

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Signs of the Times

EVENTS for the past few weeks have brought the world closer to the brink of general war than for many years; events which have decidedly favoured the Soviet propaganda effort to enhance the Communist cause before the world.

Probability increases that Gog of the North parts is nearing that time when, "having reached the plenitude of his power" (bro. Thomas' words) he will be ready to challenge the West in a match of strength to see who shall dominate the earth.

That challenge has already been made so far as the ultimate purpose of the Soviet Union is concerned. How long it will be before Russia and her allies will be ready to throw in the might of their military prowess for the kill is still unforeseeable.

RUSSIA GAINS ON MANY FRONTS

ON EVERY front of the cold war the Soviets are making substantial gains and the Western powers are compelled to go on the defensive in nearly every area of activity. **Scientifically Russia has, for nearly 4 years, taken and held the lead over Western nations.**

There have been many successful space ventures since Russia's first (and the world's first) satellite circled the globe, but the Russians have CONSISTENTLY BEEN FIRST with every new spectacular accomplishment.

And now the most coveted feat of all, a man sent into orbit around the earth and returned safely, has given to Russia a propaganda weapon which will be hard to equal, which they hailed as a "Socialist" triumph, demonstrating the superiority of their system over capitalism.

The fact that both Russia and the U. S. have been feverishly working on the project to place a man in orbit, but Russia got there first, makes its propaganda value tremendous. It demonstrates Russia's superiority in massive rocket boosters and the possibility of space as a launching area for nuclear weapons.

It increased Russia's advantage over the West in their efforts to win the allegiance of uncommitted peoples. Such Soviet superiority is calculated to inspire both fear and admiration among neutral peoples.

MILITARY SITUATION CRITICAL FOR WEST

IN LAOS the situation grows gloomier by the day. In fact **it appears certain that this vital area is lost to the West, come what may.** A cease-fire agreement between Britain and Russia has not, at this writing, been accomplished so far as the warring factions are concerned. And it is significant that the Soviets only agreed to a cease-fire plan after the pro-Communist rebels had attained military ascendancy in Laos and had occupied many strategic areas.

It is not yet clear just what a truce would involve, but it is not likely that it would include pro-Communist evacuation of territory gained. As the negotiations for a truce proceed, rebel forces continue to advance.

For the West, Laos presents a perplexing situation in which they stand between two fires, threatened with disaster no matter which way they turn. Inaction means surrendering Laos and ultimately all Southeast Asia to the Communists, and being discredited before the world as being **unable to fulfil their promises of aid and protection for their friends.**

Armed intervention means a long and hopeless struggle against guerrilla bands, assisted by Red China and amply supplied with arms by Soviet Russia, in terrain ideally suited for such type of

warfare. France carried on a long and costly war in this area in an effort to save her Indo-China empire, only to lose the entire territory in the end.

* * *

ANOTHER military loss to the West, with far-reaching implications, is the abortive attempt of anti-Castro rebels to invade Cuba. Failure in itself would have been bad enough for Western interests, but the fact that the U. S. openly aided the invading forces, gives to the Soviets a tremendous propaganda weapon, enabling them to exhibit the U. S. as an aggressor who failed in the attempt to overthrow a government aided by Russia.

Mr. Khrushchev seems to occupy the enviable position of being able to make dire threats which he does not have to fulfil himself, but gets the job done by others. Laos and Cuba are examples.

POLITICAL GAINS FOR SOVIETS

RAPIDLY recovering from the setback in the Congo and the UN Assembly, Soviet Russia forged ahead on several political fronts. In Southeast Asia, in Cuba and Africa, Soviet stock rose perceptibly during the last few weeks. Meanwhile the West, frustrated in Laos, bogged down in the Congo, and having suffered a stinging defeat in Cuba, is placed on the defensive in all these areas.

The Soviet policy remains the same as they consolidate new gains. These gains lie principally in the propaganda value of Russian scientific successes, pro-Communist advances in Laos and the failure to overthrow Castro's Communist regime in Cuba.

In his May Day speech in Havana, Castro left no doubt as to Cuba's alignment with the Communists. He declared that Cuba was now a "socialist" state; that all Cuban public institutions would be "socialized," and that there would be no more elections. Thus it has come to pass, as feared; **a full-fledged Soviet satellite is now just off the coast of the U.S.A.**

In the political field, it should be kept in mind that there is little difference in the overall policies of the two groups of nations now contending for world leadership. This purpose is to thwart the aims of each other at whatever place and by whatever means an opportunity is presented. But where the West is failing, the Soviets are gaining.

COMMUNISM GAINS WORLD-WIDE

IF COMMUNIST ideology was confined to Russia and Red China, the task of meeting its plans and purposes would be greatly simplified, but **Communism has gained a foothold in every nation on earth**, where a fifth column of dedicated persons stand ready to turn against their own nation, if necessary to serve the Communist world movement.

Communism appeared as the world, dissatisfied with its decadent religions, was seeking for a Godless, man-glorifying religion and escape from any feelings of responsibility to a personal God. The theory of evolution, "higher criticism" of the Bible by the intellectuals in the schools and colleges, and scepticism in general has provided a fertile field in which Communism has flourished.

The introduction of Communism came at a time also when the demand by colonials and foreign-ruled peoples for free government had become general. The Soviets, taking advantage of this trend, have constantly presented themselves as the only true friend and benefactor of such people.

Communism appeals to the educated who are flattered by the hope of changing humanity over to a pattern based on science and higher learning. It appeals to the ignorant and underprivileged masses as a hope for bettering their economic condition. The latter class, after ages of poverty and distress, feel they have nothing to lose and something to gain in a world under Communism.

A FASCINATING IDEOLOGY

COMMUNISTS the world over are united in a fanatical desire to make over the world to fit their pattern.

All national and racial barriers are erased; all former religious and ethical standards are discarded and the whole human race is to be united along scientific lines in a world-wide reformation which is to completely wipe out poverty and establish permanent and universal peace.

Of course, such a plan, even if sincere, is but an idle dream, for it ignores the perversity, greed and selfishness of human nature. Most of all, it is **directly contrary to Bible prophecy** of what is coming on earth, seeking to usurp the authority which God has given only to the Prince of Peace, who alone can bring peace, equity, justice and prosperity to the earth (Isa. 11:1-4).

On the other hand, the "capitalist" nations are without anything new to offer a world which is demanding some new thing to take the place of a system which has for ages done nothing more than give prosperity to a very few people. They can only cry, "Democracy and freedom," a meaningless term to starving peoples.

The appeal to religion falls on the deafened ears of a world which has corrupted God's way upon the earth. The great proportion of earth's population today are not interested in religion as a cure for their ills. They are interested only in a government which will give them economic prosperity in a godless world; and this is what Communism promises them.

STRANGE EVENTS CONVERGE IN FINAL ERA

IT IS strange and wonderful that the very things which are set forth as a remedy for all the world's woes are the very things which are setting the stage for Armageddon and the overthrow of gentile dominion.

We live in an era which has unquestionably developed into that long-expected time which would bring many factors into focus, converging in that amazing series of events which would indicate that "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

The shaking of the powers of the political heaven, universal fear and perplexity, distress of nations, world-wide tension and revolution, evil going forth from nation to nation, while stupendous military preparation makes of the world one huge armed camp with weapons capable of destroying all humanity.

Something unforeseen was a world revolution inspired by an ideology the purpose of which was to create, aid and perpetuate a planned revolt of all mankind against all previous political, religious and ideological conceptions. But such a state of affairs has a large proportion of the world in its grip AND IT IS GROWING.

There will be no peace until both Communists and anti-Communist forces are crushed by the weight of divine judgment and the Prince of Peace takes over the reins of world government.

—O.B.

EDITORIAL

In the Days of Thy Youth

"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord"—Col. 3:20.

WHAT is youth? My dictionary defines it as "A condition of being young, or that period which continues until the attainment of full growth." The word is also used as a general term for that which is undeveloped, immature, and in process of growth, therefore, not old. It cannot be definitely determined by a number of years, because full growth is not uniform in all persons.

There is one well-known established fact, and it is much before the public at this time. The days of our youth, especially our teenage years, constitute the most impressionable period of our lives, and the things we learn, whether they be good or evil, will have an influential effect upon our later years. Therefore *it is urgently essential that Christadelphian parents "bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."*

The course to follow must be two-fold, for parental instruction will not bring about the required results, *unless it is preceded by a life of holiness that will create a spiritual environment in which the child will grow in the knowledge and reverence of the Lord.* This principle was presented to the people of Israel by Moses, and recorded in Deut. 6:6-9,

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

"And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."

Among the things written for our instruction—especially in relation to our children—there is no other precept in the Word of God that brings the subject before us in sharper focus. This distinguished feature must have been foremost in the home in which Timothy was reared, for Paul speaks of the great faith of his mother and his grandmother, and reminds him "that from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures."

The responsibility of rearing children is tremendous, but comparatively few parents are prepared for this domestic duty. No doubt, many of us could look back into our own experience, and see how we failed in many ways. Therefore, in the formative parental period, *everything in the Word of God pertaining to parents and children should be studied carefully.* Regardless of our age, if we follow such a wise course, we will find much to learn, if we are willing to be taught.

