could have been used. So that when we find that in *nearly 300 places* (one-third of the total uses of the word) souls are described as being *mortal, subject to death*, from which they can be saved and delivered, it is quite clear that God is taking special pains to give us correct ideas on this subject, and remove all excuse for believing in "immortal souls" after the manner of the unenlightened heathen. Examples of this are—

Psa. 22:20—"Deliver my soul (**nephesh**) from the sword."

Jer. 38:17—"If thou wilt go forth unto the King of Babylon, then thy soul (**nephesh**) shall live."

I Sam. 19:11—"If thou save not thy life (**nephesh**—soul) tonight, tomorrow thou shalt be slain."

I Kings 19:10—"They seek my life (**nephesh**) to take it."

Es. 7:7—"He stood to make request for his life (**nephesh**)."

Psa. 22:29—"None can keep alive his own soul (**nephesh**)."

One out of every three occurrences of the word are of this character—referring to its *mortality and liability to death*. How could the immortal soul theory be more strikingly disproved? The most prominent fact regarding the soul that is forced upon our attention throughout is its *frailty and danger of destruction*. Upon this is based the one great lesson of Scripture—

"Hear, and your soul (**nephesh**) shall live" (Isa. 55:3).

* * *

LET US go further. *In 32 passages, souls (nephesh) are spoken of as being KILLED BY MAN*. Examples are:

Josh. 10:28—"Joshua took Makkedah, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof he utterly destroyed, and all the souls (**nephesh**) that were therein."

This is repeated in vs. 30, 32, 35, 37, and 39.

Deut. 27:25—"Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person (**nephesh**—soul)."

Let us look particularly at Lev. 24:17-18. The A.V. reads—

"He that killeth any man shall surely be put to death, and he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast."

In the original, *nephesh* occurs here 4 times, as follows—

"He that smiteth the **nephesh** (soul) of a man, shall be put to death. And he that smiteth the **nephesh** (soul) of a beast shall make it good, **nephesh** for **nephesh**."

Here again the translators have, by inconsistent and biased translation, obscured another clear divine lesson in the meaning of *nephesh*, or "soul."

* * *

ONE MORE step, and then we are as far away from the immortal soul theory as it is possible to be—in *13 places souls (nephesh) are said to be actually DEAD*. Examples are—

Num. 6:6—"He shall come at no dead body (**nephesh**)."

Lev. 21:11—"Neither go in to any dead body (**nephesh**).

These are parts of the Mosaic regulations concerning uncleanness and defilement by contact with *corpses*.

* * *

ALL REFERENCES quoted so far have been from the Old Testament. That is the foundation of the New, and the word "soul" occurs in the Old *seven times as often* as in the New. It is ignoring the foundation work of the Old Testament that has prevented so many from understanding the New.

The Bible is one single, indivisible unit. It cannot be broken up and a part cast aside. Only when it is regarded as one equally inspired and equally divine book can it be properly understood. God has varied His commands at different times to different people, but *statements of FACT and TRUTH never change from beginning to end.*

"Soul" in the N. T. cannot be considered apart from soul in the Old. Considering them together, we find them in complete harmony. As in the Old, so in the New, "soul" is used of animals; it is spoken of as dying; it is used for the mind, the heart, the appetite and the emotions.

Whenever speakers in the N. T. quote from passages in the Old containing the Hebrew word *nephesh*, they use the Greek word *psuche*. One outstanding example will illustrate this. In 1 Cor. 15, beginning at v. 42, Paul makes a contrast between corruption and incorruption, weakness and power, mortality and immortality. Then (v. 44) he says:

"There is a **natural** body and there is a **spiritual** body."

The word "natural" here is *psuchikos*—soulish, from *psuche*—soul. He continues, v. 45—

"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul (**psuche**)."

He is quoting Gen. 2:7 which we have considered. In v. 46 he calls this living soul, "that which is natural." In v. 47 he calls it "of the earth, earthy." In v. 50 he calls it "flesh and blood" and "corruption." *Paul's conception of "soul" fits perfectly with what we have already discovered.*

Similarly souls are applied to animals, and souls die, in the N. T. just as in the Old. In Rev. 8:9 we read—

"And the third part of the creatures that were in the sea, and had life (**psuche**—soul) died."

Rev. 16:3—"Every living soul (**psuche**) died in the sea."

And "soul" is used for natural life and functions, as in the Old. In Matt. 6:25, Jesus says—

"Take NO THOUGHT for your life (**psuche**—soul), what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink."

