

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

CLAREMONT, California—141 Princeton—Bible Study 10:30 a.m.; Memorial 11:30 a.m.

WE HAD as visitors the last week in December bro. & sis. J. E. Eastman of Fredonia, Tex.

We rejoice to be able to report that bro. & sis. Wm. Sharp, bro. & sis. Paul Sharp, and sis. Beth Sharp, after having become fully satisfied with the Berean position in relation to doctrine and fellowship, were united with us in fellowship on March 4.

On behalf of the Berean fellowship, we are very happy to welcome these brethren and sisters—G.A.G.

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LONDON, Ontario—Wells Academy Bldg., 206 King St.—Sunday School 10:15 a.m.; Breaking of Bread 11:30 a.m.; Lecture 7 p.m.; Wednesday Class 8 p.m.

Please note new address of meeting place.

WITH much joy we report one more of Adam's race has put on the Saving Name of Jesus. JEANNIE GWALCHMAI, wife of brother David Gwalchmai, who has attended our Sunday School and lectures for quite some time, decided that in order to receive the gift of immortality, she must be baptized into the Saving Name of Jesus Christ and walk worthy throughout her probation.

She made a good confession of her faith and was baptized on Feb. 25, 1962. It is the prayer and wishes of the brethren and sisters that God will guide and direct the ways of our new sister in her walk towards the Kingdom.

We have had the pleasure and fellowship of bro. & sis. Fred Higham, bro. Fred Higham, Jr., bro. Growcott, bro. Fabris, all of Detroit; sis. Arleen Carney of Texas; and bro. & sis. Joseph Jackson of Toronto. We appreciate brethren Higham and Growcott's labor of love in exhorting.

We send much love to the brethren and sisters of like Precious Faith from the brethren and sisters in London. —bro. D.E. Gwalchmai

Worcester Fraternal Gathering

(If The Lord Will)

It is a great pleasure to report that, if the Lord will, the brethren and sisters in Worcester will hold a Fraternal Gathering on Saturday and Sunday, October 13 & 14.

The accommodations will be taken care of by the Worcester ecclesia, as they have been in the past.

They would like to urgently request that all who plan to attend notify them as early as possible.

It is quite difficult to arrange accommodations on this scale, especially at this particular time, when other events are drawing visitors to the area. Last time the motel asked for a positive commitment nearly a month in advance.

The effort the Worcester brethren and sisters have put forth in the past, in arranging group accommodation for the visitors, has greatly added to the opportunities for joyful and beneficial communion together, and they are desirous, if possible, as the attendance grows, to continue the benefits of this arrangement.

Write: Bro. Wm. Davey, Strawberry Hill St., Dover, Mass.

EDITORIAL

Exhortation—A Divine Requirement

"Exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin"—Hebrews 3:13

SOME years ago, a brother wrote—

"If brother Thomas broke up the fallow ground, and brother Roberts sowed the good seed, and nourished the tender plants, it becomes faithful brethren, in these last days, to maintain the growth, and **keep down the weeds**. This cannot be better accomplished than by the faithful word of exhortation at the Lord's table.

"Free from the care of this present evil world, we examine ourselves in the sight of God with heart 'naked and open unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do.' Here, surely, is the time and place when we should get nearer to God, and become more like our Master who left us 'an example that we should follow in his steps'."

We think this is sound advice, but others have said that nothing should be said in an exhortation that would disturb or upset any of us, for we come to the memorial meeting to remember Christ, and therefore we should be edified, cheered and comforted.

To a certain extent, this is true, but it depends how we are conducting ourselves during the week. If we have been walking in the Truth, as we should walk, and have been serving God faithfully "as good stewards of the manifold grace of God," we will not be disturbed or upset in mind by a faithful word of exhortation.

If, however, we have not been walking in the Truth as we should, and have been careless about the things of the Kingdom, and the Name of Jesus, then we **should** be "disturbed" to such an extent that it will generate self-examination, and cause us to return to the path of righteousness. But there is a time and place for everything.

In the first place, we should apprehend with the mind just what exhortation is, and how and when it is to be applied. One brother has said that "the purpose of exhortation is to prepare ourselves for the breaking of bread." If we were to depend upon that, there would be little time for preparation.

It would be far better if the exhortation we hear **today** were used as a foundation upon which we could build an adequate preparation for the **week to come**. By adopting this method, and making it a studious habit, we will, as Paul has said, "by reason of use have our senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

This is good, for if we did not have something to exercise our minds, we might get an exalted opinion of ourselves, and finally be condemned for our pride; for, says James, "God resisteth the proud."

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BUT what IS exhortation? Basically, it means "to call near, to invite, to invoke by imploration, to beseech or intreat," and is used thus in all cases; in particular, Heb. 10:25:

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

In the same letter, in 13:22, Paul tells us to "**suffer** the word of exhortation." That is to put up with, to bear with, and to endure it when we are in the assembly. It is not only for the one sitting next

to us, but it is for each one of us, and is to be endured in accordance with our requirements, that we may be stirred up in our minds to do that which is right in the sight of God.

How do we respond to the word of exhortation? Do we endure it, and act upon it when our minds are stirred up by way of remembrance, or are we like one who was heard to say to the exhorting brother, after the memorial meeting: "Look here, my brother, I do not want anyone to tell me how to live."

The reply was in harmony with the facts. The brother said, "When I was speaking this morning, I did not tell anyone how to live, but I did quote from the words of Jesus and the apostles who have left on record much in the way of instruction as to how we are to live."

Therefore, we turn again to these records, and in Heb. 3:12-13, we read—

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

Then he follows on in the same chapter, and refers to the people of Israel who came out of Egypt—

"With whom God was grieved forty years, and they could not enter (the **land of promise**) because of unbelief."

When we look at the record of Moses, we learn that they lusted after evil things; they sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play, and many times they murmured against Moses and Aaron. They had been hardened through the deceitfulness of sin — a danger that faces every one of us, and this is what Paul warns about.

If we reach that stage, we will not want to be disturbed; we will just want to listen to smooth things, and look for some to pamper us. If we are rebuked, we become offended and stay away from the meeting, instead of suffering the word of exhortation, as we should.

One of the three things that Jesus counselled those in Laodicea to do was to "**Anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.**" This eye-salve is the Word of God that comes to us in the writings of the prophets and apostles, and has to be well worked into our eyes, to enable us to see and understand. We must use it if we would have our ecclesia working as a unit.

There are many causes of ecclesial disunity, but two stand out clearly. One is the failure to abide by the rules of our Constitution, especially No. 5, which reads—

"That we mutually engage to submit to the order and arrangements preferred by the majority of the whole ecclesia."

This is a vitally important rule, but it only concerns the order and arrangements respecting the operation, or working of ecclesial affairs. However, if it is impartially observed, it will do much to bring the ecclesia into that beautiful state that Paul speaks of—

"The whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16).

The other cause of ecclesial disunity is a thing that God hates, and that is sowing discord among brethren. This, of course, is developed because of the failure to observe the rule mentioned above, and usually is the result of being dissatisfied or offended because of the action of the majority with respect to some proposal brought before the ecclesia.

They seem to forget that the only practicable basis of ecclesial order in the present dispensation, is that of mutual consent, and mutual care, love and sympathy among the members of the ecclesia; but it must be mutual, as Paul has said—

"The members should have the same care one for another." (1 Cor. 12:25).

Would we like to have "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep **our** hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"? Certainly we would. Would we like to be accepted, and asked to enter the Kingdom of God, when Jesus appears? Certainly we would.

If, then, we would like to be filled with joy, let us give careful attention to the Word of exhortation, and giving earnest heed to the things we hear, we shall be built up and strengthened in our most holy faith.

If we anoint our eyes with the eye-salve mentioned by Jesus, we then can pray like David and say, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law." For, said David again—

"Great peace have they who love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them."

The New Heaven and New Earth

By BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

"And I saw a New Heaven and a New Earth, and the Sea is no more"—Rev. 21:1

THE REASON given why a New Heaven and a New Earth are introduced is—

"Because the Former Heaven and the Former Earth has passed away" (v. 1).

The Millennial Constitution of the World, as may be perceived from Isa. 65, is not perfect. It will be a great advance upon both the old Mosaic, and the Times of the Gentiles; but it will fall far short of the constitution and order of things beyond the thousand years.

We learn this from Paul in his reference to the visions and revelations granted to him (as it would seem) for his own exclusive benefit; for he would not, could not, or might not, communicate what he had seen and heard (2 Cor. 12:1). Speaking of himself, he says—

"I have known a man in Christ 14 years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or without the body, I know not; the Deity knew), such an one suddenly transported unto a Third Heaven.

"I have known such a man, that had been transported into Paradise, and had heard secret things, which it is not lawful for the man to utter."

The third heaven, or paradise in full manifestation, is John's "New Heaven and New Earth," in which "there is no more sea." In the "Former Earth" which passes away, there is sin, and generation, and death; and because of the existence of sin, and flesh and blood, and death, there are mediatorship, and priesthood, and ruling with an iron rod, in the "Former Heaven." These things are not to continue permanently.

Sin, which is the transgression of the law, must be wholly and finally suppressed; flesh and blood must be exterminated from the earth; disease and death, which are "the wages of sin," abolished, mediatorship, and priesthood, necessary in the offering to the Deity of gifts and sacrifices for the sins of the erring and ignorant (Heb. 5:1-2) "delivered up to the Father;" and religion, which is a divinely appointed remedy for an existing breach between the creature and the Creator, suspended, as having answered its purpose, and being therefore no longer necessary. All these things pertaining to the former, or millennial, Heaven and Earth, John saw has "passed away."

In the final annihilation of the Devil by the judicial fire of Deity, in the destruction of the post-millennial Gog and Magog rebellion against the government of the saints, the bruising of the Serpent's head by the Woman's Seed, is consummated.