* * *

ONE OF the greatest dangers into which a child can be deceitfully led, and one which usually involves momentous consequences, and in some cases disaster, is the unsound theory of "self-expression." One can understand this development in the homes of deluded and liberty-loving people; but how any Christadelphian parent could adopt such an obviously unwise practice is beyond our comprehension. Even a casual reference to Bible teaching will show that this course is diametrically opposed to divine instruction. Solomon had considerable to say about the duties of parents, and a notable example is found in Prov. 13:24 (RSV)—

"He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him."

The use of the word "rod," in many places is figurative, and denotes punishment, or chastisement. However, we do not think it relates to the form of punishment used by the Romans when they beat their prisoners with rods. It is quite possible, and probable, that Paul was thinking of the above passage in Proverbs, when he wrote so extensively in the letter to the Hebrews on the subject of chastisement. However, he quotes directly from Prov. 3:11-12, when he says—

"Have you forgotten the exhortation which addresses you as sons?—My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor lose courage when you are punished by Him. For the Lord disciplines him whom He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives"

(Heb 12:5-6).

Here we have the divine pattern set before us; a model for us to observe and follow as we care for our children, and guide them to maturity. Brother Roberts sums it up beautifully by saying—

"In a family where law is maintained, you have whipping and tears, but then you have also the sunshine after the rain—the beautiful spectacle of obedient, intelligent, cheerful children whose society is not a nuisance.

"In families where there is no law, the children escape the rod, but they get something which is a thousand times worse—the misery of undeveloped minds and wilful, wicked dispositions which repel sympathy and lead at last into all sorrow.

"There is no finer spectacle on earth—it is the beauty of heaven itself—than complete and intelligent submission to law."

This statement, by our brother, is adequately supported by the words of Solomon in Prov. 29:15—

"The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother" (RSV).

Children, said the Psalmist, are an heritage of the Lord. Therefore, let us think of them as such, and "apply our hearts unto instruction, and our ears to the words of knowledge" in a courageous effort to direct the feet of our children along the path that leads to the Kingdom of God. —*Editor*

"We Shall Reign on Earth"

"Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood . . . and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth"—Rev. 3:9-10

By BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

It is written in the prophet Micah (4:3-8) that—

"The Lord shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off (from Jerusalem)"

And as the result thereof—

"They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into scythes; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid."

And—

"In that day, saith the Lord, I shall assemble" Israel, "and make them a strong nation; and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion, from thenceforth, even for ever."

And—

"Unto thee, O Zion, shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem."

And the judge, who shall be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from everlasting—

". . . shall stand and feed in the strength of Jehovah, in the Majesty of the Name of the Lord his God; and Israel shall abide; for He shall be great to the ends of the earth.

"And this man (Christ the Lord) shall be the peace when the Assyrian (the Russo-Assyrian) shall come into our (Israel's) land.

"Assyria shall be wasted with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof; thus shall He (the Judge of Israel) deliver us from the Assyrian (Gog) when he cometh into our land.

"And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man nor waiteth for the sons of men.

"And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries; all thine enemies shall be cut off.

"And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard" (Mic. 5:1-15).

From this passage, which is only a specimen of the general tenor of the law and the testimony we are informed—

1. That the nations are to be **subdued**, and that universal peace shall prevail in consequence;
2. That when this shall occur, the Israelites shall become a strong nation;
3. That they shall then constitute a KINGDOM;
4. That the Judge of Israel, formerly treated with indignity, shall be their King;
5. That Jerusalem shall be the metropolis, and Mount Zion the throne, of the Kingdom.

Such is the revealed purpose of the Most High. But a consummation like this requires preparation; and that, too, a very long one; especially as it is to be developed upon certain moral, as well as political, principles. When the time shall come for the Kingdom to be possessed, it will be said to the heirs of it, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom *prepared for you* from the foundation of the world." From this, it appears that the work of *preparing* the Kingdom takes *from the foundation of the world to the resurrection of the dead*.

All this time the Kingdom is preparing; but when the King descends, and rebukes the nations, and wastes the land of Nimrod with the sword, and makes Israel a strong nation, it will then be said that the Kingdom is prepared.

The reader will probably inquire, *What does this work of preparation consist in, that it should take so long a time?* This is an important question, and, in reply, I remark that if physical force only were employed in preparing the Kingdom, it need not take so long. A kingdom may be set up in a few days, and abolished as speedily, as we have witnessed in our own time. But it is not so with the Kingdom of God.

The physical is subordinated to the intellectual and moral; and as men, among whom it is being prepared, are so earthly and sensual, the mental progresses much more slowly than the physical; and therefore, *a kingdom founded upon moral principles* requires longer to prepare, but is more enduring when completed. In the following pages my endeavour will be to set forth an answer to the question in detail.

* * *

A *KINGDOM* is the dominion of a KING. An empire is also the dominion of a king, but with this difference: the kingdom proper, or "the first dominion," is restricted to a regally constituted territory; while the empire, or secondary dominion, though belonging to the same king, extends over other peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, than those of the royal domain.

This is illustrated in the case of the British kingdoms and empire. The *kingdoms* are restricted to England and Scotland, which are by constitution regal territories; but the empire is a secondary dominion of the same united crowns, extending over Canada, Hindostan, and other parts of the globe, with the nations, languages, and people, they contain.

There are various elements necessary to the constitution of a well-organized kingdom. In the first place, a kingdom must have a TERRITORY. This is only saying, in other terms, that something

must be somewhere. To maintain the opposite would be to contend that something is nowhere. A kingdom is not located in feeling, or in heart; though a belief of its future existence, a comprehension of its nature, or an attachment to it, may exist there. It must have a place, a locality, as well as a name.

It would be highly absurd to say that the kingdom of England and the throne of her sovereign were in Spain; yet this would be as reasonable as to say that the kingdom and throne of David are beyond the skies!—an orthodox dogma contained in the fiction that Jesus is now sitting upon the throne of his father David!

In addition to a territory, a kingdom requires SUBJECTS, which compose the nation over whom there is the king. But, simply to set up a man and call him "king" would be unwise. It would be consonant only with the barbarism of savage tribes. A well-regulated monarchy requires graduation of ranks, and orders of the BEST MEN, with whom the king may divide his power, and glory and administer the laws of the kingdom.

These LAWS should be in conformity with the provisions and spirit of the constitution; which defines the principles, and creates and combines the elements, of the State.

Now it is worthy of remark, that *the subjects of a kingdom do not "possess" the kingdom*. They are simply the inhabitants of the territory, who are defended against external aggression, and protected as civilians by the power, and laws, of the State. *The possessors of the kingdom are the king and those with whom he is pleased to share his authority.*

This is an important distinction, and must not be forgotten in studying "the things of the kingdom of God." The *subjects* of the kingdom and empire are a totally different class from the *heirs*, or possessors, of the dominion.

From this brief view, then, of the nature and constitution of a kingdom, its elements may be stated as consisting of:

1. A territory;
2. Subjects;
3. A king;
4. A constitution;
5. Laws, civil and ecclesiastical;
6. Aristocracy;
7. Attributes, or prerogatives, rights, privileges, etc.

Now, "the kingdom of God and of His Christ" will consist of all these things; and will be as material an institution—as real and terrestrial a monarchy—as that of Great Britain. It is not now an existent reality; for, though it once existed under a constitution, which hath waxed old and vanished away, its elements are dissolved from their previous combination, and remain dispersed.

Their restitution is, however, a matter of promise, attested by two immutable things—the promise and the oath of the living God. His kingdom and empire on earth are a great truth, but not an existing fact; they are visible only to the eye of faith, and are required by their founder to be received in the "full assurance of hope," with rejoicing and confidence to the end (Heb. 3:6, 14; 4:11; 10:38-39).

* * *

IN STUDYING the things of the kingdom of God, the foundation laid in the beginning must not be forgotten; for at that epoch its preparation was commenced. *The system of the world is an adaptation to man in his fallen state; and out of the things thus arranged it is that Christ's imperial dominion is being evolved.*

By the law of procreation has been provided a population which, by the confusion of tongues, has been distributed into nations, whose habitations have been fixed by the controlling power of the Elohim. Thus nations have been formed which are destined to flourish in the blessedness of the Future.

Their history records the fiery ordeal through which their generations have passed. For the most part, men see nothing in it but a strife for territory, and glory, for the advantage of their rulers; but *the Scriptures reveal the workings of an invisible machinery*, whose activity is perceived by the believer, in the incidents which occasion the conflicts among them. He discerns the leaven, hid in the three measures of meal, at work leavening the minds of men, and developing the "*enmity between the seeds*."

And though the strife is terrible, he feels no dismay, but rejoices with firm and unwavering confidence in the certainty of the triumph of the truth and its adherents; because God has assured him in His Word that the King He has provided shall crush the sin-power, and make the nations lick the dust like a serpent (Mic. 7:17).

Now this implies their subjugation; and it is to this crisis that all things are at present tending. *And what then?* Obviously, the transfer of the conquered to the sceptre of Jehovah's King, who overcomes them (Rev. 17:14), as it is written:

"The Gentiles shall wait for his law" (Isa. 42:4),
"He shall reign over them" (Rom. 15:12).