The soul here is clearly *that which is supported by eating and drinking*. Acts 15:25 we read—

"Our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that hazarded their lives (**psuche**) for the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In faithfully serving Christ they certainly could not have been *hazarding immortal souls*, but they WERE hazarding their *scriptural* souls—their *natural* lives and bodies.

The same applies to Paul's words in Acts 20:24—

"Neither count I my life (**psuche**) dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy."

And Jesus' words (John 10:17)—

"I lay down my life (**psuche**) for the sheep."
And Phil. 2:30—

"For the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, NOT REGARDING his life (**psuche**)."

In all these, *psuche* is used in the common sense of *natural life*, and cannot be harmonized with the immortal soul idea.

* * *

NOW, AS in the Old, so in the New, there are a few passages where the use of the word *could* possibly be made to fit with the immortal soul idea. There are none, of course, that *prove* or even *support* this idea—that would be impossible as we can see from the basic meaning and general use of the word—but there are some where it *could* be read in if the rest is ignored.

The passage most frequently quoted is Matt 10:28—

"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to DESTROY both soul and body in Gehenna."

Now it is rather peculiar at the outset that *the one passage most quoted to support the indestructible soul theory is the very one that that speaks of the soul being DESTROYED*, but, we find that these people do not regard "destroyed" as meaning destroyed, but the opposite—eternally preserved.

And we find further that they do not regard "death" as meaning *death*, but "eternal LIFE in misery." *We can see that with definitions such as this we could make anything prove anything.*

We have seen that according to the Scriptures elsewhere, a man *can* and DOES kill the soul. We have looked at several passages to this effect, and there are many others. The first use of the word in the New Testament (Matt 2:20) speaks of Herod "seeking the young child's life" (*psuche*— soul). The first appearance in the gospel of Mark is similar. Jesus says (Mark 3:4)—

"Is it lawful on the sabbath to save life (**psuche**) or to kill?"

Paul in Rom. 11:3 quotes Elijah as saying—

"I am left alone and they seek my life (**psuche**)."

What is meant here by saying that man *cannot* kill the soul? Are the Scriptures contradictory? Of course they are not. We must use wisdom to discern them properly. There is no difficulty in understanding what Christ means, if we *sincerely seek a scriptural solution*. Man can kill the body, but this has no permanent effect on our ultimate existence. To the faithful, this is but a brief sleep. In *this* sense, the ultimate, eternal sense, man can not kill the soul, or life. But God on the other hand is able to blot us out of existence forever and make all our memory to perish.

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NOW, TO sum up the points that have been covered:

1. We have seen that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is admittedly traced to heathen Greek philosophers, and its followers are quite willing to concede that the Bible meaning of soul is something very different.

2. The issue is clear and there is no middle ground—we must choose between Bible teaching and human speculation.

3. The words **nephesh** and **psuche**, translated "soul," occur 850 times in the Bible and in **not one case is there any suggestion of immortality**.

4. The translators have used over 40 words in translation and a glance at this list shows how far different the **Bible** soul is from the **orthodox** one.

5. The word is first used of ANIMALS.

6. One-third of all its occurrences speak of it in terms indicating its mortality and subjection to death.

7. It is often spoken of as being **killed by man**, and it is several times spoken of as **actually being dead**, and being handled and touched in a dead state.

Anything more different from the immortal soul theory it would be difficult to imagine.

* * *

IN CONCLUSION, let us urge two points of action—

FIRST, make a thorough, scriptural examination of the soul. The word occurs 850 times. Make the effort to trace them through. Compare them with the general, hazy ideas on the subject. It takes time, but *there is no other way*. God requires us to work and search.

And SECOND, having determined the facts of what we are—perishing creatures of dust—investigate God's great offer of what we may *become*—

"There is natural (soul) body, and there is a spiritual body.

"As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

"This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

These glorious words of the Apostle Paul will be fulfilled someday in the great joyful host of the redeemed, as they stand assembled before the judge of all the earth.

For all *others* it will be—

"As the beasts that perish."

"Like sheep are they laid in the grave, death shall feed upon them, and their beauty shall consume in the grave."

Let US choose the path of wisdom and life.

—G.V.G.

The Truth Shall Make You Free

"Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed"—Gal. 1:8

WE LIVE in an age and in a country where religious tolerance has run to all extremes; so much so that anyone who dares to express a firm opinion on any religious belief or criticise any other religion than his own is branded as a bigot and utterly intolerant.

The world, especially the so-called religious world, considers anyone a fanatic who presumes to teach that his religious belief is the only true faith and teaching of the Bible.

Such a position is not only contrary to the Scriptures, but it would make Jesus Christ and his apostles the most intolerant of all religious teachers.