Henceforth, the earth (not burnt up, but perfected, and rendered the paradisaic arena of all the unutterable joys and beauties and ecstatic things beheld and heard of Paul) becomes a fitting habitation of Deity in unmediatorial intimacy with the humblest of mankind; for then the Father will be the "all things in all men."

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HOW TRULY great, then, is the voice John heard out of Heaven, saying—

"Behold the Tabernacle of Deity with men, and He will dwell with them; and they shall be His peoples, and the Deity Himself will be with them, their Deity" (Rev. 21:3).

They shall all of them be divine people, like to the Saints, then the rulers of the nations for the past thousand years. Having come forth from the graves, they become, together with the living who suffered not themselves to be deceived by the Devil and Satan, and seduced from their allegiance to the King of Kings, in the Gog and Magog revolt, the post-millennial harvest of the dead and living, of which Jesus and his brethren are the Firstfruits.

"The rest of the dead" being thus added to these, the whole number given by Father to the Son, is complete.

"And the Deity shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death; nor shall there be sorrow nor crying, nor pain anymore: for the former things are passed away. And there shall be no more curse" (Rev. 21:4; 22:3).

Such is the consummation of the Divine purpose in the creation of the heavens and the earth. He formed it to be inhabited (Isa. 45:18): to be a Tabernacle for Himself with men.

He could, had it pleased Him, have created it perfect, and filled it with immortal inhabitants, at the beginning. To have done this would have prevented all the crime and misery that blot and crimson the record of the past; but then the world would have been a characterless automation; and unfit for association with the Governor of the Universe, Whose attributes are moral, as well as intellectual and potential.

He desired a society for our planet consisting of tried and faithful friends, such as Abraham, who loved Him better than his dearest son. He proposed to develop it upon the principle of belief in His promises and obedience under trial; and to crown the world with incorruptibility and life.

Having prepared such a society as this, and concentrated it from all ages and generations into one glorious community, He would then put His hand to the final completion of its dwelling-place, as declared to John, saying—

"Behold I make ALL THINGS NEW!" (Rev. 21:5).

When these true and faithful words are fulfilled, "It is done." Everything is finished by the Alpha Spirit, who began the work in the week of days: and as the Omega Spirit, the Beginning and the End, completed it in the week of thousands of years. The invitation to a participation in the sublime inheritance is liberal, and worthy of Deity, Who saith—

"I will give to him that is thirsty of the fountain of the water of life freely.

"He that overcometh, shall inherit all things, and I will be Deity to him, and he shall be to Me a son."

The Kingdom of Men

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, a population has been provided 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 Age. 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. 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 as it is written, "The Gentiles shall wait for his law," and "He shall reign over them."

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. —Bro. Thomas.

Answers to Bible Questions

By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

Though He Was Rich

QUESTION: "What is the explanation of 2 Cor. 8:9 — 'Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor?' In what way was Christ 'rich'? The verse is brought forward by some of the orthodox faith to prove the pre-existence of Christ."

ANSWER: A more exact translation of the verse will make the meaning clear to you. Paul did not say "was rich." The verb is in the present participle, "being." Correctly translated, the verse would read—

"Ye know the loving kindness of the Anointed Jesus, our Lord, that on your account, he impoverished himself, being rich, in order that ye through his poverty might become rich."

The question is, **In what are believers enriched?** Believers do not become rich except as regards what is in store, and as Jesus said to Smyrna—

"I know thy poverty (but thou art rich)"—Rev. 2: 9.

Here are riches and poverty co-existing. This gives us a key to the sense in which Christ was richest. He was rich in being "the heir of all things" —the coming King of Israel— the Beloved of the Possessor of heaven and earth.

Yet though rich in owning so high a rank and having such an exalted destiny before him, he stooped to poverty in every respect.

Though King, he became servant of all—a man of sorrow, a friend of publicans and sinners, without where to lay his head.

Though sinless, we see him in the situation of a sinner, as regards nature and the common experience of man. The passage is really explained by those other words of Paul's—

"Though in the form of God and thinking it not robbery to be equal with God, he made himself of no reputation but took upon himself the form of a servant." —**Bro. Roberts, 1890**

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Them That Sin Rebuke Before All

THERE are no "scriptural grounds" for refusing forgiveness to "a brother who has committed a fault and has repented," but while granting forgiveness, **there may be reason for indicating: the repudiation of his offence**—reason having to do with others rather than the offender, as when Paul says—

"Them that sin, REBUKE BEFORE ALL, that **others** also may fear" (1 Tim. 5:20).

We are to (1 Tim. 5:14)—

"Give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully."

And (Eph. 5:11) to—

"Have no fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness."

Now if an offender, whose sin was notorious in the unbelieving community, were to apparently pass unchallenged amongst the brethren, occasion would be given to the adversary to say that they were indifferent to sin, and thus the Truth would be blasphemed. We should be seeming to have fellowship with the works of darkness.

We can only prevent this by some outward token of repudiation: such a token as would be visible to the outside. Miriam was excluded from the camp for seven days. If an offending brother is suspended from fellowship for a period, the right token is given, and the brother's repentance is put to the test.

In the apostolic days of the Spirit's delegated authority, there were more effective methods (1 Cor. 5:5). In our day, no other seems available, and we cannot but suppose the Lord will approve the brethren's action in such a case, and condone any excess of zeal for righteousness there may, in His judgment, be in it.

Whatever is done ought to be done in the spirit of kindness— with the desire to restore and not to humble a brother, while at the same time upholding the standard of that "holiness which becometh the house of God."

—**Bro. Roberts, 1890.**

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The Second Resurrection

QUESTION: "I am aware that Rev. 20:11-15 is used to prove the second resurrection; but if so it proves too much, as we can easily demonstrate. John saw a Great white throne and Him that sat upon it, before whose face the earth and heaven fled away. It is claimed that the Father is the One sitting on that throne. If that be so, the heaven and earth flees away before it. Does 'the heaven' (Christ and his brethren) 'flee away?' Does 'earth' (the City of the Saints) then existing 'flee away?' Does the Father really take away Christ's power and become judge Himself in his place?"

"And I saw a great white throne and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them, and I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, etc." (Rev. 20:11-15).

ANSWER: This pictures a universal resurrection which could only apply to times of universal responsibility; and under the figure of death and hades cast into the lake of fire, it represents the abolition of death by the destruction of all who are not made immortal, which cannot be understood of the Kingdom.

Our correspondent thinks it can be understood only of the **beginning**: of the 1000 years because of the statement that "the earth and the heaven" fled from the face of the occupant of the throne. He rightly deprecates the idea that the constitution of things thus to be abolished is Jesus and the Saints and the Holy City.

But is there no **recent** event of which this can be understood? "**When the 1000 years are EXPIRED**" (Rev. 20:7)—

"Satan goes out to deceive the nations that are in the four quarters of the earth."

They enter into league and constitution, and go up on the—

"Breadth of the earth and encompass the camp of the Saints."

Here is a system of things—temporary certainly—but still taking time to organize, and **swelling: out into all the proportions of an organised "heaven and earth" political.**

With the "four quarters of the earth" thus insurrectionally organized, the Kingdom of God is reduced to very small proportions, geographically speaking. **A Satanic system of things has carried all before it.** With one voice, the populations unite to overthrow the government of Christ.

But, in a moment, the threatening confederacy dissolves before his face, and he is then revealed as the judicial arbiter of universal human destiny in the great wind-up that clears the way for a final and perfect state of things on earth.

The responsible millions of the thousand years are raised. The unworthy are destroyed; the accepted are immortalized; the great harvest is gathered in amid a universal feast of trumpets and everlasting joy.

—**Bro. Roberts, 1890**

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Great Length of Life at the Beginning

THAT MAN should live long in the beginning was suitable in every way. He was few in number in those days and weak in social organization, which rendered it needful that the elders should continue to live for the benefit their experience and numbers would afford to the race.

Nearer the fountain of his being, he was naturally stronger than afterwards when his stock became "the worse for the wear."

Then there was a degree of submission to God in those days that was not common in later times, when it became necessary to remove the population by a flood. This would favor longevity, as we see illustrated in the Age to Come, when the will of God being the rule of human action, men are again to live to a great age (Isa. 65:20-22).

As to **how** the shortening of life was effected, "**the decree of the watchers**" is the all-sufficient explanation (Dan. 4:17) for to the angels the present world is subject (Heb. 2:5).

—**Bro. Roberts, 1891**

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The Bread and the Wine

"KEEPING the feast" of the memorial supper, "as the Lord himself did," is not a question of the quality of the bread and wine we use: for **on this we have no directions**, and—

"Where there is no law there is no transgression."

It is our moral relation to the things signified that is everything:

"Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of MALICE and WICKEDNESS, but with the unleavened bread of SINCERITY and TRUTH" (1 Cor. 5:8).

No brother would **object** to literal unleavened bread being used, but no enlightened brother would **insist** on it as essential.

As for wine, you cannot have wine without fermentation. Grape juice is one thing; wine is another. Men may agree to call the former wine, but it is not the thing that has for ages been known as wine.

Bible wine is grape juice in the vinous stage, in which there has been that amount of fermentation of the saccharine matter that imparts to it the heart-gladdening power of which David speaks.
—**Bro. Roberts, 1890.**

The Faith

"Faith is a confident anticipation of things hoped for; a full persuasion of things not seen"—Heb. 11:6

Hebrews XI

IN the tenth chapter of Hebrews the apostle concluded his powerful reasoning concerning the Law and its relation to Christ. Then he returns to exhortation, and closes the chapter with an appeal to patience—

"For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. **Now the just shall live by faith**" (v. 36-38).

This forms the basis of the exposition of Faith which we find in the chapter under review. If the just shall live by faith, it is evident that the unjust shall die for lack of it. However, as **all men have faith in something**, the apostle must have had some **particular** Faith in view when he said (Heb. 11:1):

"Now Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Or, as Dr. Thomas rendered this verse in Elpis Israel—

"Faith is a confident anticipation of things hoped for; a full persuasion of things not seen."