The nations, then, are the subjects of the theocratic empire. By the truth and judgments of God brought to bear upon them, exciting and controlling their activity, they are being moulded like clay in the hands of the potter, for the dominion of the saints in the Future Age.

The hope of these things, whose seeds were sown in the constitution of the world at the beginning, was the Hope of the Gospel then in its most general enunciation. The subjects and territory of the empire, and the rulers thereof, were plainly marked out.

The earth, and the conquered seed of the serpent, obedient to the victorious seed of the woman, was the Gospel of the Kingdom in its most simple form.

No particular portion of the globe, however, was indicated as the territory of a kingdom. The Spirit began with universals; but as the world became older, the particulars of the promise were unfolded to the eye of faith.

But never, from the foundation of the world to the sealing up of the testimony of God, was such a kingdom, or dominion, promised as that which is believed in, and glorified in the "sacred" psalmody of the Gentiles.

Earth, and not the skies, is the region where alone it will appear. I shall show this abundantly; and thereby prove that they who sing such ditties as those of which the following is a specimen, sing what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be:

"With thee we'll reign, with thee we'll rise,
And kingdoms gain beyond the skies!"

"*According to your faith be it unto you.*" This is the first principle of religion delivered by the Great Teacher himself. It is just and right it should be so. No one can blame God for not bestowing upon them what they do not believe in; and, consequently, do not want, or seek after.

This is precisely the position of the present generation of religionists in relation to the Kingdom of God. They have faith in a sort of kingdom He hath not promised; and in the one He has promised they do not believe.

Hence, they believe in a non-entity; and, believing in what is nothing, they will get nothing but confusion of face. But we propose to show them a more excellent way; and in so doing invite their attention to "*THE PROMISE MADE OF GOD UNTO THE FATHERS*"—The Hope of Israel."

He Hath Borne Our Grievs

By **BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS**

"Let the dead bury their dead . . . No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God"—Luke 9:60-62

PART TWO

The above implies there are some who are "fit," and some who are "not fit," and it shows who are they that are "fit."

Those who are fit are those who lay hold with full purpose of heart and accept the calling in Christ *in its entirety*. That calling is a thing that is very exacting indeed; *it claims absolute ascendancy with those of whom it lays hold*.

It is a very different thing from the religion preached from the pulpits of the churches and chapels. The clergy give the people to understand, though they do not say so in express words, that they need not be very much taken up with religion, that a sprinkling of it will be sufficient; whereas the Truth of Christ demands to be the object of life, principle of action, subject of supreme affection—*the engrossing thing*.

How reasonable this seems when we allow ourselves to realize all the surrounding facts of the case, and the end of every human being. Walk through a cemetery, for instance, and read the tombstones. There you have a sleeping congregation of people, who have done with life. There are all sorts—from the grey-haired captain who acquired military or naval honours in various parts of the world, and in the language of Parliamentary compliment, "deserved well of his country," to the unknown pauper who drivelled out his inglorious days in the workhouse.

There are merchants under these sods, who, in their day, had risen to the top of the social scale by their industry and by talents which were highly applauded as their own, and who died in the lap of luxury.

And there are also strong young men and beautiful children with whom parents had to part, and whom, too, notwithstanding breaking hearts, they have had to follow into the grave. There they lie, a common mass of corruption—unknown, unknowing, forgotten in the land of the living.

Now, let us imagine that we are included in that congregation as we certainly shall be if the Lord arrest not the course of Nature by his coming, and let us imagine the time for resurrection come. On the one side of the resurrection-line there is the past—the human past, with its dropped burden of human anxieties and human business; and on the other side, what is there?

GOD'S business; God's business on a large scale. Christ is at the head of it. He puts aside the kings first and all their governments, and his great business is to exalt the Name of God in the earth, and to bring the nations into subjection and harmony with Him.

Now, whom of all that congregation of the dead, whose mortal days and mortal concerns are all gone, whom of them would you select to be companions of Christ in this mighty work upon earth, which has as its object the exaltation of the honor of God's Name for ever and ever, in the countless population with which the earth is yet to be peopled?

Would you think it a large price to ask of any of that dead rotting congregation for the privilege of immortal partnership in this work, that they should have *devoted their mortal affections, their mortal energies, their mortal opportunities, to holding up Christ's Name in the day of his disgrace?*

I am sure that no one realizing the matter would falter in the decision. Everyone would say it was most reasonable that people who lived for themselves, should reap what they had sown.

The great majority of the dead lived for mortal life; and they cannot complain if they get, and perish with, what they worked for. All they worked for was good things to put on their backs, and the satisfaction of "respectability" in their day and generation. They got what they worked for; they had their reward; therefore what would you bring them forward into the Kingdom of God for?

The Kingdom of God is for those only who seek it *first*, and *work* for it in a practical enthusiastic way, and are considered fools for their pains.

Let us then, brethren, never listen for a moment to those who would hinder in the good fight by recommending what is called "temperance" and "moderation" in divine things.

Their exhortations are altogether misplaced, and altogether uncalled for. The tendencies of the sluggish beast of the natural man are sufficiently powerful in that direction to render it quite needless for anyone to exhort us in that line.

We need exhorting the other way. We want continually to be pulled up in the direction of the path which the Captain of our Salvation himself has trodden before us, and in which he is, so to speak, leading us on. We know what sort of path that was.

We know he was no "mild" and "moderate" man in the things of God. We know he had no schemes in hand but the one scheme of God's purpose. We know that he was never found trimming his sails to world breezes, or emulating or inculcating worldly principles; he devoted himself solely to the work which the Father gave him, and his relation to the world was one of continued antagonism.

Our work and our attitude, *IF we are his brethren*, will be the same. The work may be different now in its external form, but it is the same work for all that, based upon the same testimonies and the same principles, and aiming at the same end—the purifying of a peculiar people for the inheritance of the Kingdom of God.

Let us not fear to give ourselves to it with all our hearts. We shall not regret it when that day comes to us, or when we shall gasp out the vital energy which keeps us going for the time being. We shall look back with satisfaction on our little course if we are able to say—

"Well, I know my efforts were weak, and I know my shortcomings were many, but I have sought to serve Christ to the extent of my mortal possibilities as circumstances allowed, and although it has been a toilsome career, hard work and unsatisfactory in some respects, I am glad to look back upon it and would do as I have done if I had to live it over again."

On the other hand, the men or the women who have merely mild notions of Christ, and who have been devoting themselves to personal aims connected with this mortal life as the object of their exertions, when they get through their comfortable drive and come to die, they will be far other than satisfied with the account they will have to look upon; they will be filled with consternation when they come to present it.

* * *

IT IS a glorious day that is coming, but glorious only in a certain line of things. The greatness and the glory of the day of Christ are all on a certain foundation. The glory and the foundation of the glory are both visible in Psalm 99 that has been read. Let us glance at them for a moment. "*The Lord*

reigneth." What is the leading feature of the system of government and of human life when the Lord reigneth?—

"The Lord is great in Zion. He is high above all the people, let them praise Thy great and terrible Name; for it is holy."

"Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship ye at His footstool; for He is holy" (Psa. 99:3-5).

The recognition of the greatness of God is the foundation of the glory of those glorious "good times coming." It is testified that all nations shall come and worship before God; and that the knowledge of the glory of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; God's will shall be done upon the earth as it is done in heaven. There will be glory to God in the highest at the time that there is peace on earth.

Now, in contrast to this, just look at the world at the present. What does it know or care for the greatness and the glory of God? What conception has it of His holiness? Speak to it of such matters, and your speech is to them the speech of a madman. *This helps us to realize HOW THOROUGHLY EVIL THE WORLD IS.*

Some people have a difficulty in realizing the truth on this point. They certainly think the world was bad at the time of the Roman Emperors, and at the time that Christ appeared; but they have an idea that now we are advancing by slow degrees towards an age of progress and enlightenment, that in fact the world as a whole is tolerably righteous.

The prevalence of this idea is only proof of the ignorance that exists as to the nature of true enlightenment and true civilization. The world lieth in wickedness now as much as it did in the days of John. The wickedness has only changed its form a little.

Wickedness in our day is refined; it is cultivated; it is methodical; it has got on a beautiful skin outside, but according to the divine standard, it is, perhaps, more reprobate than the untutored barbarism of early days. It is more proud and more blind to its weakness and dependence.

The barbarians had *some* notion of a God, and entertained *some* idea that they must give some service to that God; but this miserable world of modern civilization is like to burst with exaggerated notions of their own importance. It is ripe for destruction.

It is respectable enough according to current notions of respectability, but, in the eyes of God, it is sunk in corruption as much as it was before the Flood, when mankind had "corrupted His way upon the earth."

Mankind have now utterly corrupted His way, and are walking after a thousand imaginations of their evil hearts, fearing not the Possessor of Heaven and Earth, regarding not His law, nor caring to know the state of the poor. Christ is with them a byword.

We are close to the time when it is revealed that the angel—the symbolic angel with the sickle—will gather the harvest of the earth and cast it into the great wine press of the wrath of God, that it may be trodden by him to whom alone is allotted this great mission, even the Man of Sorrows who in his day bore testimony to the wickedness of the world; who upheld the faith and honor of God, and who is to have the great honor of executing the work of judgment when the time arrives.