They came not only teaching a doctrine which they set forth as the ONE AND ONLY TRUE FAITH, but they were *opposed to and denounced all other religious systems* of teaching as false and vain, though they did most of their preaching among a people who professed to be deeply religious and believers in the teaching of the Scriptures.

Christ and his apostles classed all religious teaching, except their own, as "doctrines of men," fables and myths, containing not a grain of salvation, and the religious teachers of their time as "blind leaders of the blind."

Now God is "without variableness, neither shadow of turning," and He has also said—"I CHANGE NOT."

Jesus Christ and his teaching is "the same, yesterday and today, and forever," and *we are commanded to be followers of the apostles even as they were of Christ*. This would apply to the manner and spirit of their teaching as much as to anything else.

It is a great temptation in these days of tolerance and compromise to drift into popular methods of preaching and teaching; to adopt a soft, smooth line of "good words and fair speeches," as being the best method of presenting the Truth, but actually it is the least effective way.

It is not a mixture of truth and error that was needed to save men, but—

"THE TRUTH shall make you free" (John 8:32).

A mixture of truth and false doctrine is not Truth but one of the most deceptive of all lies. The apostle Paul even went so far as to say that *any perversion of this doctrine would curse any man*, even an angel from heaven (Gal. 1:8-9). And the same apostle warned that men would arise among the disciples who would do just that (Acts 20:30)—

"Speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them."

Not only did such men arise, even before the work of the apostles was finished, but in every age and generation such men have appeared to test the faith of genuine believers, even to this day.

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OUR BELOVED brethren Thomas and Roberts and all who followed in their footsteps dedicated their lives, and suffered reproaches and criticisms for, keeping "that form of doctrine" pure.

From the start, they realized that complete separation from the churches, and likewise *separation from all false teachers who might arise among themselves*, was an imperative and inescapable duty, absolutely essential to the maintaining of the purity of the Faith.

Today the people called Christadelphians, who owe their present possession of the Truth to these faithful pioneers, are facing the greatest danger ever to appear since the days of bro. Thomas. The danger comes not from fanatical teachers of crotchets but from the introduction of pleasing, philosophical reasoning which has its purpose a *compromise with popular notions of the time*, such as scientific speculation and the efforts to compromise the Mosaic account of the creation with modern geological theories; a method of teaching which will lead directly to the popular conception of Bible teaching.

In addition, there is an attitude in certain quarters of taking a tolerant view toward the erring groups who, for many years, have corrupted the Truth with false teaching.

One of the most outstanding "peculiarities" of the Christadelphians, should be complete separation from all that is impure in doctrine.

A tolerant, compromising approach may please, but *it does not convict nor convert to the Truth*. While our presentation of the Gospel should be done with humility and love, it is an invariable rule that *no one can be converted to the Truth until he is convinced that his erroneous beliefs will condemn him, and that he is a sinner in need of cleansing from his sins which a belief in the Truth alone can accomplish*.

The apostle Paul's earnest entreaty was (1 Tim. 6:20)—

"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust!"

A fact which unquestionably gave him much consolation and satisfaction in the closing days of his ministry was expressed in his final words to Timothy—

"I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH."

What Faith? The Faith of the Gospel which he preached, "*The hope of Israel*," the doctrines, tenets and principles of teaching set forth in Moses and the prophets and the preaching of Jesus Christ and his apostles.

It was "*that form of doctrine*" which Paul told the Romans that they had obeyed from the heart and had thereby been made free from sin and become servants of righteousness.

How had Paul kept this faith? The history of his ministry will show a life devoted to the preservation of the Truth in its purity, a character built upon the principles contained therein, and *fearless denunciation of every false doctrine and every false way*. He taught the necessity of separating from all false teachers whom he called heretics and blasphemers.

He told the Ephesian elders that he took satisfaction in the fact that he had "kept back nothing that was profitable to you," and that he was "pure from the blood of all men," because he had not shunned to declare unto them the **WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD**.

The teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles made it clear beyond any question of doubt that, in order that this form of doctrine retain its saving power, it must be kept pure and free from any adulteration whatsoever. —O.B.

"THE THINGS THAT ARE NOT SEEN ARE ETERNAL"

We step backward but a short distance, and where were we and the people we know, and the town we inhabit? Absolutely non-existent. We step forward a similar distance, and what do we see with mathematical certainty but this, that all these things that exist before our eyes, and exercise our minds in various ways, must cease to exist?

We can see this without the aid of the Truth at all. Yet the impression of the moment is that these things are very real and abiding. When we can see this much in matters common to all men, does it not become easier to estimate the verities of things appertaining to Christ?

