

# 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

Final dates for receiving News: May 22, June 19, July 17

*Please send News frequently to help maintain and strengthen the mutual love and interest and fellowship of the Brotherhood.*

**PORTLAND, Oregon—2212 N. E. Prescott St.—Memorial Service 11 a.m.; Lectures 7 p.m.; Bible Class Thursdays 8 p.m. (in homes).**

WITH sorrow we report that Bro. Ed Hansen of our ecclesia fell asleep in Christ on Wed., March 13. This was not entirely unexpected, but still it comes as a shock, especially to those of us who have been very close to our brother for 30 years.

He now awaits the call of Christ to resurrection, being confident to the very end that God would fulfil all that He had promised in His Word.

Less than two weeks before he fell asleep we held a conversation with him at which time he reiterated in no uncertain terms a continuing satisfaction with his present stand in fellowship, convinced that the move he made to accept the Berean position in June, 1962, was sound.

On our bro. Ed's behalf we would with sincere gratitude thank all in the brotherhood for their solicitous letters and cards. Near the end our brother was not able to read them, but at the first his spirits were lifted up considerably knowing that so many were interested and would take time to encourage him in his hour of trial.

This has served a dual purpose, for it has also brought the rest of us in Portland closer in the bonds of love to all the Brotherhood throughout the world.

Since our last ecclesial news we have also lost sister Dora Cook who passed away very suddenly in Vancouver, B.C. We had not become acquainted personally with sis. Cook. We did receive a couple of letters from her and felt we knew her somewhat because of them.

Her letters showed such sincerity in her desire to do what was right in the sight of God that we wonder if it may not have been providential that sis. Cook came into the Berean fellowship just four weeks before she fell asleep. We know that many questions of this sort will be answered at Christ's return.

Our prayers are with sis. M. Randell, also of Vancouver, who lost not only a sister in Christ but a good friend as well. May God be with her to strengthen her in that she is at present in complete isolation in that part of the country.

We had the pleasure of a visit from bro. & sis. Frank Truelove of the Richard, Sask., ecclesia. We were further strengthened in our walk through the word of exhortation given us by bro. Truelove. We also benefited by conversation with them regarding some of the more serious aspects of the Truth. Their visit will be a bright spot in our memories for a long time to come.

We have held two lectures so far, of those scheduled. The first with 13 present, including 2 strangers, were encouraging. The second lecture with no strangers present was of course rather disappointing. We will not be too easily discouraged, realizing that these are the results often to be expected in these last days.

Your brethren and sisters in the One Hope, of the Portland ecclesia. —bro. A. R. Tilling

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## **EDITORIAL**

### **The Lord Is My Shepherd**

*"The sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name"*—John 10:3

THE ART of using a word, or phrase, literally denoting one kind of object, or idea, in place of another by way of suggesting a likeness, or analogy, between them is very old, and takes us back to the days of antiquity.

It is known as metaphor, and the use of it is common to our every day life. We have no difficulty in understanding the meaning of certain terms, provided we are acquainted with the literal they are based upon.

There is no literature in the world where metaphor is used with such beauty, and deep significance, as in the Scripture of Truth. The Bible abounds with it. In Isa. 12:3, we have a beautiful example—

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

Such cases could be multiplied many times over, but we doubt if there are any more expressive than the one forming the title of our present message—"The Lord is my Shepherd." This phrase constitutes the opening words of the familiar 23rd Psalm, and as we reflect upon it, beautiful mental pictures begin to take shape.

Those of us who have been reared in any of our great cities, and are unfamiliar with the scenes of rural life, will only be able to form a vague idea of a shepherd and his work.

But to others, who have lived in the countryside where sheep are raised, a picture of beauty develops at once. They see a stream slowly flowing through a land of hills and valleys, with sloping pastures of "tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." In the foreground stands a shepherd watching his flock of sheep as they graze on the hillside.

This, however, is only part of the picture. To fully appreciate the use of the word "shepherd," as used in the Bible, we must know something of their duties, and habits, especially in the east. There, they are constantly with their flocks by day and by night, to number, feed, gather, conduct and guard them as we read in Luke 2:8—

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night."

The shepherd's care of the sheep was constant and tender, and his control over them was very great, as we read in Isa. 40:11, where speaking of Christ, the prophet says—

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

One observer was told by a shepherd that throughout the east the sheep will not obey the voice of a stranger, nor will they follow him. If he tries to catch one, it will run from him. How much better we can understand the words of Jesus—

"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

"And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers" (John 10:4).

Because of the peculiar nature of sheep, it is essential that a shepherd be in attendance night and day. They are the most innocent of animals with very little power to protect themselves. In the

pasture, they are constantly in danger of dogs and wolves, and if unprotected are apt to wander from the fold.

How appropriate that such an animal is likened to men and women. On one occasion, as Jesus beheld the multitude, he said they were "as sheep not having a shepherd."

In the parable of the "Good Shepherd," Jesus informs us that he is the one so described, and he refers to his followers as sheep, saying—

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

They hear his voice and listen to what he says. Those who submit to the word of Christ, and obey his commandments, are aptly represented by sheep, and are truly able to say, "The Lord is my Shepherd."

In John 10:3-4, Jesus said—

"The sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice."

The shepherd's voice is what Jesus has spoken for our guidance: and in those spoken words we discover much more than what is revealed in the New Testament: for he is the Word made flesh.

**Therefore, the voice of the Shepherd can be heard from Genesis to Revelation, because it is the voice of the Spirit.** This will be prominently noted in the seven messages to the ecclesias: for each one concludes with these words—

"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the ecclesias."

If we hear his voice, then we will listen to the things that were written in the Scriptures for our instruction. The result will be as Paul has said, "that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." And to show the strength and importance of his statement, he said to Timothy in 2 Tim. 3:16-17—

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

Those who aspire to be numbered among "his sheep" will always have a great desire to read the words of the Spirit; and that reading will not be just a duty, but a great pleasure and joy. They will "acknowledge him in all their ways," for they know "he will direct their paths." They will then discover that they have responded to the instruction of Peter to—

"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Among the many sayings of the Good Shepherd, there is one that we should never forget. In fact, it should be foremost in our minds at all times, and it might be well to set it at the top of a list of the wise sayings of Jesus that relate closely to the way of salvation.

If we were to look at the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, and the marriage of the King's son, we will find that they conclude with these heart-rending words—

"For many are called, but FEW ARE CHOSEN."

In a contemporary magazine, a brother's death is reported, and it is stated of him that he "now waits peacefully for his reward in the Kingdom." But we do not know who will be selected from among the called, and therefore we have no authority to say who will, or who will not, be saved.

But we do have an obligation with regard to ourselves. Peter deals with it in the first chapter of his second letter. In verses 3 and 4, he calls attention to our high and lofty calling, and in verses 5 to 9, he reminds us of those qualities we must develop within ourselves if we would "be partakers of the divine nature." Then he concludes with vs. 10-11—

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for IF ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

This is not an isolated passage. It is only one of many that will be found in the writings of Peter, Paul and John, and in all cases we will observe that they are based upon the teaching of Christ.

Those who walk in the Truth, or walk in the light, as he is in the light, will find that "he goeth before them, and they follow him because they know his voice." Therefore they are truly able to say—  
*"The Lord is my Shepherd."* —Editor

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## He Who Shall Be Mighty Ones

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

*"I YAHWEH—the First One and the Last Ones—I am He"* —Isaiah 41:4

### PART FIVE

NOW, this "Apocalypse of the Sons of the Deity" is represented in the Apocalypse by different remarkable symbols. The first is that described in Rev. 1:13-16, and styled "Son of Man."

This does not represent an individual man. It represents MANY IN ONE. What John saw among the lightstands was a similitude or likeness—"like to a Son of Man." The voice John heard proclaimed the reality of this likeness to be "THE LAST"—the Spirit in the last manifestation; the ONE YAHWEH in many Elohim.

In the time of manifestation it is "the Living One," which before apocalypse "was dead," but being apocalypted, "is living for the Aions of the Aions;" and as "the First" before this apocalypse, and limited to Jesus Anointed, "had the keys of the invisible and death" (Rev.1:18)

This apocalyptic plurality in victorious progress was obscurely communicated to Isaiah in the following testimonies—

"Who raised up righteousness from the east, ('the kings from a Sun's risings'—the saints,) called Him (that which is indicated by the symbol before us) to His foot, gave the nations before him, and made rule over kings?" (see Rev. 2:26-27).

"He gave them as dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow (Ephraim and Judah—see Zech. 9:13; 10:3-4). He (the symbolical Son of man) pursued them, and passed in peace; by the way he had not gone with his feet. Who hath wrought and done this, naming the generations from the beginning (at the Bush)?" Isa. 41:2-4.

To which enquiries, the Eternal Spirit answers (vs. 4-6)—

"ANI YAHWEH — I who will be THE FIRST ONE and **eth-acharonim** — THE LAST ONES—I, He.

"The isles saw, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came. They helped every one his neighbor, and said to his brother, Be of good courage."

In this passage "the Last" is in the plural, but in Isa. 44:6, it is used in the singular, according to the formula—

"Thus said YAHWEH, King of Israel, and his (Israel's) redeemer, YAHWEH Tz'vahoth (or, HE who will be of hosts, that is, "COMMANDER" of them—see Isa. 55:4).

"I THE FIRST ONE and I THE LAST ONE; and without Me no ELOHIM.

"And who as I shall proclaim, and declare it, and set it in order for Me since I appointed the people of Olahm? And the things that are coming, and shall come, let them show unto them."