To that work and that great honor we are called, if we are of his spirit, if we are his brethren, if we have a family likeness with him. The family likeness, in this case, is a thing of principle and not of flesh and blood, and the principle shines through the gorgeous picture of the Kingdom presented in this Psalm. It is *the greatness of God and holiness unto Him.*

"BE YE HOLY," Christ said to his disciples, and therefore to us. We may imagine him standing here now and saying—

"Be ye holy in all manner of conversation."

This is a *practical* exhortation. There are things which we ought to dismiss as inconvenient and unbecoming in sons of God, and Paul mentions among them "covetousness, jesting and foolish talking." *These are things which waste and burn up the mind.*

There are indulgences in common follies which dry up the spiritual sap and engender aversion to spiritual things. Let us avoid them. Remember, we are aiming toward the state symbolized by the four heraldic living creatures of the Israelitish commonwealth, full of eyes, and which rest not day and night, saying—

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is and is to come. Thou art 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."

We are to be incorporated in those four living ones if we are acceptable to Christ at his coming; and that acceptability will only exist then if we are now constituents of the peculiar people. Christ is working now; purifying the people unto himself, and he has been working at this work ever since he went away, through instrumentality employed.

* * *

IT IS hard work in our generation. The world is in such a wretched plight with regard to the Truth, that we cannot begin where the apostles began. The apostles began straight off, whereas we have to convince men of the elementary principles. We have to begin at the very foundation, and show that man is mortal; that Christ is coming, and that the Kingdom of God is to be established on earth.

Consequently there is the tremendous danger that people getting to know these elementary things may think they are all right, whereas the fact of the matter is that the foundation is only laid for the work of *fashioning them into the likeness of the people prepared for the Lord.*

Well, if the difficulties are great, no doubt Christ's sympathies are great; if our situation is peculiarly discouraging, no doubt our welcome before him, if we overcome, will be correspondingly cordial. He may say—

"Many believed on me who saw the signs and wonders of the apostolic age, but ye saw them not, and yet believed, Blessed are ye; enter now into the glory revealed."

In prospect of that, and with the desire for such a reception, let us continue patient in this well-doing; breaking bread from Sunday to Sunday, daily reading the Word and persevering under all circumstances, however discouraging, in the patient observance of all the things that Christ has commanded.

Without Excuse

"I rejoice at Thy Law, as one that findeth great treasure. Great peace have they that love Thy Law, and nothing shall offend them"—Psalm 119:162-5

PART TWO

MAN, IN his natural state, lies in sin. To a large extent, *ignorant* sin—he does not know that his natural way of life is displeasing to God—

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

"All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but **he that doeth the will of God abideth forever** . . . Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (1 John 2:15-18).

Unaided, we do not and cannot know what is sin and what is the will of God. Uninstructed, we constantly offend and grieve Him, because our natural course is to follow the way of the flesh and the world (Rom. 8:13)—

"If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

This is why He has caused the Bible to be written for our instruction. It must be our daily study, if we truly desire to be pleasing to him. A few thoughts from the pen of David (writing, of course, under the influence of the Spirit) will illustrate the necessary course that love for God and desire to know Him and please Him will follow—

"Blessed are they that keep the Lord's testimonies, and that seek Him WITH THE WHOLE HEART. Thou hast commanded us to keep Thy precepts diligently . . .

"O, that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes! . . .

"With my whole heart I have sought Thee. O, let me not wander from Thy commandments . . .

Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee.

"Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law . . . I will delight myself in Thy commandments, which I have loved . . .

"The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy; teach me Thy statutes . . . Thou art good, and doest good.

"Thy hands have made me and fashioned me; give me understanding that I may learn Thy commandments. I will never forget Thy precepts, for with them Thou hast quickened me.

"O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day. How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

"Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever; for they are the rejoicing of my heart . . . GREAT PEACE HAVE THEY WHICH LOVE THY LAW."

These passages, which are all taken from Psalm 119, show the *necessary frame of mind in relation to God's revelations*—a wholehearted and fulltime devotion and absorption—and the importance of these revealed truths, not only as essential instruction in the way of life, but as the great and consuming interest of life and substance of pleasure and meditation. The entire Psalm is very instructive in this respect.

A daily, consistent study of the whole Bible is the ONLY way to acquire the saving and guiding and mind-transforming knowledge that brings peace.

There is a booklet, called "The Bible Companion,*" by which the Bible can be read through in one year—once through the Old Testament and twice through the New, because the latter is more detailed and concentrated.

* Available free on request.

We would strongly urge any who desire to know God to follow this plan of reading faithfully, prayerfully, and consistently.

Much of the reading will be difficult. Much will, to begin with, be incomprehensible and therefore perhaps somewhat dry. This is to be expected in relation to a matter of such transcendent importance. Nothing worthwhile comes easily, and there is nothing more worthwhile than this.

Get a Bible with good, big print and read it daily, meditating upon it, praying for the enlightenment and understanding, and *putting into practice the part you understand*. This latter is essential, for God is not to be mocked. We must approach God's Word with a sincere and humble intention *to learn* and DO. Jesus said (John 7:17)—

"If any man will DO His will, he shall know the doctrine."

Read it with an open mind and without preconceived ideas, for *much of what passes for religion and doctrine has no foundation in Scripture* but is the invention of man.

On the other hand, do not jump too quickly to conclusions without comparing Scripture with Scripture. The Bible is a consistent whole when properly understood and many passages clarify other passages.

Prayer is principally a matter of thanksgiving to God and seeking His guidance as to what we should do. What we should do is plainly told us in the Bible. Praying to God for guidance or for some benefit, without doing everything we can to find out for ourselves from the source of information He has lovingly given us, would not ring true and consistent in His eyes.

There are some very plain instructions in the Bible as to what to do. If we ignore these, or do not trouble to find out about them, our prayers have no chance of recognition.

Belief of the true Gospel of salvation—the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ—and baptism into these things, are outstanding among the first things that must be attended to in order to stand in God's favor and receive His recognition and blessing.

You may say, "It does not seem fair to pray for help when I can do nothing myself." In a sense this is true, although actually we can never do anything of ourselves. It is God that "works in us to do His will," and gives us the power to overcome, that the glory may be all to God.

Our part is to put ourselves into that humble and teachable and truth-desiring and receptive condition that will enable God to work through and in us—to put aside our own desires and cast ourselves upon Him.

Our natural condition is perishing. We are, with the rest of the world, in the grip of sin, and *of ourselves it is impossible to get out of this condition*, regardless of our efforts, because our greatest efforts at best would be insufficient to entitle us to immortality. At best we are still sinners.

Our best efforts fall far short of perfection, and according to God's eternal and necessary and righteous laws, *perfection alone could ENTITLE us to endless life*. Sin and death are inseparable.

But God has, in His love, made a provision of His own freewill for us to escape from sin and its inevitable consequence, death. He has provided Jesus Christ as the Mercy-seat where we can approach God and be forgiven, on the basis of our belief in God and love of Him, and our repudiation of our own sinful natures and taking upon ourselves the sin-covering Name and identity of Christ.

We die as individuals and are reborn as a part of Christ and share with him the fruits of his victory over sin.

As a token of the genuineness of our belief and love, He requires us to devote ourselves to the obedience of His all-wise commandments, which are simply His loving instructions regarding the course to follow for our own happiness and wellbeing.

We cannot *earn* life. It is entirely a free gift on the basis of love, but we must act in consistency with the love and belief we profess. We must show, by striving to obey Him in all things, that that love is the ruling power in our lives.

This is what God desires, and this gives Him great satisfaction and pleasure—

"There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."
—are the words of Jesus. This is a glorious and inspiring truth. This is something we *can* give God—the pleasure and joy of obedient sonship. For this, all the creation was made.

If we are sincerely striving to know and do His will and promote His glory and pleasure, we have the great satisfaction of knowing that we *are* doing something for Him. We are making our lives worthwhile and useful in the most satisfying pursuit to which it is possible to devote ourselves.

In the words of Paul, we become "labourers together with God" in the great plan of the ages which is to fill the earth with His glory.

Do not feel that you can do nothing for God and therefore hesitate to keep asking Him to do things for you. But there are many things we *can* give God which are of great value to Him—thanksgiving and recognition of His loving provision, praise and glory, a humble heart sincerely seeking to do His will, *a love for Him that carefully avoids those things that grieve Him*, an appreciative reverence and devotion to His holy Word which He has caused to be written for our guidance to life.

The only way to find God, and through God to find peace, is by the study of His Word. It will not come by strivings with ourselves, no matter how agonized and sincere they are. We must get the *facts*, and get ourselves in line with them—

"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps aright."
But God says—
"This is the way, walk ye in it."

It consists of specific facts and specific commands: "Do this—do not do that." It cannot come by wishful thinking, any more than we could learn to play the piano by merely wishing. Jesus says—

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

The *closer we get to Jesus*, and actually *learn* of him—who he is, what he has done, what he will do in the future, and what we must do in order to be allowed to draw near him and share his love and friendship—the fuller and richer and more satisfying our life becomes.