Paul then tells us that **this** is The Faith without which it is impossible to please God. The possessor of such a Faith looks back in the past and ponders the things which have been testified by the prophets and apostles. He finds the evidence so convincing that he becomes fully persuaded of its truth.

Turning next to the future, he considers those great and precious promises that God made to the fathers of Israel. Knowing that He is able to perform those things He has promised, he anticipates with all confidence their literal fulfilment.

An individual, with such a Faith, finds that his life is transformed because of his new way of thinking. The things of this life gradually lose their attraction and, if he continues in this newness of life, his disposition changes, and a character is formed that eventually leads to perfection.

It would be impossible to attain to this full assurance of faith were it not for the fact the believer understood thoroughly that (v. 6)—

"He that cometh to God, must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

The word "diligently" does not appear in the original Greek text, but its insertion here does no violence to the thought expressed by the apostle. The verb implies intenseness. It signifies a persevering effort, or a constant application of the mind to the Word of God, and no word could better express what is expected of the believer.

After rehearsing the precepts of the Lord in the presence of the children of Israel, Moses concluded with these words—

"And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt harken **diligently** unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all His commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth" (Deut. 28:1).

The idea is graphically portrayed by the voice of wisdom in the following (Prov. 22)—

"If thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou **criest** after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure;

"**Then** thou shalt understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

Therefore, if we would attain unto a Faith that is well-pleasing to God, we must give heed to His word. Paul has declared that—

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

We understand from this, then, that **Faith comes by studying: the Scriptures.**

By this means, a knowledge of His testimony is assimilated; thereby producing within the believer a contrite spirit, and causing him to tremble at the Word of God.

This cannot be accomplished if we study the Scriptures sparingly. It must be done daily, systematically, and with untiring diligence, because—

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:14).

As the study of the Scriptures progresses, and the knowledge of the divine testimony broadens, the inward man grows in stature, delighting in the law of the Lord. He becomes grounded and settled in The Faith, so that when tribulation comes upon him he is not moved away from the Hope of the Gospel, but is able to stand fast in the Lord, denying himself all ungodliness and worldly lust; and walking soberly, righteously and godly in the world. His confidence is based upon the Psalmist's assurance—

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them"

(Psa. 34:7).

Although the angelic protectors are invisible, Faith, based upon a full assurance of Hope, rejoices in the certainty that they are—

"Ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation"

(Heb. 1:14).

Having defined Faith in such an excellent way, Paul proceeds to illustrate its operation by selecting from that great "cloud of witnesses" some of those noble men and women whose Faith exemplifies the definition given. If we examine each example set forth in this chapter, we will find that theirs was a Faith which operated by love, and was perfected by trial. Although they were greatly distressed at times, as all who strive to walk faithfully in Christ Jesus soon realize, it was **necessary**—

"That the trial of your Faith, being much more precious than gold, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:7).

Ye have heard of the patience of Job, says James. Yes, we have, and what a wonderful example it is! Even in the midst of intense mental and physical suffering, as his friends scorned him and his eyes poured out tears unto God, he could look beyond it all and say (23:10)—

"When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Gold, then is a symbol of Faith, the most precious attribute of the believer. Such a Faith embraces those "great and precious promises" that God made unto the fathers and which formed the ground or confidence of the Hope of the worthies listed by the apostle.

It could not be better illustrated than by Abraham, whose name occupies so prominent a place in this chapter. In his old age he was promised a son; but—

"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able to perform"

(Rom. 4:20).

This, however, was not unusual conduct on the part of Abraham. In fact it was characteristic of him. Even in his native land, as he dwelt among idolaters, he responded to the call of the Lord, and went out, not knowing whither he went.

On this eventful journey with his immediate relatives, he arrived at Haran, where they remained till the Lord appeared to him again. On this occasion the first of those great and precious promises was made to Abraham as God said to him—

"I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing, and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:2-3).

This promise became the basis of the Gospel and the foundation of true religion. Commenting on this promise, Paul says that the Gospel was preached to Abraham, and because he believed it God was so pleased that He counted it to him for righteousness.

We would like to dwell at some length on the various events in the life of this illustrious friend of God, but we must pass on to some of the other faithful servants of God whose living and moving faith brought them into good report.

Let us not overlook Isaac and Jacob, to whom the promises were renewed. In both cases the apostle refers to that period in old age when they, by faith, blessed their sons.

To fully comprehend the great faith exhibited by these men, we must keep in mind the period in which they lived, and the fact that they were not members of a great body of believers with whom they could assemble and worship together, but were **"strangers and pilgrims on the earth."**

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PASSING on to another great period in the history of the descendants of Abraham, we come to Moses, who, declared Paul, was faithful in all His house.

If ever a man required faith, it was Moses. Reared in the palace of Pharaoh, he could have enjoyed all that the riches of Egypt provided for an adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter. But, coming to manhood, and realizing the destiny of Israel, he refused it all and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God.

To all natural appearances Moses must have been looked upon by his Egyptian friends as being mad.

Just imagine giving up the treasures of Egypt, leader of the world in science and power, to become associated with a nation of slaves! But the promise concerning the Seed of Abraham who should possess the gate of his enemies, and through whom all the families of the earth would be blessed, contained far greater riches in the estimation of Moses than all the riches that Egypt possessed.

Therefore in this great faith he kept the Passover, and fled from Egypt to lead his people through the Red Sea and on to Mt. Sinai, where, during a most awe-inspiring display of the power of the Deity, the Law was given to Israel and they were established as a nation.

"And what can I more say?" Surely we join with Paul in this question as he names many others—

"Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens" (v. 33-34).

As we look back over Israel's history, and read in detail concerning those wonderful examples, we realize that they were **men of action** because of their great faith which they manifested by their works.

But this is not all. Faith also leads to endurance. Some were tortured, not accepting deliverance; some had trials of scourging, bonds and imprisonment. Others were stoned; some were slain with the sword, while others wandered about in coats of skins; destitute and afflicted.

But these were not all. They are only a few who received special mention. The Book of Life will reveal many more when it is opened in that day, and the Deity makes up His jewels from among the living and those who, like Abraham, have "died in faith, not having received the promise"—

"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (v. 40).

No; they have not been made perfect, for that which is perfect is still a matter of faith and hope. Today the whole world lieth in wickedness.

But we know what the signs of our times portend. Therefore wake, brethren, wake! for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. —G.A.G.

Bring Forth MUCH Fruit

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance"—Gal. 5:22

THE vine, in Scripture, is sometimes used to represent Israel, whose spiritual condition is set forth by the vine's condition. Thus we read —

"Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: Thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it."
(Psa. 80:8).

This is Israel, God's firstborn. The Israel-vine later grew and produced what is represented in the vineyard parable in Isaiah 5—

"Now will I sing to my Well-beloved a song of my Beloved touching His vineyard.

"My Well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and He fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and made a winepress therein.

"And He looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes."

Everything possible that would be favourable to producing good fruit was done for the vine. The fertile soil of a fruitful hill facing the sun was chosen for its planting, the ground laboriously dug up and the stones patiently removed.

It was not, therefore, unreasonable that the Husbandman should look (expect) that it should bring forth grapes —

"What could have been done more to My vineyard, that I have not done in it?

"Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?"
(Isa. 5:4).

The vine **did** bring forth grapes, but they were wild, of a bad or evil quality, not good for eating. Some of these wild or evil grapes are described in the 7th verse, where the Husbandman—

"Looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry."

* * *

IN John 15 Jesus continues to speak to his disciples by setting forth himself as the True Vine—

"I am the True Vine, and my Father the Husbandman."

He then proceeds to discourse about the branches of the vine. Here, then, we have the True Vine, the Husbandman, and the Branches.

As we have read, Jesus is the True Vine, God is the Husbandman, and all Christ's followers are the Branches (vs. 5-6).

The Branches in the True Vine under the care of the Husbandman should bring forth fruit, because everything possible for fruit bearing will be done for them. John 15:5 reads—

"I am the True Vine, ye are the Branches. He that ABIDETH IN ME, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for **without me ye can do nothing.**"

This is the purpose of the branches of the vine to bring forth fruit, MUCH fruit. If the branch does not bring forth fruit, it is not the fault of the true vine but rather something is wrong with the branches.

That which is wrong with a fruitless branch is that it is NOT ABIDING in the true vine, which abiding has been expressed as the vital connection between branch and vine.

This Greek word "meno" is translated "abide," "continue," "remain." Apart from this, the branch would be fruitless. And this abiding, continuing and remaining point out the **vital dependency of each branch upon the vine.** Jesus said—

"Without me ye can do nothing."

So only by abiding in him will a branch bear fruit.

In John 15:6 Jesus says—

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

To not bring forth fruit is to not abide in Christ. The end result of a branch in such a condition is oblivion. The fruitless branch is cut off, cast away, withered, gathered up, thrown into the fire and burned up, and so is no more. That is its end.

The branches of a vine should bring forth fruit when cultivated with care. That is its purpose. But if there is no fruit bearing, the only other thing a fruitless branch on a fruitful vine is good for, is fuel for fire.

We may well ask then, "WHAT fruit must be brought forth?" Certainly not the wild grapes the Israel vine brought forth, for such was not acceptable to the Lord of the vineyard. The fruit that is acceptable with Him is the "fruit of the Spirit," as enumerated in Gal. 5—

"Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

This is "fruit meet for repentance." The fruit of the Spirit of the True Vine is in contrast to the wild grapes of the Israel vine already quoted from Isa. 5, where the Lord of the vineyard —

"Looked for judgment (justice), but, behold, oppression (bloodshed); for righteousness (innocence from evil), but behold a cry (of oppressed ones)."

The fruit of the Spirit is, therefore, those qualities of character that are Godly or Christ like; in other words, the DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.

* * *

WHEN we ask, "How can a branch bring forth such fruit?", and we answer, "by ABIDING in Christ," we must then ask, "How can a branch ABIDE, CONTINUE, or REMAIN in Christ?" Jesus answers in John 15:10, where he says—

"If ye KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love."