The "Last Ones" of Isa. 41 are comprised in the "Last One" of Isa. 44, which, though expressed in the singular, clearly indicates a plurality by its association with the sentence, "and without me no Elohim"—without the Spirit which quickeneth there will be no glorified saints, for "the flesh profits nothing;" they are "the people of Olahm," destined to reign with the Christ a thousand years—Rev. 20:6.

And here the reader is requested to bear in mind, that the titles and expressions by which the ETERNAL POWER designates Himself in the Scriptures of the prophets are all reproduced in the New Testament and the Apocalypse, and therein applied to Jesus and his Brethren when "perfected in spirit," or "glorified together" (Rom. 8:7).

Thus, the prophetic YAHWEH ELOHIM styles himself "the First and the Last," so doth the symbolical Son of Man;

YAHWEH says he is the only Rock, Paul speaking of the Rock terms it CHRIST:

YAHWEH styles himself King of Israel, Christ Jesus calls himself the same;

YAHWEH declares that he is a saviour and that there is none beside him, the Word made flesh was called Jesus, because he should save his people, or be their saviour—

"I, I, YAHWEH, and there is no saviour beside me" (Isa. 43:11).

John saw the Son of Man similitude in the midst of the Seven Lightstands, or aggregate of ecclesias, and heard the "voice of the many waters" from their midst, as indicative of the source from whence the persons constituting the reality symbolized by the similitude are derived.

The promises symbolized in Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21, are all made to the constituent members of this similitude of the mystical Son of Man — the "One Body," the church, when victory is complete.

Another vision of the Sons of the Deity in Apocalypse is described in Rev. 4. When John was "in spirit," he saw the similitude of their manifestation when they shall be "in spirit" on the day of the Christ. He saw them enthroned as —

"The 24 Elders, clothed in white raiment, and crowned."

He saw them enthroned in a stormy period, when "lightnings, and thunderings, and voices" were issuing forth from their enthroned omnipotence (v. 5). He saw the going forth of their power into all the earth in the burning of the Seven Spirits (Rev. 4:5; 5:6), which seven, symbolical of the One Spirit in judicial exercise upon the dominions of the world, he saw in the similitude of the FOUR LIVING ONES, omnipotent and omniscient — the One Spirit manifested in the Redeemed, careering in victorious conflict, and proclaiming the superlative holiness of Yahweh Elohim Almighty, the "Who was, and Who is, and Who is coming" (Rev. 4:7-8).

He saw these in progress through the earth, contending for dominion over it, with the full assurance that they would succeed (Rev. 5:10).

"WE SHALL REIGN," say they, "ON THE EARTH."

John also beheld the Sons of Deity in Apocalypse in the Mighty Angel of Rev. 10. This—

"Comes down out of the heaven invested with a cloud, and a rainbow upon his head, and his face as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire."

His lion-roar proclaims the consummation of —

"The mystery of the Deity as He hath declared the Glad Tidings to His servants the prophets" (v. 7).

— which accomplishment ultimates in the constituents of this Mighty Angel taking possession of: the kingdom under the whole heaven, and the consequent establishment of the reign of YAHWEH and of His Elohim for the Aions of the Aions.

This is the result of the 7th and last trumpet having exhausted the judgment pertaining to it. The consummation of this trumpet, which is also the consummation of the Seventh Seal, is the work of the Mighty Angel, symbolizing the heaven-descended Jesus and his Brethren, the saints.

The Seventh Vial is the work allotted for them to do; and in their mission they march to victory with "FACE AS THE SUN, and feet as pillars of fire."

Again they appear upon the apocalyptic page in Rev. 14:1. Here they are the sealed nation of Rev. 7: 4-12, resurrected, with the Lamb, Jesus, in their midst. Their symbolical number, a definite for an unknown (Rev. 7:9) is 144,000. In this vision they are stationary, as indicated by "stood" in reference to the Lamb with whom they are.

They are standing, awaiting the result of the proclamation which announces to the nations that "THE HOUR OF JUDGEMENT IS COME" (Rev. 14:6-7). They wait the issue of this before they go forth, as "the Seven Spirits in all the earth," to overthrow Babylon, and to torment the worshippers of the Beast and his Image—xiv. 8-11. In Rev. 15:2, the Sons of the Deity are again apocalypsed here, they are in the attitude of victory and blessedness. They are in joyous repose, "standing upon a translucent sea, having the harps of the Deity."

This sea of nations had been "mingled with fire;" but "they had gotten the victory" over the Beast and his Image, and over his Mark and Number, which as dross had all been destroyed from the sea by the fire of their indignation and power; and they are seen here in "rest from their labours, and their works following them."

This scene is the consummation of the Seventh Vial, in which it can be said,

"Thy judgments are made manifest" (Rev. 15:4).

In getting the victory over the Beast they are apocalypsed in the vision portrayed in Rev. 19:11-21. Here the Sons of the Deity appear in military array, in clouds of cavalry, styled "the hosts in the heaven," following "THE WORD OF THE DEITY" in his campaigns against the nations; which he smites and conquers in treading "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of the all-powerful Deity."

They tread them "as ashes under the soles of their feet," and bind and shut up the Dragon in powerlessness for a thousand years.

Having obtained this great victory over the kingdoms and dominions of the world, they are manifested as the occupants of thrones peculiarly their own; which continue undisturbed for a thousand years. Their victory inaugurates the universal dominion foreshadowed in Rev. 5:12-14.

Peace being thus conquered by their omnipotence, "the spirit is quieted, and the earth is at rest." The Gentile earth and heaven have fled away from before them. With the Captain of their salvation they are enthroned as "the Kings of the earth;" and as A DIVINE MUNICIPALITY, possess the glory and honor of the nations (Rev. 21:26).

In this relation they are apocalypsed as the NEW JERUSALEM, "the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is the Deity;" looked for, but not yet seen, by the patriarchs and prophets of the olden time—Heb. 11:10; Rev. 21:9-27.

For a thousand years this Beloved City is the light of the nations, which are then "all blessed in Abraham and his Seed," according to the Gospel of the Kingdom. It is the YAHWEH-Elohistic municipality, symbolized by one hundred and forty-four cubits, each cubit representing one thousand of the numerical symbol of this "Holy Nation," the Israel of the Deity—Rev. 7:4; 14:1; 1 Pet. 2:9; Gal. 6:16.

But, at the ending of these thousand years, during which they have been an Arboretum of healing influences to the nations, the base ingratitude, malice, and envy of human nature find scope to organize rebellion against the Saints and their government. Their camp is beleaguered by countless myriads which gather together against them for war.

But the Sons of the Deity are as powerful at the end as at the beginning of the thousand years. Peace and blessedness will not have enervated their incorruptible nature; and they will be prepared to give the rebels a crushing and final overthrow. As the Woman's Seed, their mission is to bruise the Serpent's Head—Gen. 3:15.

The war begun, their burning indignation overflows them as a consuming fire, in which they are "tormented day and night" to the end of the thousand years—Rev. 20:10. Thus "fire comes down from the Deity out of the heaven, and devours them."

This establishes "the End," when the kingdom is delivered up to the Father, Who will then have put all enemies under the Son's feet.

*At this crisis death is banished from the earth; the wicked utterly destroyed out of it; and the Deity—apocalypsed, or manifested, in His Sons, considerably augmented in number by the accessions of the thousand years — becomes the sole Occupant and Inheritor of the earth— 1 Cor. 15:24; Prov. 10:30; Rev. 21:3-4.*

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## **Answers to Bible Questions**

**By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS**

### ***Did Jesus Eat the Passover the Day He Died?***

**QUESTION:** "Did Jesus eat of the Passover on the day of his crucifixion? This could not be. Moses says it must be slain on the 14th day of the month, and John testified that Christ fulfilled this law, for he says (19:14)—

" 'And it was the preparation of the Passover and about the sixth hour.' —when Pilate gave him up to be crucified. This is important, especially in an argument with a Jew, to show him that "not one jot or tittle" failed to be accomplished in him. And besides, if not assured on this head, how know we that he was the Lamb of God?

"The last supper could not have been 'fragments of the passover.' In the first place, when supper was ended there should have been none. And secondly, the Passover was not slain until the following day.

"A casual reader of any of the narratives, except that of John, would suppose that it was the Passover of which Jesus and the apostles were eating, and more especially so would it appear from Luke.

"But still an attentive perusal, with a knowledge of the requirements of the law and the prophets in the case, will show that Christ, our Passover, the Lamb of God, was sacrificed on the 14th day of the first month at even, and consequently **could not have been alive to eat of the Jewish Passover that year.**"—C. C.

*(This crotchet was put to bro. Thomas over 100 years ago, and he answered it as follows in the Herald):—*

ANSWER: The Law did not require the Passover to be killed on the evening of the 14th day of Nisan, but "between the evenings" of that day.

The lamb was to be put up on the 10th day, and to be kept:

"Until the 14th day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it between the evenings—**bain haarbaim**" (Exo. 12:6).

The feast was also to be kept "between the evenings" (Num. 9:2-3)—

"Let the children of Israel keep the Passover at his appointed season. On the 14th day of this month between the evenings ye shall keep it in his appointed season."

These evenings would be what we term Thursday and Friday evenings, between which was the 14th day of the month.

**We have no doubt but Jesus did really eat the Passover with his disciples.** This appears from his sending Peter and John, saying (Luke 22:8)—

"Go, and prepare us the Passover, that we may eat."

Afterward, being seated at the table, he said—

"I have heartily desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say unto you, I will not any more (that is, after this eating) eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God."

According to Mark, the disciples said (Mark 14:12)—

"Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover?"