It is all real, solid facts, like learning the laws of mathematics or the facts of history, although on an incomparably higher plane. Do not grope in the dark. Use the light that has been lovingly provided for your feet.

The Bible throws a light back 6000 years, and forward into eternity. It lifts us out of the murky restrictions of the immediate present and gives us a clear view of a glorious plan unfolding through the centuries. It gives our life a purpose and a meaning and a connection with eternity and divinity.

Beware Lest Any Man Spoil You

"If you be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. Set your affections on things above, not on things on earth"—Col. 3:1-2

THESE WORDS are found in Col. 3, and were written by Paul during his first captivity at Rome. The city of Colosse was a city of Phrygia in Asia Minor. Laodicea and Hierapolis were in its immediate neighbourhood (Col. 4:13).

The epistle was addressed to the Christians of the city of Colosse, and delivered to them by Tychicus, whom the apostle had sent both to them and to the church of Ephesus, to inquire into their state, and give exhortation and comfort.

The main object of the epistle is to warn the Colossians against a spirit of philosophy, which was corrupting the simplicity of their belief, and which was noticeably tending to obscure the eternal glory and dignity of Christ.

To get the full view of the picture as Paul presents it, and the wonderful exhortation for then and now, we must read the whole of the epistle through together, whereby we shall be strengthened, grounded and settled, in our faith.

In the opening verses Paul thanks God for the association of the Colossians in the Truth. He expresses concern for them that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing; and in loving fatherly concern he encourages them to spiritual fruitfulness.

He thanks God for His blessings in delivering us from the power of darkness that we, the Colossians and Paul, should be considered in the holy order of saints in the light.

But once again this power of darkness was eating into the very vitals of the simplicity of their belief in Christ. How beautifully and lovingly does the apostle lead us on step by step, as he shows us our privileged position—once alienated and enemies of the truth by wicked works—yet now reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, presented—

"Holy and unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight."

With such a glorious hope as ours, we need the warning as well as the exhortation, to continue grounded and settled, that as Paul desired, every man be "made perfect in Christ."

Then in Chap. 2, the apostle opens with the thoughts of his conflict (margin: fear or care) that he had for them and for Laodiceans, and as many as had not seen his face. His desire was to see a *closer bond between the brethren and a firmer stand for the Truth*. As we look into what finally existed in the Laodicean church, a state which alas has again taken its toll, we can enter into the apostle's feelings.

He warns of enticing words which have a tendency to beguile and to offset Paul's powerful words of exhortation. Enticing words appeal to the flesh. But Jesus said that the flesh profiteth nothing. So we have the exhortation that if one come into our assembly with the *Word of Truth* to give earnest attention to it. But if their words be *of the flesh*, (their own fleshly reasoning), to mark them and have no dealings with them. The apostle warns them to—

"Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit after the traditions of men—after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

Each verse, as the apostle progresses in his writing, brings out the sterling thought and desire of the apostle to see manifest a Christlike steadfastness, for as he says—

"In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and YE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM."

Surely then, if we can be Christlike, we are Godlike, and so complete in him. *But this is not native to us*, for he warns:

"Let no man (or company of men) beguile us."

He calls attention to our great and glorious position with the exhortation not to forfeit what we have embraced. *Why should we become subject again to the rudiments of the world from which we have been rescued through Christ?*

Then Paul comes to the real things that matter — those things that concern him, the Colossians and us. As we follow the apostle in his exposition of the Truth in this epistle, those things, *seemingly small at first*, loom larger and larger before us (if we grow in the Truth) like the small light from a projector, and finally come in full and brilliant focus before the eye of faith—

"If ye then be risen with Christ"—(we SAY we have)—"seek then those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God . . . Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

Here the apostle gives us a full lifetime job. We ask ourselves, is it worth the great struggle he says is necessary?—

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive of the glories in store for those who love and serve Him."

Surely then the apostle is not asking us for something unreasonable. He goes on to show us how we should conduct ourselves, as children of God and brethren of Christ—yes, as that *NEW MAN in Christ Jesus*. He says if there is one thing to be counted above another, it is LOVE.

Constant prayer, too, in the life of the saints is a vital necessity. Without prayer we cannot hope to attain to the true saint in light, for—

"The prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

"Let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt."

"Ready to give an answer at all times for the reason of the hope that is within us."

What a great lesson is to be learned from the apostle's care and fear for the Brotherhood. He had sent Tychicus to the brethren, that he might help them and establish them in the Truth. We can well imagine Paul's feelings toward them and his great desire to hear the report of his faithful minister.

This glorious message went out to the Colossians as it has now come unto us—

"If we be risen with Christ, let us seek those things above, yes, SET OUR AFFECTIONS on things above, not on things on the earth."

Though there are many things today that disturb us, some things that would bear us down to the ground, let us take comfort from the words of the apostle. Let us, with renewed zeal, begotten only of the Truth, "*Set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth*". So that—

"When Christ, who is our life shall appear, that we also may appear with him in glory."

—W.J.P.

Turned Away Unto Fables

"I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them"—Acts 20:29

SO PAUL declared to the Ephesian believers at their last tearful parting on the seashore at Miletus.

It is evident from a reading of the New Testament Scriptures that the apostles knew that this Christianity they were founding would not survive on a large scale.

We know that Paul left Ephesus, and went to Jerusalem, where he was imprisoned for two years and finally sent to Rome. Even in his Roman prison, Paul kept up his work of preaching the gospel; and continued to exhort the ecclesias through letters. So he warned the Thessalonians, and also Timothy that "there would come a falling away" from the truth; that a "time would come when they would not endure sound doctrine and would turn away unto fables" (2 Thess. 2:3; 2 Tim. 4:3). It is in the 2nd epistle to Timothy that we hear the pathetic words—

"Demas hath forsaken me; having loved this present world."
"All Asia hath turned away from me."

Peter foretold (1 Pet. 2:1) that there would be—

"False prophets among the people, and many would follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth would be evil spoken of."

John warned of the "Spirit of anti-christ that was even then at work." (1 John 4:3). In his 2nd epistle he said that—

"Many deceivers are entered into the world."

While his 3rd letter tells plainly of Diotrephes—

"Who loved to have the pre-eminence among them; who refused to receive the brethren, and cast out of the churches those who did" (vs. 9-10).

Finally, in his last message to the world, in the Book of Revelation, Jesus speaks of conditions in the seven churches:

There were those who had left their first love; many who held the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Israel to sin; some kept the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes; and others held a name that they lived, and yet were dead; and finally, many were "neither hot nor cold" in their belief of the Gospel.

Such were the conditions already in the year A.D. 96 when John was spending his last years on the Isle of Patmos. Departure from the Truth was widespread; and to this even the world's historians agree. For comments on the times we go to the "Outline of History" by the late H. G. Wells, and pick our remarks at random from several sections regarding the rise of Christianity. We begin by quoting:

"This doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, which plays so small a part in the present Christian creeds, is certainly one of the most revolutionary doctrines that ever stirred and changed human thought.

"It is small wonder the world of that day failed to grasp its full significance, and presently went back to the old, familiar ideas of fierce deity, temple and altar, of consecrated priests and magic blessing."

"Much of the history of the Christians in the first 2 centuries is very obscure . . .

"During this time, a considerable amount of theocrasia (blending of gods) went on between Christians, Jews, Mithraic, and Egyptian cults.

"From this gradually emerged a form of worship. Christians held their religious ceremonies on the Mithraic Sunday; and copied its abundant use of candles . . .

A priesthood began . . . Fast days and feast days were instituted."

The following historical outline is condensed directly from Wells' account, largely in his own words. We find the same testimony in Gibbon, Mosheim, etc.—historians of the world and of Christendom itself.

Pagan doctrines accepted as truth at this time included the immortality of the soul; and an old Egyptian belief in a state where souls are purified after death—which corresponds to "purgatory."

Baptism by immersion was on the way out; and a form of pouring or sprinkling was being substituted. Until this period, only adults who could profess their faith were baptized—but now infant sprinkling crept into a large part of the Church.

A doctrine of the trinity was introduced. Though new to Christianity, a trinity had been worshipped in Egypt for centuries before Christ's birth. They had adored the goddess Isis; Serapis, her husband; and Horus, their son. This was easily transferred to Christianity, where God was spoken of as the Father; Christ was his Son; and Mary was the mother of Jesus. From this simple beginning, corruption grew until it became a triune god-head

Early believers possessed neither building nor altar; rite or ceremony (declares Wells),—but the full-fledged Christianity of the 4th century was mainly a priestly religion. Its outward appearance had taken on a remarkable resemblance to the cults of Serapis, Ammon, and Bel. The centre of its elaborate worship was the sacrifice of the mass, by a consecrated priest.

All during its growth Christianity had been persecuted by the Roman emperors because of its refusal to tolerate the god-head of the Caesars; but now a change takes place. In 312 Constantine became associate emperor. His mind quickly grasped the binding power of the Christian religion and used it for his own convenience.

By 324 he was full emperor, and this enabled him to learn of the bitter dissension among the Christians regarding the nature of God. He made a great effort to reconcile the differences in philosophy in order to have uniform teaching in the community.