This is the vital connection between the vine and the branch. It is the doing of the will of God. It is the KEEPING OF THE COMMANDMENTS of Christ, the DOING OF GOD'S WILL, by which the branch can abide, continue, and remain in the true vine and so bring forth fruit.

In John 15:2, Jesus says—

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away."
—and the fruitless branch ends in oblivion. But he continues,

"And every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

Hence the branch that is fruitful (bringing forth **some** fruit) is purged, that it may bring forth **more** fruit. This purging means to cleanse or prune, cutting away from the fruitful branch **luxuriant growth** that makes a 'big show,' but is unproductive.

We remember the Israel fig tree. From a distance could be seen a luxuriant growth of leaves which seemed to promise much fruit, but upon closer inspection the promise is seen to be only a pretension, a cloak, a show—there was no fruit.

The unnecessary growth on the fruit-bearing vine branch saps up some of the life-giving energy of the vine, but gives no fruit in return. If, however, the unnecessary, showy growth, be cut away, the full amount of life-giving energy from the vine will be used in fruit bearing, thus bringing forth more fruit.

This purging, pruning, cleansing, or cutting away, is a painful process. It is as the chastening of the Lord, Heb. 12:6—

"For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth . . . Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous. Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness **unto them who are exercised thereby.**"

Thus to bring forth more fruit of the Spirit, the peaceable fruit of righteousness, the process is not joyous, but grievous. But it **must be done**. The Husbandman wants—looks for—expects—the maximum production from each branch of the vine. True, some branches bring forth much more fruit than others. But the point is, each fruitful branch is pruned to bring forth as much fruit as possible.

"Herein is my Father glorified," said Jesus, "That ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

The fruit is to the glory of God. And in glorifying God in this, the one and only way, the evidence of the true disciples of Christ is set forth. Jesus on another occasion said—

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

This is the test: We should apply it to ourselves.

Are we bringing forth good, cultivated fruits? Not the wild fruit of injustice, evil doing and selfishness that gives not glory to God and crucifies Christ anew; but the fruit of the Spirit, the peaceable fruit of righteousness, fruit meet for repentance. Only by so doing can we glorify God, and be Christ's disciples. —N. M.

With Most God Was Not Pleased

"We groan with in ourselves, waiting for the redemption of the body"—Romans 8:23.

CHAPTER 10 of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is a stirring exhortation to eternal and untiring vigilance—an earnest and urgent admonition to constantly and repeatedly examine our foundations and consider our position—a solemn warning that the tide we are fighting is very powerful and if we ever pause to rest on the oars we shall be swept down the stream.

The keynote of Paul's words is **diligence**; unceasing and unwearied attention; earnest heed to the things we have received lest at any time we should let them slip. Paul is **always** driving at this principle of watchfulness, of alertness—**always** trying to impress his hearers with the danger of even a momentary relaxation of that eternal vigilance that is the high price of God's approval.

A lifelong, unrelaxing battle for righteousness, obedience and godly self-control—that is Paul's basic theme. Let us consider some of the things he says about it. At the end of the chapter previous to this one, we read (1 Cor. 9:27) —

"But I **keep under my body**, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to **others**, I myself should be a castaway."

Speaking of the constant warfare this required, he exclaimed (Rom. 7:24) —

"O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!"

And again he says of this struggle (Rom. 8:23)—

"Ourselves also which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of the body."

And further (Gal. 5:17)—

"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

We are called to **war**. A war in which there is no respite. A war that demands all our energies and attention. A war to which all other considerations are subordinate. A war upon the outcome of which **ALL OUR FUTURE DEPENDS**.

No outward accomplishments or achievements, fame or position, whether in the Truth or out of it, will so decisively affect the judgment of the final day. No consideration of circumstances or position approaches in importance **the unseen struggle within**.

In Paul's mind, there is almost a reckless heedlessness of the external factors of our lives. He says—

"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called" (1 Cor. 7:20).

"The time is short—let them that have wives be as though they had none—let them that weep be as though they wept not, and them that rejoice as though they rejoiced not" (vs. 29, 30).

"Art thou bound? —seek not to be loosed; art thou a servant?—care nothing for it for the fashion of this world passeth away" (vs. 27, 21, 31).

Of course, this must not be carried to foolish and hurtful extremes. There are many specific commands which bear on the shaping of the outward details of our lives, but Paul's point is:

Don't let anything confuse, delay, or displace the main issue.

The whole final outcome will rest on the result of the war within ourselves — everything else is subservient.

"To him that overcometh," we read 7 times in Rev. 2 and 3, as describing the recipients of the promise. Overcometh what? Overcometh the world (John 16:33). What is the world? Evil. "Overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). And the battle is right inside ourselves between the spirit that purifies and the flesh that defiles.

We are locked up all our lives in a small room with a deadly enemy. We can't get away from him, though many wander far in the attempt, seeking rest and finding none, blaming their disquietude on their circumstances. **We can have no peace unless we destroy this adversary** (Rom. 8)—

"If ye, through the Spirit, do put to death the deeds of the body, **YE SHALL LIVE**".

And we can have no hope of putting him to death if we permit anything to distract our attention from the task. Paul declares (2 Tim. 2:4) —

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life."

This is the Spirit's counsel and illustrates the urgency of the case. Paul further says:

"I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, **WHICH IS YOUR REASONABLE SERVICE**. And be not conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:1-2).

And he sums up the issue in the stirring words at the end of the 13th chapter of Romans:

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand.

"Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and MAKE NOT PROVISION FOR THE FLESH, to fulfil the lusts thereof."

Truly an exalted calling—worthy of all our attention. Nay, even more, demanding all our attention. The whole teaching of Christ and the Apostles is that this is a **big** battle, a **lifelong** struggle.

Was Paul an exception when he found that ceaseless effort and constant watchfulness was necessary to a successful overcoming? Are we stronger than Paul? If Paul found that his success demanded that he cut himself off from the entanglements of this life and devote all his energies in one direction, can we possibly think that it is unnecessary in our case? Can we fight two battles successfully when he found that one taxed all his powers?

The thought is often expressed that the Sunday morning meeting affords a welcome opportunity to withdraw from all worldly distractions and apply ourselves wholly to the Word of God. There is much truth and comfort in this thought, but somehow we always feel uneasy when it is expressed. What right have we to get into "worldly distractions" in the first place? Did Paul? Did Christ?

The Scriptures teach that **every** thought, word and action should be motivated by the primary consideration of self-control and pleasing God. This should be the uppermost thought AT ALL TIMES. This is our whole concern.

The question of our temporal preservation and welfare is a secondary consideration. That is something for which God assumes full responsibility—if we seek to please Him. He gives us no grounds for reversing this order of importance—even for part of the time. Rather He forbids it—

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all these things **shall be added unto you.**"

He gives us no grounds for voluntarily accepting any set of circumstances which, regardless of how they affect our material well-being, make our task of self-control and godly obedience more difficult, and add to present distractions at the expense of our attention to higher things.

But, whatever our circumstances may be, whatever we are called upon to do, in every aspect and task of our daily life—the controlling thought should be, not expediency or policy or 'smart' practice or worldly wisdom or self-assertion, but an open and honest and unconcealing avowal of the principles that please God, which are humility and gentleness and seeking not our own and a cheerful and ready suffering of injustice.

Maybe we shall suffer a little for it and be taken advantage of and not get so far in worldly things and be considered fools and 'easy marks'—doubtless this will be the result, BUT — we shall be developing a character and self-control and record in the book of God's approval that will stand us in good stead when all present things have passed away.

If we find, or think we find, that our position or employment requires us to suspend the application of these principles at any time, there is obviously something vitally wrong somewhere. At our daily work is where Solomon's words apply—

"Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long"
(Prov. 23:17).

Though we work beside them, we work on an entirely different basis. They depend upon themselves for all they get and sometimes this method seems highly successful, but—let us not envy sinners. We depend directly upon God and work to please Him—the employer is but an incidental factor completely under God's control and we know that God is just and that we may leave our welfare entirely in His hands.

Paul's repeated exhortation is that **nothing** must interfere with the continual application of the primary principle of our lives, and he urges a **constant**, continuous examination of ourselves in this matter. In the chapter before us he says —

"Wherefore, let him that **thinketh** he **standeth** take heed lest he **fall**."

The Apostle's chain of reasoning reaches back into chapter 9, where he says (v. 24) —

"Know ye not that they that run in a race run **all, but ONE receiveth the prize**."

It is clear that the point he is taking from this illustration is the solemn fact that many run who will never receive the prize. Many complete the course but there is nothing waiting for them at the end. Many are **called** but few are **chosen**. Many who understand God's Word will say in that day, "Lord, Lord!" (Matt. 7:22), but will be turned away without recognition. "**So** run," Paul continues, "that ye may obtain."

Just **running** is no assurance of God's favor. We must **SO** run that we may obtain, for many run and obtain **nothing**. We must know **where** we are running and keep our mind on it. Paul says (1 Cor. 9:26) —

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly."

And Solomon exhorts —

"Get **wisdom** and forsake her not, that when thou **runnest**, THOU SHALT NOT STUMBLE"
(Prov. 4:5, 6, 12).

Paul goes on (v. 25)—

"And every man that striveth for the mastery is **temperate** in all things."

Young's Concordance gives "self-constraint" for "temperance." The idea is discipline in the interests of fitness.

"Now **they** do it" (he says) "to obtain a **corruptible** crown (the perishable laurel wreath), but we an **incorruptible**."

How much more, then, should **we** practise self-discipline, keeping under our body, bringing it into subjection and ruthlessly stifling the instinctive and unreasoning reactions of the flesh which are the root of all misunderstanding, unpleasantness, strife and trouble, lest—as Paul says—when we have preached to **others**, we **ourselves** should be castaways.

Then he continues, beginning the next chapter (1 Cor. 10) —

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink."

Here again is the same thought. Paul reminds them that a **nominal** affiliation with God's purpose is no assurance of His blessing or favor. He illustrates this from the position of the Israelites.