In reply he said to go to a certain place and say (v. 14)—

"The Master saith, Where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?"

Having made ready—

"In the evening he cometh with the twelve, and as they sat and did eat, etc."

But Jesus and the "whole assembly of the congregation of Israel" doubtless did not eat at the same hour. Mark says the Passover was killed on the first day of unleavened bread, and this day began at even. Jesus and his companions ate the Passover at the first evening; the Jews at the second, the intermediate day being their "preparation."

Jesus was apprehended after eating at the first evening. During that night he was arrested and taken before the high priest, and upon false testimony judged worthy of death.

On what we call Friday morning, they held a council, which sent him bound to Pilate. Having confessed to him that he was King of the Jews, he was, therefore, condemned to be executed for treason against Tiberius Caesar.

Sentence being passed, they crucified him at 9 a.m.—the "third hour." At 12 noon, the "sixth hour," darkness overspread the land, and continued for 3 hours, or "until the ninth hour," or 3 p.m., when the veil of the Temple was rent, and the body of Jesus broken.

And now when the second evening was come, "because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath," the body was taken down, for it was not lawful for it to remain there all night, as it is written—

"If a man be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in anywise bury him that day (for he that is hanged is the cursed of God); that thy land be not defiled."

"And the evening and the morning were the first day." Thus the Bible reckons. From Thursday evening to Friday evening was the first day; from Friday evening to Saturday evening was the second day; and from Saturday evening to Sunday evening was the third entire day.

The Jews reckoned this as three days. Jesus rose very early in the morning of Day 3, as typified in Jonah.

If the Law had confined the eating of the Passover to the second evening of the 14th, Jesus could not have eaten. But as it was to be eaten between two evenings, Jesus could both eat the Passover and be slain as such.—**Bro. Thomas in the Herald.**

*Further remarks by brother Roberts: —*

TRUE IT is that after eating the Passover with his disciples, Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives. But he did not in this become a transgressor of the Law, for although it is written in Exo. 12:22—

"None of you shall go out of his house till the morning."

—this was not part of the directions for the observance of the Passover after Israel should be settled in the land, but an institution peculiar to the circumstances of the night of their deliverance from Egypt.

You will see this if you consider the reason given for the commandment not to go out—

"For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians" (v. 23).

You do not find Israel commanded to stay in their houses on the night of the Passover after they should enter the land. On the contrary, they were commanded to **leave their houses** and sacrifice and eat the Passover only at the place which should be chosen out of all the tribes of Israel for that purpose:

"Thou mayest not sacrifice the Passover **within any of thy gates** which the Lord thy God giveth thee; but at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place His Name in, there shalt thou sacrifice the Passover at even, or the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.

"And thou shalt roast and eat it at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose, and thou shalt turn in the morning and go to thy tents."

Jesus fulfilled this command in repairing to Jerusalem to eat the Passover with his disciples— not inside the door of his house, but in the place which Jehovah had chosen to place His Name there, after the eating of which he was at liberty to do what he did.

Neither can we imagine that he transgressed the Law in the omission of the "bitter herbs" required to be eaten with the lamb. "Bitter herbs" are not mentioned, but then their use was so much a matter of course as to be understood as comprehended in the general statement that they ate the Passover, just as in our case the cup is understood when we speak only of the breaking of bread.

Jesus no doubt partook of the Passover the day before the nation at large, but it was, none the less, the Passover of the Law, which was to be observed "between the evenings," as shown by Dr. Thomas in the article above.

Jesus ate the Passover at the earliest time allowed by the Law, and the nation at the latest. The result was that Christ both partook of the typical Passover, and became himself the antitypical Passover in being crucified at the very time that Israel as a nation were observing the typical ordinance.

The suggestion that it is the breaking of the bread that is meant when it is stated that Jesus ate the Passover, is untenable. The breaking of bread is never called the "Christian Passover."

It is Christ who is "our Passover," as Paul declares (1 Cor. 5:7). The breaking of bread is a mere memorial of him. The only other Passover is the Mosaic type of which he is the antitype, and **of the type he undoubtedly partook**, as it was meet he should, being a Jew, "made under the Law."

—Bro. Roberts, 1878

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## Ask and Ye Shall Receive

*"And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine"—Matt. 7:28*

AS WE consider this last verse of Jesus' long address to the people from the mount, recorded in Matthew 5 to 7, we may be inclined to wonder why the people were so astonished at his doctrine, since they were all Israelites, brought up and educated under the divine teaching as contained in Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms. Moses had told them (Deut. 18:15)—

"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him shall ye hearken."

Now this greatest of Israel's prophets stood before them, speaking with authority the words of life by which they might be released from the bondage of their Law, and rejoice in the glorious liberty as sons of God.

Why were Jesus' words so strange and unreal to them? Was it because the teaching of Jesus was altogether new, and had no relation to what was taught in the Old Testament Scriptures which they read and studied at the Rabbis' feet?

It is said that Jesus magnified the Law and made it honourable, and that not one jot or tittle should pass from the Law till all was fulfilled. That the teaching of Jesus was based upon the Law and the Prophets is seen in Matt. 7:12—

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for **this is the Law and the Prophets.**"

When Jesus was asked, which is the great commandment in the Law, he replied:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

"This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

"On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (Matt. 22:37-40).

When Jesus opened up to the Jews what the Law was intended to instil within their hearts, it all seemed strange to them to the extent that they accused him of being a mad man, or "having a devil," as they put it.

Now we can easily point out the great mistakes the Jews made in that they had missed the full meaning of the Law, and consequently had never risen up in their spiritual life to the point where they could receive the teaching of Jesus as he showed them the application God's law should have in the lives of men.

But are we altogether without fault in this respect? Are we not prone to take the easy way out and gloss over the pointed statements Jesus makes in these chapters, and allow ourselves to rest in the assurance that we are getting their full meaning and applying their strict requirements to our everyday lives? When Jesus told the Jews—

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."  
—they no doubt thought they were doing that very thing, and we could easily deceive ourselves in the same way.

To seek **FIRST** the Kingdom of God and His righteousness is to put these things foremost and above all things else in our lives — to make them the first and greatest concern with which we occupy ourselves from day to day throughout our lives. Are we in better case in this respect than were the Jews who were astonished at his doctrine? Jesus said—

"Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

There is very much activity indicated on our part in these words: Ask, seek, knock. James says (1:5)—

"If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God."

But as we ask wisdom of God, we must set our hands diligently to the task of seeking for His righteousness in the spirit of the words of Solomon:

"Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the Lord understand all things"  
(Prov. 28:5).

\* \* \*

*"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."*

What is the meaning of these words? This is knocking at the doors of Wisdom's gates, that we may find entrance to her galleries, and so behold the wondrous things contained in God's holy precepts. Wisdom calls to us (Prov. 8:33-34)—

"Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord."

God has promised that if we ask, He will give; if we seek, we shall find, and if we knock, it shall be opened unto us. But He promises nothing to those who neither ask, seek nor knock; nor to those who ask but do not seek and knock.

If, as we read our Bible, we find that it does not always speak our language, or that there is nothing within us that responds with eager understanding to its written pages, we may be sure that we have failed to give due regard to the words of the Master when he tells us to ask, seek, and knock.

This wonderful outline of Jesus' teaching closes with the parable of the wise and foolish builders. The wise man built upon a rock, so that when the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, it did not fall; for it was founded on a rock.

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*Let us so build.*

—E.B.

## Except There Come a Falling Away

*"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called"—1 Timothy 6:20*

THE ENGLISH word apostasy is defined as meaning: "abandonment of what one has voluntarily professed: desertion of principles of faith." An apostate is one who deserts professed principles of belief. To apostatize is to teach or persuade one to desert accepted principles or belief.

The word is derived from the Greek "apostasia," and it is used but twice in the Scriptures, and it means falling away from, a defection or the forsaking of accepted principles or teaching. Paul uses the word in 2 Thess. 2:3, where he says—

"Let no one deceive you by any means, for that day (the coming of Christ) shall not come except there come a falling away (apostasy) first."

Here the apostle is referring to the great apostasy or falling away from the Faith which took place during the first centuries of the Christian era, the result of which was the creation of the Roman and Greek Catholic systems of false religion, from which also sprang the various creeds and denominations of Protestant Christendom.

The word "apostasia" is used in Acts 21:21, and is translated "forsaken," where the Jews are accusing Paul of having forsaken or apostatized from the Law of Moses.

However, though the word "apostasia" is used only twice in the Scriptures, the act of committing apostasy is referred to throughout the Scriptures, and, in the scriptural sense, refers to departure from the true faith and teaching of the Scriptures.

Apostasy differs from heresy in that the heretic is one who simply teaches doctrines or holds opinions contrary to accepted and established forms of doctrine. The apostate teacher of error is also heretic, but the heretic is not necessarily an apostate, as he may never have known the truth.

Apostasy differs from error and unbelief in that error and unbelief may be the result of ignorance, while apostasy can be committed only by those who have been favoured by having known the way of Truth, but have deliberately departed therefrom.

\* \* \*

MANY CAUSES of apostasy are given in the Scriptures. Desire for leadership is a common one, as we read in Acts 20:30, where Paul is warning the Ephesian elders of coming apostasy. He says—

"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

And thus it has been since the days of the Apostles. And ever since the days of Dr. Thomas there have been those who were not satisfied to be humble students of that great exponent of the Scriptures, but who in their pride and self-esteem desired a following of their own, have invented crotchets contrary to the Faith, and ever after spent most of their time and energies promulgating the same and trying to indoctrinate others with it.