He does not seem to exist; but we know he exists. His coming does not seem as if it would happen; but we know it will happen, as a thing not depending upon appearances. His kingdom does not seem as if it would ever be more than a talk upon earth; but we know the fact is contrary to the appearance.

We know it by the application of our reason; and reason, fed by the materials furnished in the Scriptures, can be quite positive in the presence of the most unpromising appearances.—bro. Roberts.

Signs of the Times

THE SIGNS of the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth, as depicted in Luke 21:24-28, are the most comprehensive group of signs in all the Scriptures, especially as applicable to this particular era. Every detail of conditions on earth today in relation to these signs is included in this wonderful prophecy of the last days of Gentile dominion on earth.

Briefly summarized, we note:

1. The "until" of Jewish captivity coming to an end, coincidental with the evidences that Gentile dominion and down-treading of the Holy Land is about to end in world catastrophe, which, except for divine interference, would leave the whole earth in a state of chaos and anarchy.
2. Upheavals in the political heavens, world-wide distress of nations with problems without solution, or a state of world-wide perplexity.
3. The "sea and the waves" of humanity in a state of revolt against present governments and conditions.
4. A state of fear among all peoples, generated by the build-up of destructive forces, increase of war preparation and a constant state of "brink of war" and insoluble problems and conflicts among two great groups of nations ("mountains of brass"), hopelessly deadlocked in a contest to control the destinies of all peoples; all of which leads to the inevitable conclusion that worse things are yet to come, with world catastrophe as the probable result.
5. "Powers of heaven shaken," or the overthrow of many governments.

Because of the overwhelming accumulation of evidence that all these signs are not only visible but brilliant in their intensity, we might be considered repetitious in our constant reference thereto. But repetition is a common feature of scriptural revelation, and it is the only way in which a thing of vital importance can be kept constantly in mind. **We cannot remind ourselves too often that these things are ACTUALLY COMING TO PASS just as the Lord foretold**, and therefore our redemption "draweth nigh"—our redemption or our rejection, according to our record when he comes.

S. E. ASIA BOILING WITH UNREST AND REVOLUTION

THE LITTLE kingdom of Laos, now in a state of unrest and revolution, may be the **deciding factor in who controls S. E. Asia**—pro-Communist or pro-Western nations. At present the situation is described as "chaos, discontent, armies on the loose."

Laos, bordered on the north by Red China, touching Burma on the northwest, forms a wedge between pro-Western Thailand and pro-Communist North Vietnam, with South Vietnam and Cambodia (pro-Western) on the south and southeast.

The situation in a few words is a backward nation dependent on outside aid for its very existence (as all these small nations are), its people divided politically and racially, constantly harassed by Communist infiltration and subversive activities. There seems to be no hope of any peaceful solution of its problems.

Loss of Laos to the Communists would be a death blow to Western influence in Southeast Asia. For, it is certain that the small, weak pro-western nations bordering on Laos could not long resist Communist pressure, sparked by Red China, aided and abetted by Soviet Russia.

It is doubtful if Burma could long remain neutral. In fact, loss of this vital area to the Communists would leave all of Southeast Asia, even India, wide open to Communist aggression.

This civil war in S. E. Asia is actually a contest between East and West to determine which bloc shall control this vital area, with Laos and the other small nations as mere pawns in the hands of the great powers involved. It is a situation such as that now existing in Laos, which could easily involve the great rival powers in a general war.

It is beginning to appear that the \$300 million which the U. S. has spent in an effort to maintain Laos as a Western bulwark has been spent in vain. It is also becoming evident that the Western efforts to purchase friendship and co-operation with money has failed in many instances.

CONGO CONTINUES DANGER SPOT

THE PRESENT situation in the Congo differs little from the one in Southeast Asia. Although the U. N. was given a mandate to assist the Congo government in "the complete restoration of law and order," that mandate was somewhat vague, and it is now evident that they were given an impossible task, for, the best that they have been able to do so far is to prevent complete chaos.

At present the position of the warring factions in the Congo is described as a "stand-off," with U.N. members deadlocked on policies to resolve the nation's problems. As in Southeast Asia, the greatest obstacle toward a sane and workable policy for the Congo lies in the rivalry existing between East and West, each bloc hoping to gain strength in the final disposition of the African problem.

Israeli intelligence sources report that evidence is accumulating that Egypt is now being used as a base for shipment of Soviet arms to factions in the Congo and other Central African nations favourable to the Communists.

Great are the problems facing the U.N., and failure in the Congo may easily mark the beginning of the end for this organization that was supposed to be the answer for world problems.