The Israelites were led by the pillar of cloud, even as **we** are by the pillar of revealed Truth. **They** were baptized into Moses as **we** are into Christ. They were nourished with the spiritual meat and drink of God's providing — **AND YET** (v. 5) —

"With many (RV: MOST) of them God was **not well pleased**, for they were over thrown in the wilderness."

Why? Because they presumed upon the strength of their position as the especially chosen of God, and forgot that His favor was no inherent right of theirs but depended solely upon their strict obedience to Him. What does Paul say?—

"Now all these things happened unto them **for ensamples**: AND THEY ARE WRITTEN FOR OUR ADMONITION, upon whom the ends of the ages are come."

Let us examine the examples he lists, where the Israelites encountered the temptations common to all men, and which are given for our guidance.

THE GRAVES OF LUST

THE FIRST (v. 6) refers to Numbers 11:4, where we find they lusted for flesh, for the good things of Egypt and complained—

"There is nothing at all besides this manna before our eyes."

The lesson is strikingly obvious—nothing but this monotonous manna, nothing but the **bread from heaven!** Oh, for the pleasures of Egypt which we left to follow God!

Forgotten was the fact that God was leading them to the promised land of freedom and plenty. Forgotten was the fact that the pleasures of Egypt were inseparably connected with **a bondage and servitude that had no end but death.**

Do we sometimes question the value and necessity of the monotonous, flesh-wearying bread from heaven, and seek to enliven ourselves with a little jaunt into the pleasures of Egypt?

God is not mocked. What was His answer to the Israelites?—

"The Lord will give you flesh until it COME OUT AT YOUR NOSTRILS, and it be loathsome unto you."

A grievous plague followed and before they left that spot to continue their journey,

"And Moses called the name of that place 'The Graves of Lust,' because there they buried the people that lusted" (Num. 11:34).

THE GOLDEN CALF

THE next illustration Paul cites is that of the golden calf:

"These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."

The Golden Calf still has an extensive following. Most people regard it as the only haven of safety and deliverance. Not so, however, the people of God who know that more often than not it is an instrument of destruction rather than deliverance, and at best only a useful but quite dispensable tool in the hand of Providence.

Solomon compares the two schools of thought and renders a verdict that bares the fatal weakness of the Golden Calf—

"For WISDOM is a defence, and MONEY is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is that WISDOM GIVETH LIFE to them that have it." (Eccl. 7:12)

The golden calf gave the Israelites a comforting feeling of security, but not for long. They found it was no protection against the wrath of God, and far from bringing them **life**, it brought many of them a quick death. **That in which they had trusted was the very cause of their destruction.**

THE WAGES OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

PAUL continues his story. The next incident (v. 8) is that in which Balaam the prophet and Balak, king of Moab, figure. It is described in the 23rd and 24th chapters of Numbers. We see these two wicked men peering from a hilltop at the mighty and magnificent array of the camp of Israel—

"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob; and thy tabernacles, O Israel! For from the tops of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him. How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?

"Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel! According to this time it shall be said of Jacob and Israel, 'What hath God wrought!'"

What a picture of invincible security!—

"He crouched as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee."

But unfortunately this is not the end of the scene. These two men do not give up so easily, and there is a lesson to be had from their tenacity if not from their unrighteousness. Truly at times (Luke 16:8) —

"The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light."

It was so in this case.

Through the crafty counsel of Balaam, Balak found a crevice in the shining armour of Israel and so destroyed many thousands of them. He tempted them to lay aside their breastplate of righteousness. He enticed them to venture forth out of the strong tower of God's favor and protection. And,

"There fell in one day twenty-and-three thousand."

Peter mentions this incident, too (2 Pet. 2:15). John adds force to the symbol in the Revelation. Speaking to the church at Pergamos, the Spirit says (Rev. 2:14)—

"Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel."

"OUR SOUL LOATHETH THIS LIGHT BREAD"

"Neither let us tempt Christ," continues Paul (v. 9), **"as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents."** Turning to Numbers 21: 4-6, we read—

"And the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses,

"Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread; neither is there any water; and our soul **loatheth this light bread!**

"And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died."

"Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted." Is not his assurance sufficient that all things work together for good? Do we have to have everything explained?

"The soul of the people was much discouraged." Our sympathies are with them, as they must be with any who are discouraged, but we cannot deny that they had no excuse on this occasion. They would not have been discouraged if they had kept their minds on their blessings and miraculous delivery from Egypt, and not brooded on their temporary hardships.

By holding our troubles up close to our face and staring at them, we too may be discouraged; but let us try to keep everything in its true proportion and not belittle Christ's great and self-sacrificing work by warped, ungrateful self-pity.

"FEAR THEM NOT; THE LORD IS WITH US"

"Neither murmur ye," Paul goes on (v. 10), "**as some of them also murmured and were destroyed of the destroyer.**" He is referring to their despair at the report of the ten spies—

"And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron and said,
"Would to God we had died in the land of Egypt and all the congregation lifted up their voices and wept that night." (Num. 14:2).

In vain Moses pleaded (v. 9)—

"Fear them not, THE LORD IS WITH US."

What was God's sentence?

—"According to your faith be it **unto you**"—

"As truly as I live, saith the Lord, As ye have spoken in mine ears, **SO WILL I DO UNTO YOU.** Your carcasses shall fall in the wilderness and ye shall not come into the land"

(Num. 14:28).

* * *

"**NOW all these things,**" says Paul, "**happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.**"

But Paul does not conclude without comfort. He does not want to leave the impression of a vengeful God, standing ready to strike at every mis-step. It is God's love he is emphasizing, not His wrath.

In the 13th verse he seeks to dispel any impression that man's road is one of arbitrary pitfalls. God doesn't buffet him for His own amusement, or even just out of concern. On the contrary, says Paul, **every incident of our lives is arranged by the untiring watchfulness of divine love;** every trial is adjusted to our capacity by the insight of omniscient wisdom; every weight is gauged in the unerring scales of all-discerning knowledge.

With divine patience, God is slowly garnishing His Temple with vessels of honor. The process is bitter, but it is glorious. Each trip to the furnace brings the gold forth purer. The higher and nobler the purpose for the vessel, the hotter the fire and the sharper the tool that shapes it and the more rigid the scrutiny it receives.

As one star differeth from another in glory (1 Cor. 15:41), so it is in the Kingdom of heaven. **The more we can stand, the more we shall suffer.** Christ suffered the most, came forth the purest, and will shine the brightest.

Godly suffering is a sign of sonship and acceptance. Absence of trial indicates unworthiness of God's fatherhood (Heb. 12:6-8). Therefore the apostles **rejoiced** that they were **counted worthy** to suffer for his name (Acts 5:41). "But God is faithful," Paul concludes —

"Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it," (1 Cor. 10:13).

The Psalmist declares (34:7).

"The angel of the Lord encampeth around about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."

We believe this—**but do we arrange our lives in full faith of it?** Do we **depend** on it, and step forth confidently in the assurance of it; in spite of appearances, obeying God in what the world

would consider a foolhardy disregard of consequences; or are we afraid to trust our weight in childlike faith to the everlasting arms that are underneath?

"**Blessed** is the man that **trusteth** in the Lord," we read in the next verse of the same Psalm; and Christ echoes the same thought—

"ACCORDING TO YOUR FAITH be it unto you."

David continues (v. 19)—

"Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth them out of them all."

"Wherefore," Peter adds (4:19):

"Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ"— 1 Pet: 1:7.

Even Christ Pleaseth Not Himself

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves"
—Romans 15:1.

IN Romans 14 we are impressed with how inter-related our lives should be in the work of the Lord. In fact, Paul's message from ch. 12 on, has been leading up to the conclusion of our united service in the Truth.

NOTHING SHOULD BE DONE WITHOUT CONSIDERING ITS EFFECT UPON THE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE BODY OF THE BELIEVERS.

This is also comprehended in the expression,

"Presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice unto God."

Anything which might offend our brethren and sisters must be eliminated. For the harmonious and efficient operation of the body of believers, there must be complete subjection of personal desires:—

"As we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office; so we being many, are one Body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Rom. 12:4-5).

The operations of the Body of Christ will be to the glory of God if we remember this interdependence of member to member. God has arranged the Body according to His wisdom, for the development and blessing of His children. Therefore—

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another"
(Rom. 12:10).

These maxims, when thoroughly digested, create a right spirit within all members, causing each one to be a living sacrifice, so that in the eyes of God the whole body of believers may be an acceptable sacrifice, an oblation of sweet odours unto the Father.

BUT IT MUST ORIGINATE FROM THE INDIVIDUAL HEART OF EACH COMPONENT OF THE BODY.

There must be a conscious recognition on the part of each called-out one that all events are arranged by God, for the sake of His elect. And if we believe we have been called by God, we will feel a personal thankfulness to Him for whatever may be our lot. There will be no complaints because of those trials which our probationary walk may incur.

We will conclude that the powers of the world are ordained of God, and are controlled by Him to the establishment of His purpose with the saints.

* * *

SO WE lead on to Romans 14, and we are instructed to receive patiently those who may be weak in faith, and bear with them. We must show all the compassion we can toward those whom God has called. Let us not by impatience destroy the work of God.

The New Revised Standard Version gives a slightly different rendering to verse 1. It carries the sense of the rest of the chapter fully, without conveying the impression that we are to countenance those who hold wrong doctrine—

"As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions."

Note the words "weak in faith" replace "weak in THE faith." By true brotherly kindness such an one can be drawn toward greater trust and faith in God and assisted to a fuller perception of the purpose and operations of God, both as enwrapped in the Law and in its higher teachings. It is as the Apostle states elsewhere—

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient."

We must consider the effect of our actions on the faith of our brethren and sisters—

"If thy brother be grieved with thy meat, (or those things which you do) now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" (Rom. 14:15).

* * *

WE are given two examples in Romans 14 of how it applied in Paul's day. Paul was writing to the Gentile believers and asking them to show the Jewish believers the utmost consideration.