\* \* \*

In 2 Tim. 4:3-4, we have described one of the most common causes of apostasy. It is Paul's warning of the falling away from the Faith which was already at work in his day. He exhorts Timothy to preach the Word constantly with zeal and energy—

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts (desires) shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

The pleasing fables of the Agnostics, the subtle philosophy of the learned professors who had found their way into the ecclesias and the "good words and fair speeches" of the worldly-minded compromisers took their toll, until apostasy reigned supreme and the faithful were reduced to an unrecognized minority, and the light of Truth was reduced to a mere flicker in the ecclesias.

\* \* \*

THERE ARE many causes and many kinds of apostasy, but all having the same basic meaning and result; The falling away or departure from the Faith in doctrine and/or, practice. In Jude 3, we have an exhortation to—

"Contend earnestly for the Faith."

Because that—

"Certain men crept in unawares . . . turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

In this epistle Jude shows apostasy fully developed. Total apostasy—**which, as it always does, had a small beginning**—little by little whittled away at the true Faith and the moral principles of the Word of God until total apostasy was the result. It is an ominous warning that apostasy, though it may be small and innocent-appearing in its beginnings, like a cancer, grows to fearful proportions, unless speedily checked, until the last vestige of spiritual life and vigor has been extinguished.

The outward appearance may be there. Like Sardis, they may have a name that they live, but they are dead. Or, like Laodicea, may imagine they have need of nothing, but spiritually, are poor, and blind and naked.

In 2 Tim. 3:1-5, the apostle Paul mentions many causes and many forms of apostasy, among which is self-esteem, covetousness or unbridled desire, unholiness, disobedience to the commandments of Christ, lovers of pleasure, godliness reduced to mere formalism, powerless, lifeless; despisers of those who are good — those who are seeking to avert or combat the apostasy.

It was this general state of apostasy which resulted in the formation of that ecclesiastical monstrosity, the church of Rome and her many harlot daughters; which began with the perversion of a few elements of the Faith and ended in total apostasy.

And let no one be so blind as to think that they can condone just a "little error." As the accumulated drops of water swell into a mighty river, so error grows until all who tinker with it are swept into the ocean of total departure from the Faith that pleases God.

\* \* \*

APOSTASY is the most dangerous form of opposition to divine teaching. The infidel, the sceptic and the rank heretic are easily recognized for what they are, while the apostate always comes garbed in the clothing of deception. He outwardly professes "unswerving loyalty" to the very teaching which he is perverting.

Coming in the robes of piety and professed love for the Truth and zeal for righteousness, he deceives the hearts of the simple. His "liberal" policies of fellowship appeal to the weak in faith and those who are impressed by large numbers.

**Weak fellowship is in itself one of the most dangerous forms of apostasy, for it is bidding Godspeed to the apostate teacher.**

When error is harboured in any group of believers, and is allowed to exist for any length of time, it would appear to be almost, if not quite, beyond reform. Therefore, there is but one sure way of avoiding contamination with such a condition, and that is to "come out" from it.

Teaching error, condoning it or fellowshiping it appears to be **so debilitating to the spiritual man that complete recovery from its effects appear very rare**. This, it would seem, is indicated by 2 Peter 2:21 —

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

To us living in the time of the end, the warnings against apostasy are especially ominous. For we live in an age of so-called liberalism, in which the Word of God, and even tried and true principles of living, are being discarded for "modern" flesh-pleasing forms of religion.

It would be tragic if some should be led away now, who have so faithfully held out up to the present. But it seems that this is so.

The sound standards and principles of our pioneers, which have been accepted by the Body from the beginning as essential to maintain a strong and healthy community of Truth, and which have been wisely and scripturally designed to bring believers into the Body on a broad, firm foundation, are now not only neglected, but directly opposed and condemned, and the trend is in the direction of the churches of the world, where one becomes a member by merely filling out a card.

*Faithfulness for a little while will not save us. Apostasy from the solid foundation of sound doctrine and fellowship may ruin a life previously devoted to the Truth. It is faithfulness unto death which will win the crown.* —O.B.

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## **There Is One Baptism**

*"The unity of the Spirit . . . one Body, one Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, ONE BAPTISM, one God and Father of all"*—Ephesians 4:3-6

### **I. THE IMPORTANCE OF EARNEST AND REVERENT OBEDIENCE**

(1 Sam. 15:22; Jer. 7:23; Luke 6:46; John 14:21; 1 John 2:4; Ecc. 12:13)

### **II. WHAT BAPTISM SYMBOLISES AND ACCOMPLISHES**

1. A cleansing, a washing away—remission—forgiveness of sins.  
(Acts 22:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:26)
2. A burial and rebirth—a death to the old Adam—a resurrection to newness of life.  
(Rom. 6:3-4-5; Col. 2:12; John 3:3, 5)
3. A Union with Christ, a partaking of his righteousness and the effects of his sacrifice; a naturalization into the citizenship of the commonwealth of Israel and an heirship of the promises made to the Fathers.  
(Gal. 3:26-29; 1 Cor. 12:12-13)
4. A release from the bondage and slavery of Sin; a transfer of masters from the service of Sin unto death to the service of Righteousness unto life.  
(Rom. 6:3-4, 7, 11, 17, 18; Rom. 7:6; Rom. 5:18 with 8:1-2)

### **III. TOTAL IMMERSION IN WATER NECESSARY**

1. To fulfil the symbol of burial and resurrection or rebirth.  
(See passages under II, 2)
2. As demonstrated by the description<sup>®</sup> and instances of baptism recorded in Scripture.  
(Acts 8:39-40; Matt. 3:6, 16; John 3:23)
3. The actual meaning of the Greek word (**baptizo**) used in the New Testament.
  - a. Usage of general Greek literature over 2000 year period.
  - b. Septuagint translation of 2 Kings 5:14 (Baptizo).
  - c. In writings of so-called 'Church Fathers.'
  - d. Words used for baptism by early writers in Latin.
  - e. Words used in early translations of Scriptures in Latin, Syrlac, Coptic, Ethiopic, etc.

### **IV. KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF OF THE GOSPEL AN ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITE**

1. General references to the necessity of belief.

(Heb. 11:6; Rom. 1:16-17; Hab. 2:4; 2 Thess. 2:12-13).

2. Baptism specifically and inseparably associated with belief.

(Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:21; Mark 16:16; Acts 18:8; Acts 16:30; Acts 8:36-37; Acts 8:12).

## V. BAPTISM OBLIGATORY—NOT OPTIONAL

1. Because of its significance and the emphasis that the Scriptures lay upon what it accomplishes, making salvation contingent upon its observance.

(Rom. 6:5; Gal. 3:27-29; 1 Pet. 3:21; Tit. 3:5; John 3:5, 7; Mark 16:16).

2. It is expressly commanded.

(Acts 10:48; Acts 22:16; Acts 2:37-38; Matt. 28:19)

3. Its necessity proven by invariable example of the New Testament.

(See the many passages already adduced)

4. The "One Baptism" an element of the 7-fold "Unity of the Spirit."

(Eph 4:3-6).

### 1. *The Importance of earnest and reverent obedience.*

IT IS a fundamental scriptural principle that God regards obedience to His commands and ordinances as more important than any other manifestation of love or respect for Him. He says through the prophet Samuel, in rebuke of Saul who sought to please the Lord other than how He had commanded—

"Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

(1 Sam. 15:22).

And through Jeremiah regarding Israel God said (7:23)—

"But this thing I commanded them, saying, **Obey My voice**, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and **walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you**, that it be well unto you."

And in the words of Jesus,

"Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?" (Luke 6:46).

"If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

John declares (1 John 2:4)—

"He that saith, I know Him and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him."

And finally Solomon—

"Fear God and **keep His commandments**: for this is the whole duty of man" Ecc. 12:13.

Obviously then our course is clear. We must humbly learn what God desires and requires, and we must earnestly try to obey. The first point, then, has been scripturally substantiated. It is difficult to conceive how anyone who professes to be a Christian would feel secure in ignoring any of God's commands, particularly one so clear and unmistakable and so fraught with significance as we shall see baptism to be.

Yet the whole "Christian" world, almost without exception, regards Scriptural baptism with amused contempt, and has substituted for it the unscriptural and meaningless man-made ritual of sprinkling unconscious babes. How can they hope to please God with such a flagrant disregard for the sanctity of His ordinances?

### 2. *What baptism symbolizes and accomplishes.*

#### 1. **A cleansing, a washing away— remission—forgiveness of sins.**

Ananias, when he was sent to Paul in Damascus, said to him:

"Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22).

Peter said to the multitude in Jerusalem (Acts 2:38)—

"Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins."

Paul, writing to the Corinthians and reminding them of their position in Christ, said (1 Cor 6:11)—

"Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the Name of the Lord Jesus."

And to the Ephesians he refers directly to the medium of this cleansing when he says—

"Sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water, by the Word" (Eph. 5:26).

\* \* \*

## **2. A burial and rebirth—a death to the old Adam—a resurrection to newness of life.**

PAUL illustrates this aspect most clearly in writing to the Romans, where he explains that their baptism was a death to the service of the flesh which can only reward with corruption, and a rebirth to an entirely new way of life with limitless prospects.

He says (Rom 6:3-4), as he urges them to put away sin and to live in consistency with the symbolism of the ordinance they had undergone—

"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

And he continues throughout the whole chapter in the same strain, emphasizing the vast change in the purpose and principles of life that must necessarily accompany a sincere baptism.

"We have been planted together in the likeness of his death,"  
—he says (v.5), in further reference to this aspect of the symbolism of baptism.

And to the Colossians—

"Ye are buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him" (2:12).