On his order, the first general council of the church was held at Nicea in 325. This date is important: for it marks the definite entry upon the stage of human affairs of the "Christian" church and "Christianity" as it is generally understood to-day. It marks the exact definition of Christian teaching as contained in the Nicene Creed; though this was amended in 381; and a further explanation of the Trinity was set out by Athanasius a short time after.

He taught that the "true Catholic faith worships God as trinity and trinity in unity." He calls it an "incomprehensible mystery" but added a clause condemning every one "who doesn't accept it as truth."

In this 4th century the literal coming of the kingdom of God was rejected. In a book entitled "The City of God" by Augustine, the mind is led directly to the possibility of the world becoming a theological and organized kingdom of heaven—with the church as the divinely-led ruling power over a league of earthly states. This thought was quickly accepted; and grew into the definite goal of church leaders.

The testimony of the historian Gibbon confirms this—

"The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was intimately connected with the second coming of Christ . . .

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

"Though it might not be universally received, it appears to have been the reigning sentiment of the orthodox believers . . .

"But when the edifice of the church was almost completed, the temporary support was laid aside. The doctrine of Christ's reign upon earth was at first treated as a profound allegory, was considered by degrees as a doubtful and useless opinion, and was at length rejected as the absurd invention of heresy and fanaticism."

The big lesson is how gradually and imperceptibly the change from Truth to error was effected.

Continuing the condensation from Wells—

Until this time, church authority in the Eastern empire was divided by 4 patriarchs; while in the West the Bishop of Rome claimed supremacy on the grounds that Peter had been the first Pope; and had built his church at Rome.

In 533, the emperor Justinian took the first steps to aid the church in its bid for power when he constituted "the Bishop of Rome head of all the holy churches; recognizing the Pope as his head, and judge of the faith." This statement was not recognized in the Eastern church until the year 607, when Phocas consolidated the power of the Roman Bishop to include "Constantinople and the European kingdoms."

With the fall of the Roman empire, these barbarian races became Christian. So, in a few short centuries the Pope had become in theory and in practice, the high priest, censor, judge and divine monarch of Christendom. His influence continued for more than a thousand years; and his domination reached Ireland, Norway, and Sweden.

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OF NECESSITY we have used the words of the historian to show how man departed from the Light of God's truth. *It is clear that this departure was gradual*; but it was not accomplished without opposition. The cost had been great—faithful men and women tried to keep the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Thousands had been put to death—some by pagan Romans; others by pagan Christians.

Many escaped, making their way quietly out of the cities and towns. As Paul said of the prophets, "these also dwelt in dens and caves of the earth" and in doing so preserved the Light of the gospel through perilous times. God has never left Himself without a witness in the earth—though the world at large is ignorant of this fact.

All these events Jesus had shown to John in vision. They were "the things which must shortly come to pass." They were written in symbolic language that still repels the attention of the world; but it is remarkably clear "to those with ears to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."

Through the study and God-given wisdom of earlier brethren, we know that the 12th chapter of Revelation shows the struggle of the Christian church in the days of Constantine; and how, when it had won, they turned against all those still holding the Truth of the Gospel "who fled into the wilderness" as we have mentioned.

The 13th chapter then brings us to the end of the Roman empire; when Europe was divided into 10 separate states; and the despotic rule of the Pope began its 1260 years of supremacy over the minds of men.

Historians refer to this period as "the dark ages;" and the name is most appropriate. It was an age of war, robbery, violence, ignorance and superstition. The life of each district went on at low ebb, with little trade or travel.

For 3 centuries it produced neither science or literature of any importance; yet during this period the Roman Church thrived. Clergy multiplied; and claimed jurisdiction over such matters as wills, marriages, oaths, heresy, blasphemy.

Indulgences were sold, and the money built elaborate churches. New dogmas were adopted; and in 787 a church council approved "the use of images in the churches as aids to worship."

The schools of the Roman empire had been swept away; and few of these priests could read the gospel or their service books. They formed monastic orders; and for 800 years monasteries were the sole center of elementary education, where pupils were taught to copy manuscripts and books.

* * *

WITH THE invention of printing in 1466 the world entered a more vigorous phase.

The immediate result of printing was the appearance of Bibles. They were widely distributed. School books became cheaper, and soon a knowledge of reading spread. With this communication, two entirely different systems of opposition to the Catholic church appeared in the 15th century, and continued until the middle of the 19th.

Opposition to the church came (1) from kings and princes in Europe. They were tired of the political interference from the Pope and were determined to get him out of politics.

Criticism (2) from within the church, came first with a concern over moral and material things. Priests and Bishops had started to travel to Rome and also to France when the popes were in residence there. These visitors were amazed at the display of wealth, regal splendour, and adoration poured upon church dignitaries.

As time passed, and the Bible was translated into their own languages, doctrinal controversy arose. Wycliffe set up the Bible as a counter-authority to the Pope by publicly denouncing the doctrine of the Mass as "disastrous error."

His writings spread through Europe, and John Huss, rector of the University of Prague, took up and carried on his doctrinal discourse. Huss was excommunicated by the church; was captured, and burned to death.

This was the start of the Reformation movement in Europe. Others soon took up the criticism of church dogmas, including the Lollards, Luther, Calvin, and Knox, who started Protestant churches.

In France, 2,000 Huguenot churches appeared. This nation, long considered "the first son of the Church" was bathed in blood as the Catholics took up the sword to stamp out heresy. The story can also be told of Britain, Spain, Holland, Germany and other European nations.

In spite of all the blood shed during this period, it cannot be denied that the leaders of the movement only reformed sufficiently to break their link with Rome and the Pope. *They still resisted any dangerous break away to the teachings of Jesus.*

The golden opportunity for Christianity to search for, and reveal the Light of God's coming Kingdom as preached by the Apostles, was rejected. Though they translated the Bible, they did so with the old pagan creeds firmly fixed in their minds.

When words and principles arose in the Scriptures that denied the truth of these creeds, they were too steeped in theology to correct them. The established church of England is the most typical and successful of the resulting compromise in the doctrine.

But this, too, was in the plan of God. For as the Protestant churches detached themselves from the spiritual grip of the mother body, the kings of Europe warred against the Pope's political power. In 1870 the Pope became a prisoner in the Vatican, and the territory was made subject to the rule of Victor Emmanuel of Italy.

The sceptre had departed from the Pope: and the church settled down to what it is today: a religious organization apart from outward direct state-craft; surrounded by her wayward daughters—the Protestant churches.

This ended the 1260 year period mentioned by Jesus in which this power would "make war with the saints, and would overcome them." Every method had been used against the saints. Bibles had been burned—but they had not been eliminated completely;—for faithful men and women memorized chapters and even books so that they could be written again.

In spite of the tortures of the rack, burning, hanging, quartering, and drowning, this Word has been preserved for us: so that we, "upon whom the end of the age has come," might find the way to salvation.

* * *

THIS WAY was finally opened by the labours of our late brother Thomas, beginning about 1833, when he began to sift among the doctrines of the Protestant groups, and to compare them with the Scriptures.

The more he studied, the more Light God gave to him; and the more certain he became that the chief doctrines of the *Trinity* and the *Immortality of the soul* were not Scriptural, and had no connection whatever with the Gospel preached by Jesus and his apostles.

He openly opposed such teaching, and soon found himself engaged in debates and public lectures which caused uproar and dissention among the religions of his day—in both America and Britain. Many of these people turned to the Scriptures in an effort to defeat him; but they very soon became convinced that God's Word was Truth; and new communities of believers were formed.

These new ecclesias were grounded carefully in the first principles of truth by the continued work of bro. Thomas. As time passed, he turned to the prophecies of the Old Testament; and learned the solution to Ezekiel and Daniel.

Satisfied as to his correct interpretation of these two books, he applied the same principles to the Book of Revelation, and found that it contained the key to the events we have already mentioned.

By 1848 he had compiled and edited "Elpis Israel" as the first exposition of the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ. This book also contains much detail concerning the Catholic church, and gives an outline of the events to happen in the latter days.

Bro. Thomas performed this work at the beginning of these latter days. His explanation of the prophecies relating to the end of Papal power was printed just 22 years before it became history; and many eyes turned to the Book of Daniel which had been long unread and misunderstood. This had been in keeping with the Divine plan as we can see from the prediction of Dan. 12:4—

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

Travel *has* increased; and so has knowledge—as we all know quite well from experience. How has this increase in knowledge affected the preaching of the Gospel? We would *like* to be able to say that more and more people show an interest in the Scriptures, and that the world is very much aware of the nearness of the return of Jesus.

But this would be in direct opposition to fact, and to the Scriptures themselves. Paul predicted "a falling away from the truth, and a return unto fables." This was not completely finished with the Roman Catholic and Protestant apostasies. *It was also to be revealed in another manner in these last days.*

We mentioned that Wycliffe had set up the Bible as a counter-authority to the influence of the Pope. From that time forward the Protestants had great respect for the Open Bible. It was a matter of pride to have a copy in the home; and in most homes it was read each evening by the father to his children.

But a real loss of faith in the Bible came in 1859 when Darwin first published "the Origin of Species;" and by 1871 when "The Descent of Man" appeared, the whole of Christendom became sceptical.