The Jews had been brought up to observe the Sabbath as a day of rest. The sincere Israelite, unacquainted with the purpose of God, would have very strong feelings about the observance of the Sabbath law. We recall how fanatically the Pharisees viewed (according to their reasoning) any infraction of the ban on labor on the seventh day.

Our minds are impressed with the mental opposition which Peter himself manifested toward the call of the Gentiles—

"Not so Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean" (Acts 10:14).

This impression was not completely erased some years later as illustrated by the words of Paul to the Galatians—

"When the Gentiles were come, Peter withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

"And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation" (Gal. 2:12-13).

This was wrong on the part of Peter, and it was necessary for Paul to correct him. But it illustrates the depth of Jewish convictions.

The things, however, which Paul was speaking about were things which were basic teachings of the Law of Moses, which were now in a state of transition to a higher and fuller meaning.

The keeping of the Sabbath under the Law was to lay a foundation for belief and trust in the Sabbath of Rest of one thousand years, the Millennium. Most did not perceive this feature. The opening up of the Gospel to their understanding would therefore gradually unfold the meaning of the Sabbath. As the Jews increased in faith they would understand the real intent of the Law as a schoolmaster developing into the glorious age of blessings in Christ.

* * *

THE eating of all meats would be received with the same caution by religious Jews. The restriction of their eating habits to those animals of cloven hoof and chewing the cud would be very important to them.

The fuller meaning of these restrictions would only come with an understanding of the characteristics required in those who were called to be sons and daughters of God. They would gradually see the beauty of that which had been previously only a burden and bondage of their fleshly desires and tastes.

Consequently we must use extreme care in all things not to offend the least of God's called-out ones—

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Rom. 14:21).

We are thus carried forward to the Apostle's words under consideration—

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

The original meaning of the word in the Greek for "strong" is "able." While that for "weak" is "not able," or "unable." These meanings illustrate that Romans 15 is an extension of the Apostle's reasoning which has pervaded the whole epistle.

With the combination of Jewish and Greek converts to the faith there were bound to be varying opinions upon secondary things. How necessary for the up-building of the body that patience and forbearance be manifested, until all come to the full stature of faith and trust in God.

The exhortation is for those who are "able," by strong faith in God, to remain uninfluenced by former Jewish or Gentile customs to assist by encouragement those who are not immediately "able" to completely eradicate their former impressions. This is again stressed by v. 2—

"Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification."

The example for us to follow has been set in the life of Jesus Christ. Paul presses home his example of the consideration for others (Rom. 15:3)—

"For EVEN CHRIST HIMSELF PLEASED NOT HIMSELF; but, as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."

And he further tells us that this, being a quotation of Old Testament Scriptures, was written for our benefit that we through considering the Scriptures might develop patience and comfort and be of the same mind the one toward the other.

Now, Paul has previously said:

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

When we realize how much he endured in order to bring salvation, we see how small our utmost patience is, compared with that manifested by Christ. Then also we further appreciate the extension of God's mercy and forbearance in Jesus as a High Priest at His right hand to plead for our offences.

Thus we follow the Apostle's reasoning that **if we would be made like unto Jesus at the judgment seat we must now conform our lives to that pattern which has been set in the person of Jesus—**

"Be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus, that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God." (Rom. 15:5-7).

This is a further illustration of the purpose of God to link Jew and Gentile together in the common bond of the promise made to Abraham, which Paul shows has been foretold from the days of the promise itself—Rom. 15:9-12.

* * *

BUT it was the same Apostle Paul who strenuously opposed any encroachment of Judaism into the ecclesias. Those who contended and insisted that it was necessary to be circumcised were given no quarter (Acts 15):

"There rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the Law of Moses."

Peter, who had opened the door to the Gentiles, clearly manifested the Spirit's mind—

"Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" (Acts 15:10).

The disciples countenanced no agitation of the ecclesias by those who leaned backward toward the Law. Paul spoke to the Galatians similarly—

"False brethren . . . come in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour; **that the Truth of the Gospel might continue with you.**"

This, then, is Paul's thought in Romans 14:1—"Receive . . . BUT NOT TO DOUBTFUL DISPUTATIONS." Nor can we set aside the weight of Scriptural injunction against countenancing wrong doctrine and worldly practices. This the Apostle never did. Nor may we. —F.H.

The Cherubim of Glory

PART FIVE

"The heavens were opened; and I saw visions of Elohim." Ezekiel 1:1

THUS Ezekiel begins his glorious cherubic revelation.

He was shown, in symbolic representation, the reality and meaning and purpose of things as they appear to the divine viewpoint. The curtain was drawn aside and he saw the things of the Spirit of God of which the natural man has no conception.

A WHIRLWIND

"And I looked and behold a whirlwind came out of the North" (v. 4).

The original is "a rushing wind." When the Spirit of God came upon the Apostles at Pentecost, there was a sound like a mighty rushing wind.

A whirlwind is the symbol of the greatness and irresistibility of God's universal, invisible power, especially in judicial manifestation.

Jeremiah says at this same time (23:19)—

"A whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth in fury."

OUT OF THE NORTH

The whirlwind "came out of the North." This too gives the aspect of judgment upon Israel, just as in the latter day, and deliverance comes from the South and East.

At this time the judgment from the North was the Chaldeans, but they were not the power, they were merely the instrument, the slaughter weapon in the hands of the six linen-clothed symbolic men of Ezekiel 9, who were led by the seventh man with the writer's ink horn.

To this **seventh** man the Cherubim handed the coals of judgment from between the Cherubim wheels, which he scattered over the city.

The armies of Nebuchadnezzar were all the natural eye could see, but Ezekiel is being shown a representation of what was happening upon a spiritual plane.

A GREAT CLOUD

V. 4: "A great cloud, and a fire infolding itself"—self-contained and continuously renewed, like the burning bush—"and a brightness was about it."

The cloud symbol is a very fitting and beautiful one for the Multitudinous Christ. A cloud is a vast host of individual drops drawn by the power of the sun up into the heavens out of and away from the general waters and seas of the earth.

In the process they are distilled—separated from all impurity. In the drawing up, the drops are invisible, but when assembled they ride majestically in the heavens in all their pure whiteness and beauty.

Behind their majestic beauty there lies the tremendous power of God, ready to be poured forth in storms of irresistible judgment, with pealing thunder and flashing lightning.

God is said to ride upon the Cherubim and also upon the cloud.

This cloud that Ezekiel saw was a "bright" cloud, like the cloud of glory that enveloped Jesus, Moses, Elijah and the 3 disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration.

AMBER

"AND out of the midst of the fire there appeared the colour of amber."

There are different views on the meaning of the word "amber." All authorities seem to be agreed that it does not mean amber, but refers to some very brilliant metallic alloy. The more dependable modern versions just say "shining metal."

Weighing all factors, including the Septuagint Greek translation made about 200 BC, the probability strongly points to what the ancients called "**electrum**," a very bright alloy of gold and silver. The lexicons generally lean to this.

The Tabernacle and Temple were gold and silver in the inner parts, but brass in the outer sections.

Gold is a well-known symbol of tried faith and righteousness, but what is the meaning of **silver mixed with gold**, which makes a more lustrous and beautiful metal than either one alone?

SILVER

The word for "silver" occurs about 400 times. About 300 times it is translated silver, about 100 times "money." It is the only word in the Old Testament for money, except in one or two incidental cases.

Silver in Hebrew basically denoted **money, value, price**. Its first occurrence is in speaking of the riches of Abraham, its last in Mal. 3:3—

"He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver."

When we learn that the original in the Bible for "money" is this same word **silver**, we see many interesting expressions—

"The atonement silver" (Ex. 30:16).

"The redemption silver" (Num. 3:49).

"The trespass silver, the sin silver" (2 Kings 12:16).

"They weighed for my price 30 pieces of silver" (Zech. 11:12).

The ransom money that all in Israel, rich and poor, had to give for their life was a half-shekel of silver.

ATONEMENT AND FAITH

What then is the silver that is combined with the gold of faith to make the bright glory of the Cherubim? Clearly, it is the Redemption, the Atonement, **the great sacrifice for sin without which the purest of faith would be powerless**.

See what a beautiful meaning this gives to the two trumpets of silver, the proclamation of redemption, the Gospel proclaimed through all the land.

V. 5: "Out of the midst thereof" (out of this glorious and triumphant life-giving combination of Atonement-silver and Faith-gold) "came the likeness of four living creatures."

LIVING ONES

"Living ONES" would be more correct. Truly they were "creatures" in the sense that they were created—they are the new creation—but that is not part of the meaning of the word here. This same word is applied to God Who certainly is not "created."

It just means LIFE. The primary characteristic of the Cherubim is life—intense, vibrant, joyful life. Life is the great promise of the Scriptures, Death is the great enemy to be vanquished and destroyed.

WHY FOUR?

WHY were there FOUR Cherubim? Four is very broadly used in the divine plan. It appears to denote **the plan itself**, the four-square Holy City of the great Master Builder, the fulness and completeness of God's purpose in creation.

The natural number of man is six, but man as a completed and organized community in the purpose of God—man as shaped to God's purpose and filling the earth with His glory, a universal Kingdom—is four.

FOUR-SQUARE

Several things which specifically denote the **whole purpose of God**, either in nucleus or fulfilment, are especially said to be "four-square": the sacrifice altar, the incense altar, the breastplate with the 12 stones and the Urim and Thummim, Ezekiel's Holy Oblation in the midst of the land, and finally the Holy City of the Revelation.

Several others, though not **spoken of** as "four-square," were so, particularly **the Most Holy Place where the Cherubim were**. The Most Holy was not only "four-square"—it was a perfect **cube**. Its "length and breadth and height" were equal—the perfect fulfilment of a perfect plan.

It is not four as a plural, but as a four-square, four-fold entity. Thus four rivers became united in one to form the river of Paradise; four world empires are united into one for the Kingdom of God; four points of the compass, north, south, east and west, signify one universal dominion.