John records that Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, was greatly moved by the teachings of Jesus, to the extent that he came secretly to him at night, that he might learn more about him. And Jesus, in the conversation that ensued, explained to this enquiring Pharisee the necessity of rebirth before a man could be an acceptable subject for God's Kingdom:

"Ye MUST be born again . . . Ye must be **born of water** and of Spirit (John 3:3, 5).

\* \* \*

## **3. A union with Christ, a partaking of his righteousness and the effects of his sacrifice, a naturalization into the citizenship of the commonwealth of Israel and an heirship of the promises made to the Fathers.**

IT IS in writing to the Galatians that Paul brings this out most forcibly. He is there reasoning upon the vast superiority of the new Covenant in Christ over the old one through Moses, to which the Galatians seemed to be drifting back. He is explaining that the **Mosaic** law was but an interim arrangement until Christ should come to bring into force the original **Abrahamic** covenant and promises, which, says Paul, were on the basis of faith, and not fleshly descent or the works of the Law. "For," he says—

"Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, there is neither bond nor free . . . for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

"And IF ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promises" (Gal. 3:26-29).

And to the Corinthians, he speaks along the same line concerning our unity with Christ by baptism—

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

"For by one Spirit are we all **baptized into one Body**, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free" (1 Cor. 12:12-13).

\* \* \*

#### **4. A release from the bondage and slavery of Sin; a transfer of masters from the service of Sin unto death to the service of Righteousness unto life.**

THESE different phases of the symbolism and purpose of baptism are all, of course, interrelated. They are all parts of a whole, rather than independent features. So, continuing his argument that by baptism we are buried with Christ into death (Rom 6:3-4), to which reference has been made already, Paul says (v 7)—

"He that is dead is freed from sin."

"Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed to sin" (v. 11).

"Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine delivered to you" (v. 17).

—still obviously referring to baptism, for he continues (v. 18):

"Being then made free from sin (by a typical death), ye became the servants of righteousness."

And further (ch. 7, v. 6)—

"Now are we delivered from the law, having died (in baptism) to that wherein we were held."

In chap. 5 he has explained how condemnation came upon the human race by the transgression of Adam, from whom all spring, (v. 18)—

"By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation."

This he calls (in chap. 8) "the law of sin and death" saying (8:1-2)—

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

Here again the importance of baptism is evident for as we have seen it is by this act that we become "in Christ" and so gain this release.

#### *3. Complete immersion under water necessary.*

##### **1. To fulfil the symbol of burial and resurrection or rebirth.**

THIS is shown in the passages already referred to, and is the basis of all the meaning and fitness of baptism. To destroy this figure is to rob the ordinance of all appropriateness and significance.

\* \* \*

##### **2. As demonstrated by the descriptions and instances of baptism recorded in Scripture.**

IN the eighth chapter of Acts, we are told how the treasurer of the queen of Ethiopia was reading the Scriptures in his chariot as he was returning from worshipping at Jerusalem. Philip was directed by God to approach him, and explain the Scriptures to him.

Having taught him the things concerning Jesus Christ out of all the prophecies, the Ethiopian requested to be baptized. Then in verse 38 of this 8th chapter of Acts we are told—

"They went down —**THEY WENT DOWN**—both **into the water**."  
And in the 39th verse—

"And when they were **come up out** of the water . . ."

In the account of John the Baptist's preaching and baptizing, we read (Matt 3:6)—

"They were baptized **IN** Jordan."

In the same chapter, describing Jesus' baptism by John (v.16)—

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, **WENT UP** straightway **OUT OF THE WATER**."

And we find recorded elsewhere concerning John the Baptist that (John 3:23)—

"He was baptising in Aenon, near Salem, because there was **much water there**."

All these incidents show that a Scriptural baptism required 'much water' and was a complete immersion, or burial, in water.

\* \* \*

### **3. The actual meaning of the Greek word used in the New Testament.**

There is no question that the original word in the Greek means to immerse or submerge, and **nothing else**. No Greek scholar would or could deny it.

(a) The word is so used by all classes of writers in Greek over a period of 2000 years stretching centuries both before and after Christ. On no occasion do Greek writers use the word to mean "sprinkling" for which they had an entirely different word.

(b) The translators of the Septuagint version used the Greek word 'baptizo' to translate the Hebrew word rendered "dip" in the Authorized Version at II Kings 5:14, "And Naaman went down and dipped himself 7 times in Jordan."

(c) Quotations have been compiled and could be given from Basil the Great, Chrysostom, Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen, Hippolytus, Theophylact, Hilary, Jerome, Justin Martyr, and others, to illustrate that they understood baptism as a complete immersion. Although these so-called Fathers of the Church are no real authority, their writings do prove that in **their** day (the first few centuries of the Christian era) the orthodox church still possessed the true scriptural understanding on this question at least.

(d) The early writers who wrote in Latin, as Tertullian, translate the Greek 'baptizo' into Latin words meaning immerse or submerge.

The earliest Latin versions and early versions in Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic, Gothic, etc., translate the Greek 'baptizo' into the word in their own language meaning immerse or submerge.

In short, no one in possession of the facts does, or would, venture to question the original meaning of the term, and if, in our Bibles, it had been properly **translated** instead of just carried over from the Greek, much error and confusion could have been avoided, and false doctrine on the matter would have been exposed.

#### 4. *Knowledge and belief of the Gospel an essential prerequisite.*

THIS easily proved and unassailable fact strikes the death blow to the false doctrine of infant-baptism. Baptism to be scriptural and effective, **MUST BE PRECEDED BY BELIEF**. Belief cannot be dispensed with.

\* \* \*

##### 1. **General references to the necessity of belief.**

Paul says (Heb. 11:6), "Without faith (belief) it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God," and further, "He that cometh to God **must believe**."

And to the Romans (1:16)—

"The Gospel is the power of God to salvation to everyone that BELIEVETH."

And in support of the necessity of belief he goes on to quote from Habakkuk (2:4)—

"The just shall live by faith (or belief)."

Writing to the Thessalonians, he refers to "**salvation through . . . belief** of the Truth"  
(2 Thess. 2:13).

\* \* \*

##### 2. **Baptism specifically and inseparably associated with belief.**

But we are not left with these general expressions. We find the necessity of belief inseparably linked with the ordinance of baptism in several places, and we are not given the slightest justification or loophole for separating them, or considering one as effective without the other. Again quoting Paul, this time to the Colossians (2:12)—

"Ye are buried with him (Christ) in baptism, wherein ye are also risen with him **through FAITH** (belief) of the operation of God."

Peter says (1 Pet. 3:21)—

"Baptism is the answer of a **good conscience** toward God."  
—necessarily implying knowledge and belief.

Christ, when he parted from his disciples, commissioned them to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, and he added (Mark 16:16)—

"He that **believeth** and is baptized shall be saved; but he that **believeth not** shall be damned."

In Acts 18 we are told of Paul's preaching at Corinth in Greece, and the circumstances that occurred in connection with it. Then (v. 8)—

"And many of the Corinthians, hearing, **believed**, and were baptized."

They heard; they believed; they were baptized—and that is the order we find invariably followed in Scripture. **There is never a hint of baptism without previous belief.**

Some time earlier, north of Corinth, in Philippi, Paul was thrown into prison for his preaching. An angel released him and, being impressed by the miracle, the jailor asked Paul (Acts 16:30)—

"What must I do to be saved?"

Paul answered—

"BELIEVE . . . and thou shalt be saved."

And the record continues—

"He was baptized, he and all his . . . **believing in God**, with all his house."

In Acts 8 we have the record of Philip preaching in Samaria. In v. 12 we read—

"But **when they believed** Philip, preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized."

Here we are told what it was necessary to believe in apostolic times—the "**things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ.**" These things, sad to say, are, like the divine ordinance of baptism, neglected and rejected by the churches of today.

Baptism, as we have seen, must be the "answer of a good conscience" (1 Pet. 3:21), and it operates "through faith" (Col. 2:12). Infant baptism is unknown to Scripture and is utterly incompatible with all that the Scriptures teach concerning baptism.

*5. Baptism not optional but indispensable.*

PERHAPS it may be felt that this has been well established by what has already been said, but under this heading we would like to summarize the passages and considerations which demonstrate this point.

\* \* \*

**1. Because of its significance and the emphasis that the Scriptures lay upon what it accomplishes, making salvation contingent upon its observance.**

Paul, writing to the Romans, and speaking specifically of being "buried with him in baptism" says (6:5)—

"**IF** we have been planted together . . . we shall be in the likeness of his resurrection."

The **one** depends on the **other**.

To the Galatians he makes the same qualification (Gal. 3:27-29). IF they are baptized, they have put on Christ, and IF they are Christ's they are heirs of the promises.

And Peter said (1 Pet. 3:21)—

"Baptism doth now SAVE us."

Can its necessity be questioned?

Paul speaks in a similar vein to Titus (3:5)—

"He saved us through the **washing of regeneration** (rebirth, see John 3:5) and the renewing of the Holy Spirit."

And those words of Christ to Nicodemus emphasize the essentiality of baptism to salvation (John 3:5-7)—

"Except a man be BORN OF WATER, and of the Spirit, he **cannot enter** the Kingdom of God . . . Ye **MUST** be born again."

His final instructions, when examined on this point, are further proof (Mark 16:16)—

"He that believeth AND IS BAPTIZED shall be saved."

\* \* \*

**2. It is expressly commanded.**

Consider the instances of direct command upon the subject. When Peter had expounded the Scriptures to Cornelius and those of his household, we are told (Acts 10:48)—

"And he **COMMANDED THEM** to be baptized in the Name of the Lord."