"MEN'S HEARTS FAILING FOR FEAR"

HEARTS ARE failing for fear because of the utter hopelessness of the world situation. Sober-minded men who are familiar with the actual facts are the most fearful of all. Politicians who wish to present themselves as deliverers from world disaster, and irrational optimists who try to convince a wishful-thinking people that world peace is possible are faced with stubborn facts which belie their words.

FEARFUL PICTURE OF ATOMIC WAR

A FEARFUL picture of what atomic war could mean is revealed in a report concerning the U.S. stockpile of nuclear weapons. The following statistics were presented recently to the American Assn. for Advancement of Science:

The U. S. has a stockpile of atomic weapons equal to 50,000 A-bombs of the Hiroshima type and will add 30,000 more within 3 years. These statistics revealed a grim picture of bombs now produced in huge quantities by the U. S. and Russia, each capable of exerting a blast effect of 20 million tons of TNT, sufficient to lay waste any large city at a single blast.

While scientists are agreed that only the U.S. and Russia are capable of producing nuclear weapons in any large quantity at the present time, already Britain and France are producing atomic bombs and 6 other nations are building reactors for the purpose of producing materials to generate atomic power.

Although it is conceded that none of these 6 nations could conceivably manufacture atomic bombs at the present time, and probably not at all so long as present costs are maintained, it is also known that scientists are working on processes which may greatly reduce the cost of manufacturing nuclear weapons.

Sir Charles P. Snow, "distinguished British scientist," states—

"Atomic scientists know that Red China and a dozen other states could have atomic and hydrogen bombs within 6 years or less . . . Either we accept a restriction of nuclear armaments, or within 10 years, at the most, nations which do not have atomic bombs will have them in use."

The news that Israel, with French aid, was building an atomic reactor has created apprehension in many quarters, and has brought forth a threat from Premier Nasser that if Israel's purpose was to build nuclear weapons, then the U.A.R. would attack the "base of aggression."

Israel, like all other new entrants into the atomic field, claims that their only purpose for the atomic reactor is for industrial, health and scientific research. But such claims do not completely allay the fear that it is possible to quickly convert such plants to production of atomic weapons, and more nations with nuclear weapons would mean more danger of war and more destruction when it comes.

"POWERS OF THE (POLITICAL) HEAVEN SHAKEN"

DURING THE last 45 years the overthrow of one government after another has occurred until the greater portion of the map of the world has been completely made over. **The colonial empire of Britain, France, Holland, and now Belgium, have been almost entirely swept away**, creating new nations with new problems and perplexities.

The passing of colonialism has only shifted, not corrected, the distress and perplexity afflicting the nations. **While other colonial empires have melted away, Russia has built up a Communist empire as dictatorial and oppressive as any of the old ones.** Red China is on the way toward doing the same thing.

The general strike in Belgium as a protest against the government's austerity program is following a pattern becoming common throughout the world, in which small radical groups stir up the populace against existing governments.

It is a favourite weapon of the Communist world movement, to create discontent and dissension at every opportunity as an opening wedge for the introduction of Communist control. Just another example of the "sea and waves roaring" and the shaking of the powers of the heaven.

Uprisings in two of the few kingdoms left in the world have occurred in two of the most remote areas in all the world, Ethiopia in East Africa and Nepal, between India and China. The Ethiopian monarch claims to be the modern representative of a dynasty 3,000 years old.

Though the recent uprisings appear to have been crushed for the present, there is no evidence that the causes have been removed. There is every reason to believe that the revolution which is now sweeping over the world has been extended to these two ancient and backward nations.

As the year 1960 came to a close, and while a comparatively small portion of earth's inhabitants feasted, made merry and sang hymns of peace on earth; **want, distress and dissatisfaction stalked the greater portion of humanity.**

Riot and revolution in many areas, with the whole world on the brink of war, gives no promise that 1961 will be any different. **COMMUNISM HAS MADE GREAT GAINS** and the Western nations have lost ground in many areas. The inescapable conclusion is that the final crisis is building up fast. The only question is, "How long?" -O.B.

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.

BE YE PERFECT, AS YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN IS PERFECT

What Paul prayed for is deserving of our most serious consideration, for in Paul's specifications of his desires for the brethren, we see a portrait of what we ought to be—in our leading features at all events—and what, therefore, we will be helped to strive for if we realize that they are an inspired apostle's solicitude on our account.

Paul's desire and prayer for the brethren, then, are thus expressed:

"That ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. 1:9-12).

What a comprehensive and profound definition of what Paul would have us to be!—of what GOD would have us to be; for Paul was nothing to us apart from the Spirit of God, which was in him.

—**R.R.**

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