In harmony with this, four is a factor of the periods of trial, probation and preparing for the divine purpose: 40 days, 40 years in the wilderness, 400 years of affliction for Israel from their beginning in Abraham to the fulfilment in Moses as the four-square camp, the Kingdom of God.

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

Soviet Oil in the Cold War

*The following is extracted from the US. Govt. publication of the above title, dated 1961 and available from the U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington, D.C. It is an extremely significant
SIGN OF THE TIMES.*

THE LEADERS of the Soviet Union are seasoned and skilful strategists. The theatre in which they practise their strategy at present encompasses the whole world. Political action is planned and executed in accordance with decisions, taken by the political high command, as to the nature and magnitude of the forces engaged IN CONFLICT FOR SUPREMACY IN THE WORLD.

As viewed by this high command, the future of the world is being determined by the outcome of the trial of strength between the two basic systems of politico-economic organization—the capitalist and the Communist.

A Soviet journal, published by the Society for the Popularization of Political and Scientific Knowledge, described the strong attraction exerted by petroleum on the Kremlin as follows:

"It should be borne in mind that oil concessions represent, as it were, the foundation of the entire edifice of Western political influence in the (less developed) world, of all military bases and aggressive blocs. If this foundation cracks, the entire edifice may begin to totter and then come tumbling down."

* * *

SINCE World War II, and particularly within the last few years, the rate of increase in the production of oil within the Soviet Union has been impressive.

In 1950, production from Soviet fields amounted to about 265 million barrels.

By 1960, oil production within the Soviet Union has increased to nearly 1,000 million barrels annually.

Within 5 years, Moscow anticipates that the oil output will reach 1,750 million barrels annually.

Soviet plans shaped up in 1958 called for the expenditure of the equivalent of \$45 billion in the ensuing 15-year period in oil exploration, production, refining, and transportation in a strong effort to overtake the commanding lead in world oil operations achieved by American and British private enterprise.

This system is scheduled for completion in 1963 and will bring a constant flow of oil to the edge of the free world in Europe.

Already it has penetrated the European area originally monopolized by American, British, Dutch, and French oil. At present it provides substantially ALL of ICELAND'S, and 95 per cent of FINLAND'S, oil requirements. It provides 40 per cent of NORWAY'S and 10 percent of SWEDEN'S industrial oil demands. A recent contract with DENMARK made the Soviet Union the principal supplier of industrial oil fuel there.

During the year 1960 ITALY became Russia's leading customer in Western Europe.

* * *

PRICES for Soviet oil have been adjusted to suit both Soviet political aims and specific market situations and have been pegged well below prices previously accepted as standard in the international market.

By the Soviet arrangement with Italy in November 1960, crude oil was to be supplied at Black Sea ports at \$1 a barrel, which indicated a cost at Italian refineries at about 62% of the delivered cost of oil from Persian Gulf ports.

When the American oil companies established in CUBA refused to yield to the pressure of that Government to refine Russian oil for the local market, their refineries were expropriated and the interests of the companies were closed out.

When the major oil companies operating in INDIA likewise refused, at the behest of that government, to accept Soviet oil for refining, India negotiated for supplies of Soviet finished oil products while new state-owned refineries were put under construction.

Soviet oil once processed in Italian refineries is deemed to be Italian oil and this—presumably— has a European Common Market status. Additional offerings of Soviet oil to Italy on the same terms for resale abroad suggest a Soviet intent further to invade the markets of other Common Market countries.

Thus, with the European oil market already saturated, Middle East oil is being crowded out about to the extent of the acceptance of Soviet oil by West European States.

The dependence of any member of the NATO alliance on Russian oil in a substantial measure inevitably has a significant bearing on its position relative to the security of the Western World.

WITH ITALY BECOMING INCREASINGLY BOUND UP IN SOVIET OIL SCHEMES, THE QUESTION IS BOUND TO ARISE AS TO ITS PROBABLE BEHAVIOR IN THE EVENT OF A SERIOUS CRISIS IN THE COLD WAR.

It is reported that the Government-owned Indian Oil Co. has agreed to market about 7.5 million barrels of Soviet oil products in each of the coming 3 years.

CEYLON, too, has been considering ways and means of government marketing of cheap Soviet oil.

* * *

THE ARAB LEAGUE became concerned with Arab oil resources at a relatively early date because of the possibility of utilizing petroleum as an instrument in the contest with Israel.

In 1955 a permanent petroleum office was set up in Cairo and thenceforth increasing attention was given to means of bringing oil operations under the influence or control of the Arab States themselves.

In Sept., 1960, delegates from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, plus Iran and Venezuela and with observers from Qatar — countries which together were supplying about 85 percent of the international oil market—met in Baghdad and set up a permanent Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to "coordinate policies and attitudes in eventualities concerning oil production."

* * *

THE Soviet Government has agreed to provide India with more than 100 million barrels of oil products over the next 4 years at approximately 20 percent below the standard price level.

Italy, one of the major importers of Middle East Oil, is turning more and more to the Soviet Union for its oil supplies and is even considering becoming a European distributor of Soviet oil products.

Whereas the USSR in 1959 exported only some 220,000 barrels of oil daily to the free world, the projected level of its exports in 1965 would reach 700,000 barrels daily with still larger amounts in the offing thereafter.

The principal objective of the Soviet Union at this period, in going to considerable lengths to introduce its oil into free world markets, would seem to be that of disrupting Western oil operations and **acquiring: a means of exerting influence in ideologically free and uncommitted countries.**

As long as Soviet oil is priced at levels well below those at which oil from the Middle East and North Africa can be sold profitably, it undoubtedly will find markets in the outer world, including countries in NATO alliance. ITALY IS A STRIKING CASE IN POINT.

* * *

AT THE present time, the Soviet Government is engaged in a drive to expand the size of its tanker fleet, partly by new construction at home, partly by purchases abroad.

In all, the Soviets now have 13 oil-carrying vessels (141,000 deadweight tons) under construction in its own shipyards and abroad. On order in other countries are other tanker ships— six in Bulgaria, two in Finland, two in Sweden, one in Poland.

Finland has a new contract to deliver to Russia 25 small tankers of 4,000 tons each during the period 1961-65. Very recently the USSR has purchased two supertankers from Japan, each capable of carrying 40,000 metric tons of oil.

* * *

A LARGE part of the Soviet effort in foreign economic aid in recent years has been directed toward replacing the West in the development of the indigenous oil resources of the underdeveloped countries.

Some impression of the scope of Soviet involvement in the domestic petroleum affairs of various countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America may be gathered from the following:

INDIA

The Soviet Government is active (a) in an undertaking to prospect for and organize the extraction of oil; and (b) in the construction of an oil refinery.

The latter is provided for by an agreement signed in September 1959, under which the Soviet Union will provide the equipment for the construction of an oil refinery in Barauni (Bihar), having a capacity of 2 million metric tons.

Another refinery, capable of processing 750,000 tons per year, is going up at Assam, this one with Romanian assistance.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

Soviet geologists have been prospecting for oil in the area of Kameshli (Syrian region), and delivering equipment for the construction of a refinery at Horns with a capacity of 1 million metric tons.

Other agreements between the USSR and the United Arab Republic provide for Soviet assistance in the construction and expansion of live oil refineries and installations that will make that country (United Arab Republic) independent of the outside world in its requirements for oil products.

PAKISTAN

As announced on Feb. 13, 1961— the Soviet Union will provide oil exploration teams, drilling and other equipment, and lend the money necessary to finance the work. The amount of Soviet financial aid involved in this undertaking has been estimated at \$30 million.

For the Soviets, this transaction represents a rare opportunity to drive a wedge between Pakistan and its allies of long standing and to disrupt the normal pattern of economic cooperation in petroleum between the West and still another underdeveloped country.

IRAQ

On Apr. 4, 1960, the Soviet press reported the signing of a contract under which the USSR undertook surface research for oil in Iraq over a territory measuring 400 square miles.

Under an earlier agreement, in March, 1959, the USSR will build in Iraq (at Basra) the country's first oil and chemical plants for the production of nitrate fertilizers from natural gas.

BOLIVIA

Bolivia, too, is at present in great need of new credits to buy the equipment required to expand the operations of the local state petroleum company. If no such aid is forthcoming from Washington, high officials at La Paz have hinted that a Soviet offer of equipment will be seriously explored.

ARGENTINA

In Argentina, the state oil company has been receiving field drilling equipment from the USSR under a \$100 million credit agreement signed in 1958.

AFGHANISTAN

In Afghanistan, Soviet geologists are prospecting for oil, in the northern regions of the country, on the basis of a formal undertaking by the USSR to help develop a modern oil industry in that country.

ETHIOPIA

In Ethiopia, the Soviet Government has undertaken to build "a large oil refinery" and to carry out an integrated geological survey to discover "useful minerals."

In certain areas or countries, for example in Scandinavia, Soviet oil plays a large role in the overall supply pattern.

Italy, Egypt, Finland, Sweden, and West Germany are the largest free world consumers of Iron Curtain oil.

* * *

IN THE past 10 years a dynamic program of exploration and development and an ever-increasing production of steel and oil equipment . . . has enabled the Soviets to produce more oil than their 5-year and 7-year plans called for.

As to the future, there are indications that the planned doubling of crude production through 1965 and the anticipated fivefold gain in natural gas production can be easily met and may be surpassed.

It is very probable that with Cuba in its sphere of influence, Russia is now eyeing developments in Venezuela, the world's second largest oil producer.

The world oil oversupply problem has placed Venezuela in a vulnerable position. Her economic dependence on oil has never been clearer than in the past year or two when crude oil production has levelled out.

The elimination of the Cuban market (about 70,000 barrels daily) has aggravated the situation and VENEZUELA NOW APPEARS RIPER THAN EVER FOR COMMUNIST DOMINATION. . .

Events appear to be moving in that direction.