Likewise Ananias' command to Paul (Acts 22:16)—

"Arise, and **be baptized.**"

When Peter preached to the Jews after the resurrection of Jesus, those who were convinced asked (Acts 2:37)—

"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

And Peter gave them the same instruction (v. 38)—

"Repent, and **be baptized.**"

Jesus said (Matt. 28:19)—

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, **baptizing them.**"

Then he adds—and it is to this that we particularly desire to draw attention in this connection—

"Teaching them to observe **ALL THINGS** whatsoever I have commanded you."

Is baptism one of the "all things" that Jesus commanded? We do not believe there can be any doubt, for he had just commanded it in the previous verse.

\* \* \*

### **3. Its necessity is proven by the invariable example of the New Testament.**

We find it accepted without question, and obeyed without exception. It is an integral part of the preaching and activities of the apostles and believers all through the inspired record. This will surely have been evident from what has already been adduced.

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### **4. The "One Baptism" is an integral element of the sevenfold "Unity of the Spirit."**

EPHESIANS 4 is an exhortation by the apostle Paul to live according to godliness. It is not an exhortation just to "be good" according to the world's vague and hazy conceptions of goodness, with no better guide than its own uncertain conscience and natural fleshly reasoning.

No, Paul's word's rest upon a firm foundation of specifically revealed **DIVINE TRUTH** and specifically enjoined **DIVINE COMMANDMENTS**.

Natural man does not like this. He wants to be free to speculate and formulate his own conceptions of goodness, but if he recognizes the Scriptures as the Word of God, then wisdom demands that he accept **THEIR** presentation of eternal facts, and not his own ideas. Paul says (Eph. 4:14)—

"That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine . . . but speaking the **TRUTH** in love."

The contrast is between Truth and natural speculation. And in v. 21—

"If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the **Truth is in Jesus.**"

In vs. 3 to 6 he gives an outline of what comprises the "Truth as it is in Jesus"—

"The unity of the Spirit . . . one Body, one Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, ONE BAPTISM, one God and Father of all."

Here again is illustrated the solemn importance of baptism—the ONE Baptism. What does he mean by ONE baptism? We can answer this by asking what he means by one Lord and one God. He says elsewhere—

"There be gods many and lords many, but to us there is but one God and one Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 8:5-6).

One TRUE God, one TRUE Lord, one TRUE baptism.

What then would reasonably be expected to comprise the ONE TRUE baptism, and to distinguish it from all other so-called "baptisms"? Would it not be that it was performed in the manner and under the circumstances required by God, as distinguished from the ideas and inventions of men? Could any "baptism" be the ONE Baptism that differed from that described and recorded and commanded in Scripture?

Has man the right of changing the form of baptism, marring its significance and applying it to unsuitable subjects? It seems inconceivable that any should think so, but let us consider some remarks by a renowned and respected leader of Christendom, who reflects the general view of the churches of the world.

The late "Dean" Stanley, a high dignitary of the Church of England (the Episcopal Church), wrote an article in the Nineteenth Century Magazine for October, 1879.

His words are important for they expressed clearly the viewpoint of Christendom at large, and throw a tremendous light on its trend and relation to Scripture. They illustrate the sadly perverted viewpoint that can make abandonment of the commands of God a virtue, and "glory in their shame." He says,

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

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

"There is no one who would now wish to go back to the old practice."

*Note well the following—*

**"It had, no doubt, the sanction of the Apostles and their Master.** It had the sanction of the venerable churches of the early ages.

"(But) speaking generally, the whole Christian World has decided against it. It is a striking example of the triumph of common sense over the bondage of form and custom."

*We would say it was a striking example of what Christ called "making the commandments of God of none effect by your traditions" (Matt. 15:6). Dean Stanley continues:*

"The change from immersion to sprinkling has SET ASIDE THE LARGER PART OF THE APOSTOLIC LANGUAGE REGARDING BAPTISM, AND HAS ALTERED THE VERY MEANING OF THE WORD."

\* \* \*

Little comment is needed. The issue is clear. Which side are we on? Surely this is one of the most remarkable and enlightening pieces of writing to be found concerning Christendom's outlook toward God's Word. This eminent church dignitary solemnly approves a practice which he himself admits—yea, even **boasts**—has "set aside the larger part of scriptural language regarding baptism."

What reverence had this man, and the whole system he represents, for the solemn, divine ordinance called by Paul the "ONE BAPTISM" which, says Dean Stanley, "common sense" has triumphed over?

The aged Paul said, in his last recorded epistle (2 Tim. 4:3-4)—

"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but will heap unto themselves teachers . . .

"They shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and be turned unto fables."

What is the solution? Where lies safety and assurance? Paul gives the answer in the same epistle (2 Tim. 3:14-17)—

"But continue **thou** in the things which thou hast learned and been assured of.

"From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation . . .

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God . . . that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

And to the same beloved "son in the Faith" he solemnly appeals (1 Tim. 6:20)—

"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust!—avoiding profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science falsely so called."

Between this reverent and exalted view of the sanctity of God's Word and the viewpoint of Christendom at large there is an unbridgeable gulf. Christendom's avowed allegiance to the Bible is only nominal at best. Sometimes not even that, as illustrated by the remarks of Dean Stanley.

*If we consider the question of our salvation to be of sufficient importance to warrant the effort, we should ponder well which should be our guide—an apostate, self-contradicting "Christendom," or the inspired, infallible, unchanging WORD OF GOD.* —G. V. G.

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## **The Letter Killeth**

*"Circumcision is that of the heart . . . in the spirit, and not in the letter. The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" — Rom. 2:29 and 2 Cor. 3:6*

IF THE above quotations may be used as an argument against ecclesial and individual separation from wrong doctrine or practice, then the Christadelphian body should never have come into existence. It would mean that there is no cause sufficient to warrant separation.

If this contention be correct, then bro. Roberts was wrong in his stand against "Partial Inspiration" of the Scriptures and other issues; then the action of bro. John Thomas was wrong when he separated from the Campbellites. It would mean that the saints and Holy City class of individuals should never have separated from the Apostasy enthroned in Rome. But the contention is in opposition to the Spirit's words in Rev. 18:4—

"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

God is not a respecter of persons. If this teaching applies in the present distress it certainly has done so through all ages; but we do not believe it will be carried through to this limit by its proponents. There is abundant Scriptural example and testimony to the righteous instructing them to keep separate from evil in any form, whether in doctrine or conduct.

Certainly it is the duty of all to exhort and strengthen the Body, and to help to bear one another's burdens. We are admonished to help the brethren that are weak. We are instructed to hold up the hands that hang down. We are enjoined to comfort the feeble. We are expressly told to exhort with all longsuffering.

But we are never told to accept or countenance or support wrong doctrine. We are told to sound a clear note, to rally others to the call. Nehemiah said,

"In what place ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us."

And as the Apostle Paul said—

"If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

Circumcision was a Divine ordinance committed to Abraham and his descendants, that they should be separated from the world, or called out, unto the service of God. They were to circumcise every male of their families (Gen. 17: 10-11)—

"It shall be a token of the covenant between Me and you."

The circumcision of their flesh was to be a reminder that they were children of the everlasting covenant God had made with Abraham.

But the act of circumcision could never give a title to life. This was the letter of the Law. It was the performing of an outward rite which could never guarantee eternal life. There had to be something deeper and more spiritual.

The act of circumcision, or the "letter," was only a type or symbol of something far greater that was required. Of itself it spake of the cutting off of the flesh. The spiritual aspect is very obvious and that unto which the natural act was to direct the mind.

It is very personal. It is primarily an exhortation to all individuals to examine themselves whether they be in the faith of Abraham. Paul tells us—

"They are not all Israel who are of Israel" (Rom. 9:6).

That is to say, natural descent from Abraham, belonging to the circumcision, does not really make one an Israelite. Abraham's faith was reckoned to him for righteousness before he was circumcised. (Rom. 4:11):

"He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had yet being uncircumcised."

If a man depends on an external act to save him he will die in his sins. This is what Paul is trying to impress in the letter to the Romans, chapters 1 and 2, and also in 2 Cor. 3:5-6.

He is not condemning any arrangement which God had in the past, but is pointing out that because of the flesh's weakness the Law only brought death.

The Law was "glorious" in this respect that it showed of the coming of "the just One" in its every rite and ordinance. Christ said—

"Think not that I am come to destroy the Law and the Prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfil."

He follows with a warning that **it is very dangerous to teach or in any way encourage men not to keep the commandment of God.**

But he stresses that the keeping of the commandments had to go a lot farther than the Pharisees went. The law of Christ was not contrary to the Law of Moses. Paul tells us that the Law was—

"The ministration of death."

But he saith that—

"The ministration of the spirit giveth life."

Christ goes on to stress his point in Matt. 5:21-22—

"It was said, Thou shalt not kill; but I say unto you, Whosoever is angry with his brother without cause shall be in danger of the judgment."

And in Matt. 5:27-28—

"It was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery, but I say unto you, Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her in his heart."

The Law commanded the keeping of the Sabbath holy to the Lord. We are to account ALL days as unto the Lord.

The Law commanded the offering of the tenth of one's goods to the Lord. We are commanded to give ALL we have; we have been bought with a price, we are not our own; we must present our **whole life** "a living sacrifice."

Israel was commanded to keep the literal law of circumcision. **But they were to learn a fuller meaning: by performing: this act, as we have shown.**

Their sacrifices all were framed in this manner. But they could not ignore the literal performance. Rather, in the performance, they had to glean the spiritual aspect from it.