Though Protestants in every walk of life took up the cause of the Bible, it never gained the ground lost; and was never again the only Court of Appeal. The reason was their inability to use the Bible to defeat the theory of evolution. Their knowledge was too limited, their faith too weak.

In the conflict of science and religion it appeared that science had won; and a real demoralization set in, from which there has been no great recovery. This theory has brought spiritual death to many Protestants, who refuse to listen to religion of any kind. On the other hand, the Roman Catholic church continues to grow, because it still controls the minds of men.

* * *

AND WHAT of the Household of Faith in these latter days? The story of the resurrected Truth runs parallel with that of the Apostolic times. Many were attracted to the Truth, as we mentioned earlier; but it is evident that *the Word had not been planted DEEPLY enough*; that the Light had not penetrated far enough; and so, as time passed, the human mind again sought out many theories and inventions; held doubts and reservations on basic doctrines.

It soon became apparent that once more "men of our own selves" in whom dwelt "an evil heart of unbelief" were busy disrupting the ecclesias so carefully built up by brethren Thomas and Roberts.

Bro. Thomas died in 1871—the same year that Darwin's "Descent of Man" was published. Just 14 years later a serious division of fellowship occurred when brethren insisted that "the Scriptures were only partially inspired"—in spite of the words of Paul (2 Tim. 3:16)—

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

And that (2 Peter 1:21)—

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

This doctrine was followed by others, such as resurrectional responsibility, and immortal emergence; which rejects the need for judgment, and is similar to the "saved" attitude of modern religions.

Further division came with the advancement of the clean flesh theory, which tries to make Christ free from the same sinful flesh as his brethren. This is in direct opposition to Scripture, and would seem to show a desire to return to the Catholic idea of an immaculate conception.

At the same time it was insisted that Adam was created mortal, and suffered no change in nature because of his sin in Eden. Another equally false theory was that Christ died "as a substitute for Adam."

All of these "new ideas" were put out while bro. Roberts was still alive. Though he took strong stand on the first principles of the Faith, the dissenters refused to be convinced, and went their separate ways. This resulted in the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith, which was intended to show clearly the true doctrines believed among us, and to prevent further falling away.

In 1908 bro. C. C. Walker wrote:

"If all the crochets of the last 50 years or so had been tolerated in fellowship, there would, by this time, have been no distinction between the Truth and the religion of the churches and chapels."

A quick survey of conditions since that date shows that the trend backward toward theories and reservations did not stop with 1908. By 1923 a wide spirit of tolerance had again brought division in the Birmingham Central Fellowship, and after much discussion failed to solve the doctrinal differences involved, a separation took place. *The Berean fellowship emerged, making a firm stand for Truth as outlined by the Amended Statement of Faith.*

It would not be right if we did not mention that there have been attempts at reconciliation—but this has always been sought on a "forget-and-start-all-over-again" basis; rather than on recognition of error, and repentance. Though many able brethren have honestly tried to draw the various groups together, *there has never been a successful reunion on a truly Scriptural basis.*

Some (including myself) personally found this out when we made the mistake of joining the 1953 Central reunion. We found that criticism would not be tolerated; that "reservations" to basic scriptural truths were wide and varied; and that a distinct respect for worldly education and wealth is steadily increasing.

While we regret expressing these things, it is not our view alone. We would call the attention of all serious brethren and sisters to pages 121-122 of the * December, 1960, issue of the *Logos*, a publication of the Central group itself. Here is a description of current declension in that body as strong and as tragic as any Berean brother has ever made; revealing an almost unbelievable state of affairs. We urge all to deeply and prayerfully *ponder its full implications*. The *Logos* says—

"It seemed to me, after an absence of 7 years from Britain, that the standards of previous years are gradually being relaxed. There are practices tolerated and teaching propagated in ecclesias today such as would not be permitted in earlier times, and which in other parts of the world even now would be the subject of the greatest stricture.

"Modernism seems to be on the increase. There is a tendency to challenge principles and doctrines which were once accepted without question.

"This is often put forward as an evidence of greater enlightenment, whereas, in fact it is a demonstration of irresponsibility to the authority of the Word.

"The so-called 'university' approach to the Bible itself seems to be gaining ground: the tendency to introduce evolution, or something closely akin to it, and to compromise the plain and obvious teaching of the Bible with that which is taught in the schools. . .

"Dangerous theories are being openly advocated, which, if they do not challenge the Truth, go far to weaken the point of doctrine. These relate to the present possession of eternal life, doubtful ideas relating to the power of the Holy Spirit, the tendency to accept the Bible as inspired more as a matter of words than of fact, and amend it if necessary to conform to the scientific approach.

"Even such a sacred subject as the Creator Himself is not exempt from this form of (to us, indecent) scrutiny. The statement of the Declaration that He "dwells corporeally in the heavens" has been questioned from the "scientific" approach (as though scientists know anything of the subject!) in a manner that I found quite distasteful to discuss.

"And in some quarters prophecy is quite taboo! It is treated with a sort of quiet contempt, as something that children might dabble in, but which the most advanced Christadelphian has left far behind!

"The Truth of the matter is that many are ignorant of the deeper aspects of the subject. 'Elpis Israel,' 'Eureka,' and similar works are considered as completely 'out of date,' though the critics who speak thus find it very difficult to be precise as to the basis of their repudiation.

"So prophecy is largely neglected, and this at a time when great, dramatic events are happening on a worldwide scale that indicate the consummation of the age, and the imminent fulfilment of the very things today treated by some with contempt. . .

"Some are concerned in what they call the drift in ecclesial conditions. They see a lowering of standards, a coldness of outlook, a lack of virile forthrightness in the presentation of the Truth, they are irritated by the lukewarm, indifferent, scientific, or university approach to these things which are matters of living personal import." **(End of quotation from "Logos").**

* Our copy marked Feb., 1961 on cover; Dec, 1960 on inside pages.

This is not written about the outside world. It is written by one of their own group about people who still call themselves "Christadelphians;" and who, by the use of the name, are considered

to be "the same as all the *other* Christadelphians." It *could* be written of US—if we give in to worldly wisdom and lower our standards to accept anything but the authority of the Bible.

And why *should* we accept the authority of the Bible—when there is so much opposition to it? Simply because, by its own law, it has proved to us that it is indeed "The Word of God"—the "Light that is set for a lamp unto our feet" in these last days of the Gentiles. Do we still need to prove it? Look at its tape-measure, found in Amos 3:7—

"Surely the Lord will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets."

What does history show concerning these predictions? *Are not most of them fulfilled already?* Isn't it true that the civilizations of Egypt, Babylon, Greece, and Rome perished? Isn't it true that the Israelites were once a mighty nation in Palestine, but were scattered for almost 2,000 years throughout the nations for their wickedness against God? Isn't it true that "He who scattered Israel, is also re-gathering them, and leading them as a shepherd doth his flock"?

Haven't we seen in our review that the Roman Catholic system in its rise to power and eventual decline was also the result of prophecy long before it happened? And can't we see that the ungodly condition in the world, and among the brotherhood as well, are the result of prophecy? Who then, among us can doubt that the last remaining forecasts will be fulfilled just as surely? Jesus asked the question:

"When I come, will I find THE FAITH?"

We each know the answer to his question. It depends on whether we do OUR part to keep that light burning; for Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen. By it the fathers received a good report. By it, we can, too, in the day of judgment at his appearing. —J.M.

Houston Tape Library

A variety is sent each time (2 tapes, 4 addresses), in returnable shipping cases, and a record is kept to avoid duplication. All tapes are duplicates, and therefore may be kept as long as desired. If you wish to keep any **permanently**, just return in its place **any** tape (new or used). There is no cost.

Write to bro. Charles Banta, 815 Boston, Deer Park, Texas.

Love Your Enemies

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

THIS COMMAND cuts right across our human nature. It pricks each of us in a very vital part. If we closely analyse our natural reactions we will see the wisdom of our Father in Heaven in requiring such a course for His children.

God has caused a record to be kept of His will and purpose. His reason for this is expressed numerous times throughout the Bible—

"As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."

From among the earth's inhabitants God is calling a people to bring about this glorious state. The method He has selected is the free-will service of people who devote their energies to the furtherance of His glory.

By obeying Him and serving Him they *honor* Him; and thus a close bond of affection is established. On the part of His faithful people, they love Him primarily because He first loved them—

"God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"
(Rom. 5:8).

So much so has God been pleased to draw near those who obey Him that He has called them His *sons and daughters*. They are His children in a very close sense.

Being then His children, it is obvious there must be *resemblance*. The closer we follow His requirements the more pronounced this resemblance will become. We recall that in the beginning man was made in God's image (Gen. 1:27).

"God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them."

This was the dust-formed creature, animated by the breath of life from God.

Since that time God has revealed His will for the obedience of faith on the part of all men; that they **MIGHT BECOME LIKE GOD IN THEIR MINDS**, reflecting His glorious attributes. The Bible is a revelation of the characteristics of God. He gave to Moses an epitome of these attributes when Moses was in the mount (Exo. 34:6-7)—

"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and fourth generation."