The whole of the foregoing article is extracted from the U. S. Govt. publication: "Soviet Oil in the Cold War."

* * *

Never has anything happened in history which so strikingly fulfils the prophetic words of Habakkuk (2:2-5) concerning the vision which "AT THE END shall speak and not lie"—

"He is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and cannot be satisfied, but **gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people . . .**"

And his destruction by the arisen, glorified saints (v. 7)—

"Shall they not RISE UP suddenly that bite thee, and AWAKE, that shall vex thee? . . ."

And the final consummation (vs. 14 and 20)—

"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

"The Lord is in His holy Temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him."

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Signs of the Times

"In those days . . . when I shall bring again the captivity of Jerusalem . . . proclaim this: Prepare war; wake up the mighty men!"—Joel 3:1, 9

JUST as the pendulum swings back and forth while the hands of the clock move relentlessly on in the same direction, counting off the minutes as the time for some predetermined event draws nearer; just so, the developments in the cold war sway back and forth, but the inexorable march of events proceed in one direction—**toward World War and Armageddon.**

Just as it began to appear, on the surface, that more peaceful relations were developing between East and West, as indicated by the "spy exchange" and a willingness expressed by both sides for negotiations on disarmament and related problems, the lid was blown off and the mask removed, revealing the shallowness of all such peaceful gestures.

The President's announcement that U.S. nuclear tests in the atmosphere would be resumed next April, unless the Soviet Union agreed to an ironclad, foolproof inspection system before that time, brought forth angry denunciations from the Soviets with charges of "blackmail," and a declaration from official sources that Premier Khrushchev would reject Kennedy's price for calling off nuclear tests.

And, although Mr. Khrushchev still insists on a meeting at Geneva to discuss proposals for ending nuclear tests and disarmament, such a meeting is already doomed to failure because of the wide gulf existing between the terms proposed by West and East.

The attitude of the nations toward resumption of nuclear tests by the U.S. indicates how selfish interests and political bias, rather than justice and impartiality dominate decisions.

These decisions follow the usual pattern. Russia, the other Communist countries and certain "neutral" nations denounce the U.S. announcement, even though the U.S. is preparing to do, probably on a smaller scale, just what Russia was doing only a few months ago, and that in violation of a solemn agreement on a moratorium for cessation of nuclear testing.

Britain and other U.S. allies fully approve the announcement of nuclear testing, after a complete analysis of the Soviet tests indicating Russian weaponry advances sufficient to endanger the Western position in the arms race, so much so that further tests by the Western bloc had become "militarily necessary."

The outstanding result of a resumption of nuclear testing by both the U.S. and Russia will be to speed up the arms race in both nuclear and conventional weapons. Disarmament, even reduction of arms or arms control, becomes more hopeless as time goes on.

Even though the general public, through wishful thinking and superficial consideration of the facts, may be easily misled by appearances of improvement in the world situation, even to the point of crying, "Peace and safety," the stubborn fact remains that East-West disarmament negotiations have gone on for 17 years, with little or no progress, and 353 SESSIONS at Geneva over nuclear testing alone have now proved fruitless.

In fact, it is becoming more and more evident that the great volume of words spoken by representatives of both East and West have been spoken with tongue in cheek, the speakers knowing full well that disarmament or arms control is impossible; that the two groups are as far apart as the poles on methods and controls on disarmament, and that neither side has the slightest intention of accepting any kind of a disarmament proposal unless it is highly favourable to their particular group.

Even though Khrushchev has agreed to discuss disarmament proposals on a foreign ministers' level, such a conference will be held in the midst of a global situation in which complex problems forbid any such thing as disarmament.

Besides, a disarmament agreement between a few nations would be meaningless. It would have to include every strong nation on earth and a mutual agreement among these to fairly and impartially resolve the many conflicts now raging among smaller nations.

So long as ONE nation refused to disarm, all others will continue to arm.

It also amounts to a certainty that maintaining disarmament would be as great a task as agreeing to it in the first place. Therefore, all that has been said about disarmament is nothing more than propaganda material.

SOUTH VIETNAM DANGER SPOT

THERE is a **real** war going on in South Vietnam, and on its outcome hangs the destiny of Southeast Asia. The struggle now going on will probably decide whether or not Communist rule will completely dominate all Southeast Asia, with the scales weighing heavily in favor of eventual Communist victory.

South Vietnam, allied with the West, now ruled by President Diem, who is an avowed hater of Communism, has an army of some 300,000 men, opposed by a force of Communist guerrillas of undetermined number who are slowly sapping the strength of the nation by constant harassment, destruction of crops and property, and keeping up a constant hit-and-run type of warfare in which both military and civilian population suffer.

They already control about one-fifth of the country and have most of the population so cowed and frightened that they have little heart to resist.

The West has already poured \$2 billion into the South Vietnam struggle. The U.S. has 4000 military personnel in the country as military advisors and servicemen. It appears likely at this time that "another Korea" is in the making.

Communist China has issued a warning to the U.S. that China's security is threatened by American intervention in South Vietnam and demanding the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. military personnel and equipment.

If Red China follows up this threat with action, as in Korea; then the U.S. must back down and surrender all Southeast Asia to Communist domination, with total loss of prestige, or else engage in all-out war, the outcome of which is unpredictable, but the potentialities fearful to contemplate.

"PREPARE WAR—

—beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong." —Joel 3:9-10.

Something like 25 years ago, a prominent military expert declared that,

"War has become no longer a noble grapple of courage, but a matter of finance, science and technical skill; **the time is at hand when the chief occupation of the nations will be preparation for war**, when most of the income and the best of the skill will be committed to the making of munitions and training for war."

—thus expressing in modern terms the prophecy of Joel 3:9. As we come nearer to the final conflict between the nations, which will unquestionably engulf the whole world in armed strife, the prophecies relating to that time become clearer, more literal and detailed in fulfilment.

The spirit of war is no longer confined to a few strong and belligerent nations. It now involves all nations, both large and small, all races and classes of people.

Sleeping giants, like China and India, for ages committed to peace and non-resistance, with unlimited manpower, are becoming strong military powers.

Small nations, like Finland, are building up strong military forces. Weak, poverty-stricken nations, like Egypt, are devoting much of their meagre national income to war preparation.

In the depths of darkest Africa; in backward Southeast Asia and Indonesia, where warfare previously was confined to tribal conflicts with primitive weapons, are now training large military forces, armed with modern weapons.

Another peculiar aspect of the situation, fulfilling the prophecy of Joel, "Let the weak say, I am strong," is noted in the fact that, not only have great populous nations, like China, been drawn into militarism through the march of events, but small nations, by the simple device of allying themselves with one bloc or the other, are thereby receiving military and economic aid and offers of help in case of aggression from any source, can now say, "I am strong."

A shining example of this is Cuba. Though until recently militarily impotent and financially bankrupt, by allying herself with Russia, now has the greatest arsenal of weapons of any Latin-American nation, and Castro can now derisively defy the powerful Uncle Sam, a thing which only a few years ago would have meant his destruction.

Every imaginable kind of warfare is being taught to all people and weapons for every eventuality are being created.

The whole population of the earth is being trained and prepared for whatever type of warfare is best suited to their particular situation. Defence Secretary McNamara said recently that, because of "a shift in military thinking, the United States is training men both to fight and to teach fighting to the people of free but still struggling nations."

He said this was necessary because Russia was doing the same thing for nations favourable to Communism.

Surely the nations are mad! They are rushing "like the rushing of many waters" toward Armageddon. The "powers of the heaven are shaken" and the "sea and waves are roaring."

Impelled by the unseen hand of divine providence, they are girding themselves for a conflict which they profess not to want, but which they cannot evade.

The only consolation is to those who will be "able to stand" when the crisis comes, for they, beholding all these things coming to pass, can know that "their redemption draweth nigh."

AS RELATING TO ISRAEL

ALTHOUGH "the time to favor Zion" is at hand, and that favor in many ways is already evident, especially in the land of Israel, the greater portion of the Jewish race are still scattered among the nations, still the subjects of that contempt, disfavour, oppression and persecution foretold in the scriptures. (Deut. 28:25-37; Luke 21:24).

Reports persist of growing anti-Semitism in Russia resulting in what appears to be a subtle, but well organized movement to harass and mistreat Jews, having as "its real target the eradication of (Jewish) religion itself," a report says.

Ever since the Roman dispersion, the Jew has rarely ever found a permanent home where he could feel safe from persecution or expulsion.

Even to this day wherever revolution or political strife occurs, the Jew is caught between the hammer and the anvil of contending factions because of his exclusiveness. Migration to other countries has been his only recourse but that often to no avail.

Because of recent world turmoil, mass migration of Jews is taking place in several areas, to such an extent that the Jewish agency, United Hias Service, is inaugurating a movement to resettle Jews fleeing from Tunisia, Algeria and other areas where Jews are being subjected to renewed persecution.

The plan calls for the expenditure of nearly \$3 million. Although it is planned to resettle these Jews wherever homes for them can be found, doubtless many will be absorbed by Israel.

Thus we see the outworking of the divine plan to drive a sufficient number of Jews back to their land to fulfil God's purpose for the pre-adventual resettlement of the land and prepare the entire Jewish population of the world for that greater and final regathering when it will be said to them,

"Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north . . . deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon" (Zech. 2:6-7). —O.B.

1962 Texas Fraternal Gathering

IF the Lord will, the Texas Fraternal gathering will be held at Hye, Texas, for one week, Sun., July 29 through Sun., Aug. 5.

Plans have been made for two lectures, at 11 a.m. and 8 p.m. each day. The reading and discussion of the daily Bible lesson comes at 9:30 a.m., and at 3:00 p.m. the 4th, 5th and 6th chapters of Revelation will be discussed, each discussion being opened with a short talk on these chapters by one of the brethren.

Classes for the children will be arranged under the direction of bro. Ellis Higham.

Please write to bro. E. W. Banta, 7009 Sherman St., Houston 11, Texas for further details about accommodations, etc.

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

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