So also we cannot put aside the act of baptism, but we must see the spiritual lesson it conveys. We cannot set aside any literal commands of Christ nor seek to minimize their force because of any spiritual interpretation we give them—

"If ye will enter into life, **keep the commandments.**"

This was Christ's advice. His words, as well as his whole life of service to God, teach us how to keep them.

This then, is Paul's argument, "that the letter killeth." It is the same point that he makes in Heb. 10:4—

"It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."

He had previously shown (Heb. 9:13) that the sprinkling of the blood of the offering and the use of the ashes of the heifer sanctified only to the cleansing of the flesh, while the offering of the blood of Christ was designed to—

"Purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

This is the crux of Peter's reasoning in 1 Pet. 3:21—

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

The literal act of baptism does not mean a thing as far as our eternal salvation is concerned, if it is not associated with a great change in the heart of the candidate. The actual submergence in water, like circumcision of the flesh is "the letter."

But the outward act of baptism is nonetheless essential, as the commandment of God. Therefore, whether we look at circumcision or baptism, there must be a personal cutting off of former works, of the world, of the deeds which are associated with the desires of the flesh. There must be a continual crucifixion, a continual mortification of those things which are of the world.

Moses declared this principle in speaking to Israel just before they went into the promised land (Deut. 10)—

"Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be ye no more stiff-necked.

"For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward."

The Jewish race was related to the letter of circumcision by descent from Abraham. Yet most were not acceptable in God's sight. Thus it was necessary for Moses to tell them that a further cutting off was necessary. They had to purge their conscience from dead works. They had to circumcise their hearts to God.

The Jews of Christ's time glorified in their descent from Abraham—

"We have Abraham to our father."

But Christ replied—

"If ye were the children of Abraham ye would do the works of Abraham."

Jeremiah also warned an apostate generation—

"Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskin of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings."

Israel has wandered for centuries because they did not heed the words of Moses, the prophets, and Christ. But God has not forgotten them. Moses said that God would regather them after all the blessings and cursings of Deut. 28 had come upon them. Then (Deut. 30:6)—

"The Lord thy God will **circumcise thine heart** and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

It will be clear then, what Paul has in mind in Rom. 2—

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly: and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Let us not presume upon the fact that we have been baptized before many witnesses, but let us strive to receive the Divine commendation reserved for those who circumcise their hearts from dead works to serve the living God.

We urge all to read again the very instructive words of Paul to the Romans and to the Corinthians, and also Dr. Thomas' exposition upon this subject in *Elpis Israel*, under the heading of "The Token of the Covenant."  
—F.H.

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## 1963 London Fraternal Gathering

God willing, the brethren and sisters in London, Ontario will hold a Fraternal Gathering on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 5-6.

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

Write: Bro. D. E. Gwalchmai, 29 Devonshire, London, Ont., Can.

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### Mercy Only to the Obedient

*"The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to such as keep His covenant and to those that remember His commandments to do them"—Psalm 103:17-18*

THE DEITY, Who is the Creator and Sustainer of all things, has revealed Himself in His Word of Truth. He has made it known that He is a gracious and merciful God, as He manifested Himself to Israel, and as it is written—

"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy (Ps. 103:8).

The main definition of mercy is, that—

"It implies compassion so great as to enable one to forbear, even when justice demands punishment."

Mercy is pity for the undeserving and the guilty. Mercy is compassion or loving kindness that manifests itself in forgiveness. Mercy has also been rendered as "loving kindness" or "steadfast love," so we can see how love and mercy may be blended together.

In order to understand and praise God for His merciful loving-kindness He has shown toward us, we must first realize that we are guilty of sin, undeserving of pardon, and worthy of death.

**If we are failing to grow in the realization of this basic truth, then we are failing to realize God's true relationship to us and ours to Him.**

And so it is written—

"God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"

— Rom. 5:8.

This is the starting point—though sinners, God's love is manifested toward us in His beloved Son dying on our behalf. Again, we find this beautiful truth in Eph. 2:4-5 —

"But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)."

Such verses of Scripture teach, not only that God is merciful, but the quality, extent, depth and endurance of that mercy. A person may show mercy, but this does not mean that that person may be described as being merciful. That is, because a person finds an occasion in which he chooses for some reason to show mercy, this does not mean that mercy is a quality of his character.

Of God we have already read in the above quotations that He is rich in mercy and plenteous in mercy. Also we read in Psalm 108:4.—

"Thy mercy is great above the Heavens; and Thy truth reacheth unto the clouds."

And in 1 Chron. 16:34—

"O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever."

Mercy then, is a permanent quality of God's character—not a passing fancy or whim. God does not change. Therefore, if yesterday God's mercy was rich, plenteous, and great above the heavens, it is so today and will be so tomorrow. Truly His mercy "endureth forever." Mercy is part of Him and as everlasting as He is.

But of course this does not mean that once having come to a knowledge of the Truth we can presume upon the mercy of God. This does not mean that no matter how many sins we may deliberately commit God will forgive us! Or that He must forgive us if His love and mercy are infinite!

If God's love and mercy were infinite and everlasting in this sense, then all flesh (all people who were ever born) must in the end be forgiven and granted eternal life. But such is not so. An abundance of Scripture plainly teaches that the wicked will be destroyed, as in Prov. 11:7 —

"When the wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth."

But before we came to a knowledge of the Truth, God extended His grace and mercy to us. On our part, we were dead in our sins towards God. On His part He was rich in mercy and great in love to us.

We did not deserve to receive a revelation of His word and plan of salvation. In fact, when our first parents sinned God could have justly and rightly made an end of mankind. But His character is that of grace and mercy, so the earth would be filled with His glory and reflect His Divine attributes though man be worthy of death.

Man's failure has provided the scope for God to exercise His grace and mercy. But His grace and mercy will not be extended to all. All men do not come to a knowledge of the Truth. We are happily included among the few who have been given (a gift) such knowledge, even the great and precious promises of God. Herein is God's grace and mercy exercised and manifested, while we were yet sinners.

So once we have received a revelation of God's Word we must take to heart such Scripture as Isa. 66:2, where the Lord says—

"To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word."

"Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, and upon them that hope in his mercy."

And again the clear channel of the operation of God's mercy is defined in Psa. 103—

"The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children;

"TO SUCH AS KEEP HIS COVENANT, AND TO THOSE THAT REMEMBER HIS COMMANDMENTS TO DO THEM" (Psa. 103:17-18).

While dead in trespasses and sins and not having a knowledge of God's Word, we were not responsible to the judgment seat in the sight of God, and if left in such a helpless and hopeless condition, we would die in our sins and be no more. But now we are responsible beings in the sight of God, and should show reverential obedience in hoping in His mercy.

Now we should see with heart and mind that God's continued mercy upon us is **on condition that we strive constantly to please Him in what He has graciously revealed unto us in His Word.**

How else can we "hope in His mercy?" Thus we are told again in Psalms 103:11—

"As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward THEM THAT FEAR HIM."

The rich, great, plenteous mercy of God will be bestowed upon us only if we reverence Him and call upon Him in spirit and in truth.

God is calling sinners to become saints, to be called by His Name, that they might receive the Kingdom. One characteristic of His Name and of Saints is mercy. In striving to be perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect, we often find ourselves sinning. We will be sorrowful and repentant of our sins.

It is not for us to exhort one another not to be sorrowful at such times on the plea that to sin is human and inevitable so we must learn to "take it in our stride"! It is **good** for us to be sorrowful and repentant and to pray with David—

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."

And they will be blotted out, for God's mercy endureth for ever towards them that **love Him and keep His commandments.**

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AS GOD, our Father, continues to extend His mercy to us, we must begin to reflect His character which we behold in His Son, including His Divine attribute of being merciful. Jesus said—

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

If we have received the Truth we must begin being merciful to show that this reception has been with both mind and heart; not showing mercy only when it is convenient or practical or easy or to be seen of men. Mercy must become part of us if we are to be described as "the merciful."

There are times when it is rather easy to show mercy. It is then that the extended mercy may not be given for the sake of mercy, but for some other reason, probably bad, perhaps spiritual pride.

But to show mercy so as to be counted among "the merciful" is to love mercy for its own sake and to be joyously happy in realizing that mercy rejoices against judgment.

We are commanded to forgive one another until seventy times seven—the idea of continued and repeated forgiveness is taught as a lesson for us to learn. This forgiveness is not from the lips only. It is not just a form of words. We must remember what Jesus said in the parable of The Unforgiving Servant (Matt. 18:35)—

"So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

Forgiveness must be from the heart. The heart, we know, is the seat of the emotions and affections. To forgive from the heart then, is to forgive with all our feeling, all our affection. To forgive from the lips, while burning inside, is not forgiveness from the heart. When we forgive from the heart, we forgive "from inside us," so that no ill feeling is left burning within.

This is true forgiveness, for when God forgives by blotting out our transgressions, the blotting out means to destroy, put out, or wipe away—so that no vestige of them remains.

If this forgiveness be exercised toward our brother, then, that which requires forgiveness is as though it had never happened, for it leaves no trace and is remembered no more.

Even so must it be with us, brethren and sisters, and not only toward one another, but towards all men. For if God has extended His mercy and forgiveness towards us, we must emulate Him and manifest His thoughts and ways in our daily lives. As it is written,

*"Be ye therefore merciful, even as your Father also is merciful."*

—N.M.

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## "I Know Their Sorrows"

*"I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, for I know their sorrows, and I am come down to deliver them"—Exo. 3:7-8.*

AS WE assemble together on the first day of the week to eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of Jesus, we can look upon the occasion as a season of rest for the people of God in their journey through the wilderness. It is at such times as this that we are encouraged, refreshed and strengthened so that we can continue the journey with the same fervent zeal that characterized its beginning.