The former attributes of love and mercy belong to the dispensation for God's children. The age of God's judgments and avenging are yet for the future in a completed sense. We recall the sons of Zebedee, James and John, whom the Master called "The sons of Thunder." They wanted to call fire down from heaven upon the heads of the Samaritans because they refused to receive the Master. But Jesus chided them with the instruction—

"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" (Luke 9:55).

Now is the age of forgiveness and mercy for those who would live godly. The age for the manifestation of the "Sons of Thunder" remains for the future, when Jesus, James and John, with all the glorified elect shall, in the strength of God's Spirit, go forth against a wicked world, which refuses to receive Christ. They then execute the "seven thunders" of God's wrath against an apostate world. This is the age of which all the prophets speak of the faithful desiring God to avenge their blood against the enemy. Not that any true servant desires the destruction of the wicked, but that they would repent and seek God. For God—

"Hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Eze. 33:11).

But it is a fervent desire on the part of all the faithful that the age will soon come when *wickedness as a force in men's hearts and throughout the world* shall be removed and peace and righteousness fill the earth to the glory of God.

* * *

THE MASTER was the highest manifestation of the attributes of God. He always did those things which pleased his Father. Yet Philip, the disciple, unable to see this feature of Christ's ministry, declared—

"Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."

Jesus said unto him (John 14:8-9)—

"Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?"

The pattern of loving one's enemies and of non-retaliation is held out to us in the person of Jesus. Peter, having learned the lesson of loving his enemies, was able to see the purpose in Christ's example, and he wrote of his Master—

"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously" (1 Pet. 2:23).

But this was many years after Peter had cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest, and had been impressed by his Elder Brother (Matt. 26:52)—

"All they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword."

Peter tells us that the suffering endured by Jesus was for the purpose of *setting us an example*, that we also should endure patiently the trials which come upon us as we are occupied in God's service.

The supreme example of carrying out of the principle of loving one's enemies is shown in the prayer of Jesus for his enemies as they crucified him (Luke 23:34)—

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Stephen followed in the steps of his Master some years later. Kneeling down as he was stoned to death, he prayed—

"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

In this manner these examples have shown that they were truly the sons of God; they *were* His children. They have *reflected the character of God*; there has been a likeness of God in their ways. It was supremely so in the life of Jesus.

Returning then to our original quotation we find the Master stressing the *reason* for our loving our enemies—

"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

AND HERE IS THE REASON—

"That ye may be the children of your Father in heaven."

To be worthy of so high a classification in God's sight will require all the energies to overcome the evil forces latent in our flesh—

"Be ye therefore **PERFECT**, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Perfection **MUST** be *striven after*. This constant striving for a higher standard is foreign to the flesh and the human mind. Our natural impulses only confirm our relationship to the dust of the earth. Therefore we must be diligent to overcome these forces and press higher and higher, *never satisfied* that we have attained but, as Paul said he did—

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling."

We shall never attain to the perfection of the Father, *of ourselves*. But that is no cause for giving up the struggle, the earnest contending, toward the pattern which we have before us. *Striving*

toward perfection like unto God, acting as He would have us act, will prepare us to be made like unto the angels in the future, and being sons and daughters of God in the highest sense.

Consider how unthankful and unappreciative are most of the earth's millions of people! Consider the extent to which they have gone in worshipping idols and false gods, in running riot and to excess of worldly pleasure in disobedience to the Father's will!

Consider, on the other hand, the patience and long-suffering God has shown toward all men in the provision of the elements of life, even while men are unheeding of the fact that there is a God in heaven. If God were to withdraw His breath or Spirit all flesh would perish together.

Even the breath we breathe comes from a loving Father, ever merciful toward our weaknesses. The necessary sunshine and rain, shelter and protection—yea, God's daily benefits laden upon mankind are in most cases unthankfully received by man (Matt. 5:46-47)—

"For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

We are given these examples of those who are God's enemies and of how He loves them, in spite of their forgetfulness of Him. By contrast He shows us the ways of *men*—

"For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?"

"And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?" (Matt. 5:46-47).

If we do not love our enemies we are no different than the rest of the world. If we do love our enemies we shall be looked upon as peculiar. But this is what we *should* be—

"A peculiar people, a royal priesthood, that we should show forth the praises of Him Who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light" (I Pet. 2:9).

Yes, loving our enemies, cuts right into each one of us—*into the flesh*. But the old man HAS TO BE CUT OUT, before we can become the new-born sons and daughters of God. The cutting is a lifetime work. It applies to the world around us, to the differences which come up in the shop or office, to the problems which face us ecclesially, and to the little incidents requiring patience, understanding and love in the innermost reaches of home life.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen?"

"And this commandment have we from Him that he who loveth God, love his brother also"

(1 John 4). —F.H.

1961 Texas Fraternal Gathering

HYE, TEXAS, JULY 30 to AUGUST 6, 1961

(If The Lord Will)

THE 1961 Texas Fraternal Gathering will be held, God willing, at Hye Texas, for 8 days, opening at 9 a.m., Sunday, July 30, and closing at noon on Sunday, August 6.

As in past years, the evening meetings will be devoted to a series of lectures on the first principles of the Truth.

It is hoped that the full program will be arranged in time for insertion next month.

All of like precious Faith are urged to come if possible, and a cordial invitation is extended to all others who are interested in the Berean position on Faith and Fellowship in these evil closing days of the Gentile times. Surely the Lord is at the door!

If you plan to attend, or would like further information, please write bro. E. W. Banta, 7009 Sherman, Houston 11, Texas.

Ecclesial News

LONDON, Ont.—Orange Hall, 388 Clarence St.—Sunday School 10:15 a.m.; Breaking of Bread 11:30; Lecture 7 p.m.; Wed. Class 8 p.m. at WCTU Hall, Clarence St., ½ block north of Dundas St.

WE ARE pleased to report that we have again assisted one more to put on the Saving Name of Jesus Christ. DAVID CLUBB, the son of sis. Connie Clubb and grandson of bro. and sis. Calvin Clubb of this ecclesia, and a member of our Sunday school for a number of years, was baptized on March 12, 1961.

His desire was to become associated with his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and to become a son of God Almighty. We hope and trust that through the mercy of our Heavenly Father he will walk faithfully to the end of his probation. We are deeply encouraged when we see these young scholars desire to obey the will of the Lord and to seek eternal life.

On Dec. 31, 1960 we had our Sunday School gathering which was attended by 135 brethren and sisters and Sunday School scholars. We had a very enjoyable time listening to the scholars singing hymns and reciting verses pertaining to the Truth.

On March 31, through the mercies of our Heavenly Father, we held our Fraternal Gathering. The theme was, "Thy Word is a Light unto My Feet," taken from the 119th Psalm and divided into three subjects.

Bro. Nick Mammone of Hopatcong, N. J., spoke on the subject, "The Light of the Word in Prophetic and Apostolic Times." He called our attention to the fact that all light comes from the Creator Himself.

The second address was given by bro. J. MacIvor of Toronto, his subject being, "The Light of the Word in the Latter Days." He pointed out how that the Truth in its purity has not been upheld by some professing to be brethren of Christ, and that the brethren and sisters of Christ must keep the purity of the Truth at all times and walk after the example of our Lord Jesus.

In the evening, bro. Gilbert of Buffalo spoke on the subject "The Light of the Age to Come." He called our attention to the many wonderful blessings of that Future Age when Christ would rule in righteousness and in peace.

On Saturday evening, April 1, the brethren and sisters who were able to stop over, together with our own ecclesia, assembled in the Optimist's Hall to sing hymns of praise and prayer, and do the daily readings. On the daily readings some of the brethren made comments which were edifying and of spiritual benefit to those who were assembled. We also saw two films portraying the Holy Land in its recent state of redevelopment which was very interesting to see.

On the Sunday morning at 10:15 a.m. we held an open Sunday school for the brethren, sisters and Sunday School scholars. For our speaker we had bro. Fred Higham of Detroit whose address was very interesting to the young scholars. We were very pleased on Sunday morning to have the fellowship of many brethren and sisters with whom we united by singing praises and giving thanks to our Heavenly Father. We were pleased to have bro. John Randell of California to give us the word of exhortation which was most stirring and upbuilding to us. It was indeed a pleasure to have our brothers and sisters of like Precious Faith with us on that day.

In the afternoon at 4 p.m. we assembled to hear a very timely lecture, the subject being "Will Men and the Earth Survive an Atomic War?" given by our bro. Joe McConnell showing that the earth will abide forever and that God will not permit the atomic weapons of man's own inventions to destroy it.

On Tuesday evening, April 11, we were pleased to have the company of bro. and sis. Beauchamp of California. We were able to procure a hall in which to hold a meeting. Bro. Beauchamp was kind enough to speak to us on the Gospel of John, chapter 3, explaining it very fully and intelligibly. This was most beneficial to the brethren and sisters. Afterward tea was served.

We have had the pleasure of fellowship of brethren and sisters from Toronto, Hamilton, Buffalo, Detroit, Worcester, Texas, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, California and Ohio. Bre. Growcott and Higham of Detroit have given us stirring words of exhortation on their visits here.

We send much love to those of like Precious Faith from the brethren and sisters in London.

—bro. D. Gwalchmai

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