For, as has often been pointed out, the start of the journey upon which we are engaged, brought with it a glorious prospect to ourselves, and the rejoicing of the angels which are in heaven — but where will the end of the journey find us? Will we actually reach the goal that was set before us at the first, and find a haven in that eternal rest that remaineth for the people of God that Paul speaks of in Heb. 4:9?

In Exo. 5 we read of the start of the many appearances of Moses and Aaron before the Egyptian court to ask Israel's release. But Pharaoh's response at this time was disdainful—

"Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (Exo. 5:2).

It was after this that the trials, afflictions and hard bondage of Israel became more and more severe as the heavy hand of power from, Pharaoh was brought to bear against them—

"Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves."

The situation at this point seemed to have reached an intolerable stalemate: the efforts of Moses and Aaron to release Israel from bondage had only caused Pharaoh to be lifted up with pride, and his heart hardened, while Israel were in evil case as their servitude became more unbearable.

But God was in control of the whole operation, and He would work everything out by the means that best suited the ends He had in view. The pride of Pharaoh would be broken to the point where he would be only too glad to let Israel go. God's Name would be exalted in all the earth, and Israel would be humbled and prepared by their affliction to know and accept the great God of Israel as their own.

As with Israel of old, so with us, the bonds of affliction that abide us throughout our days of pilgrimage are so ordered and arranged in our lives as to weave that beautiful fabric for that garment of praise that will at last be exchanged for the present spirit of heaviness. It is for the purpose of **bringing us into unity with that "meek and quiet spirit,"** which in the sight of the Lord is of great price.

The darkness that exists in the world today is a darkness like unto that in Egypt—"which could be felt." The prophet Isaiah says of our time —

"Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people" (60:2).

Israel's experiences in the past are for our example, that we should not lust after evil things: for we read that soon after their departure, they longed to return to the flesh pots of Egypt. They cried out in the spirit of Cain —

"My punishment is greater than I can bear!"  
—whereas they should have known from the signs and wonders which they had witnessed that—

"The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save: neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear" (Isa. 59:1).

When we, like Israel become so disposed at times when the going seems to be too hard for us, and we are inclined to look back to the more self-pleasing life which we once lived in the world, we should be inspired by such words as those of James (5:7-8)—

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

"Be ye also patient: stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

The coming of the Lord will end the great affliction of His people; yet even now we have the consolation that—

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them"  
(Psa. 34:7).

Also Psa. 34:15 —

"The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry."

God has promised to be with us as we obediently and patiently wait for the coming day, and we also have the consolation (I Cor. 10:13) —

"God will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able: but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

As we are asked to fulfil our tale of bricks to the Pharaohs of the present world, or render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; let us not unduly despair in our afflictions, as we are being persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed.

As Israel's hard bondage in Egypt is re-enacted in our lives, and the iron furnace of affliction bears heavily upon us, let us remember the day when Israel stood on the banks of the Red Sea and sang the song of Moses, giving praise to God for their deliverance from Egypt, and for the overthrow of Pharaoh and his great army in the sea.

There will come a day when the faithful saints will also sing a song of deliverance from all the present evil that bears upon them (Rev. 5:9-10) —

*"Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH!"*  
—W.J.P.

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## 1963 Annual Texas Gathering

God willing, the annual Texas Gathering will be held from Monday, July 29, to Sunday, Aug. 4, at Hye, 65 miles west of Austin.

There is adequate motel accommodation in the vicinity and also room for camping on the grounds. There is a shower room, and electric power is available throughout the grounds. Meals are served at the dining room.

Further information may be obtained from bro. Charles Banta, 815 Boston, Deer Park, Texas, who would appreciate being informed of any plans to attend.

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## Signs of the Times

EVERY springtime when the trees leaf out, we are reminded of the Saviour's prophecy in Luke 21:25-31 where he compares the multiplicity of signs indicating the nearness of his coming to the "shooting forth" of the trees in the spring as evidence that "summer is now nigh at hand."

For, we see the signs of his coming having multiplied to such an extent that **the whole world situation, in every phase of human activity, has become a stupendous "sign" that Christ's return to earth is near at hand.**

Space forbids us considering more than a fraction of the things we could mention which relate to the signs of the times, but there are 4 outstanding trouble spots which command our attention at this time:

### EUROPE STILL TENSION AREA

Although tension over Berlin has somewhat abated during recent months, the Berlin issue remains the key to East-West relations; for, until this problem is settled, it remains a bone of contention which at any time could lead to war.

The danger over Berlin has not passed—only deferred. Premier Khrushchev said recently that "settlement of the problem of divided Germany, especially Berlin, must take precedence over disarmament and other burning world issues."

The Soviet Union has told the U.S. that a nuclear force under NATO, as planned, will "unleash a race in rocket-nuclear armaments." The note was punctuated with threats of "counter-measures and retaliation."

A new book on "Military Strategy" issued by the "Soviet Ministry of Defence" reveals that some of the strategy of the next war will be:

- Peaceful coexistence until Russia is far superior to all her enemies.
- If war is necessary, a "nuclear blitzkrieg" by ICBM's and submarine-launched missiles would be directed against the U.S. and NATO nations' military bases, cities and manufacturing centres.
- These initial nuclear attacks to be supplemented with tactical air and paratroop forces and tanks which are to move in swiftly to occupy devastated territories.
- At the same time it is planned for the Soviet navy to destroy the U.S. navy.

If the U.S. and allies are able to meet these attacks with comparable forces, the result is fearful to contemplate.

### "THE REVOLT OF EUROPE"

THE above is a term now coming into use in diplomatic circles, referring to the fact that, not only France, but all of "free" Europe is backing away from the idea of U.S. domination of European affairs. They want Europe to stand on its own feet, and feel that they are now able to do so. As American influence in Europe sinks lower and lower, and De Gaulle openly defies the U.S. and Britain, many blame Administration "blunders" for the decline, but obviously the real truth is expressed in the words of a prominent Belgian:

"For 20 years Europe was flat on its back. Now we are back on our feet, and we expect to be heard."

They generally favor U.S. supplying them with nuclear weapons, but want the decision of when and how such weapons are to be used.

De Gaulle's plan to make France a nuclear power is in line with European thinking, that if nuclear weapons were left solely under U.S. control, Western Europe would be left without defence against a sudden Soviet attack.

**As the matter stands now, Central Europe is drawing closer together, commercially, industrially and politically, and leaning away from British and American participation in their affairs.**

As trade and national barriers are removed, a United States of Europe comes nearer reality, and, estranged from Britain and America, will be a rich, ripe plum for Russian plucking. Also, politically, Europe is showing a trend toward the left — socialism — and away from conservatism.

### **SOUTHEAST ASIAN TROUBLES MULTIPLY**

WHILE fighting in South Vietnam still goes on, renewed fighting in Laos reveals the futility of trying to establish peace in this troubled area by treaty with the Communists. By agreeing to "neutralize" Laos, the Reds kept all they had gained and strengthened their guerrilla forces as military assistance to the Laos government was halted and U.S. troops were removed from bordering Thailand.

At present the Communists have more than half of Laos in their possession, have opened up a corridor connecting them with their guerrilla forces in South Vietnam and can move freely into Thailand at many points. Laos, called the key to Southeast Asia, is virtually helpless against this new attack. The only alternative seems to be for the U. S. sending a strong military force into Laos and starting a Korean-style war. Already efforts are being made to establish a cease-fire agreement, but however it goes, the Communists will be left in a position to resume hostilities whenever they choose under more favourable circumstance than ever before.

Thailand, bordering Laos on the north and east, considered pro-Western, is a hotbed of Communist subversion, and Western observers believe that, without drastic counter-action, Thailand may easily become another South Vietnam, the next Red target in that area. With Burma on the west, now leaning heavily toward "socialism," and becoming deeply involved with Red China, Thailand's position is indeed precarious.

The varied and flexible strategy of Communist operations in Southeast Asia keeps their enemies confused and defence against them extremely difficult. It begins with infiltration and subversion; then terrorizing the natives so that they fear to offer resistance; then open warfare when the time is ripe.

### **LATIN AMERICA SEETHES WITH REVOLT**

AS Castro's island fortress grows stronger, with indirect aid from the U. S., and Communists gain in many Latin-American nations, military coups appear to be in vogue as a substitute for weak administrations' failure to stop Castroism.

A military takeover in Guatemala, an unsuccessful coup by navy and army officers in Argentina and rumbles of other military coups developing seem to indicate a trend in the same direction. Experience has shown that military governments are usually short-lived and often prove unsuccessful in accomplishing desired results.

While U. S. policy toward Cuba seems vague and uncertain, even baffling to its allies, it seems to fit in with the general idea that avoiding open conflict which might precipitate world war takes precedence over every other consideration. Thus Washington must engage in the distasteful task of trying to coexist with Castro and Khrushchev, even to the point of forcibly suppressing raids against Cuba.

While this strategy might appear to be the best for the present, it can only delay a clash with the Communist movement eventually. For, bitter experience has proved that Communists always

consider compromise evidence of weakness, and any truce or cease-fire agreement as an opportunity to strengthen their forces for a drive in another direction.

### **MIDEAST TORN WITH UNREST**

EVENTS in the Mideast at present are more exciting and ominous than they have been since Nasser seized the Suez canal, and it would seem that the Egyptian dictator is making a real comeback from what appeared to be complete failure in his plan to rule all Arabia. This does not mean, of course, that his success is yet achieved; nevertheless he is riding high, and all Arab nations not yet in league with him are tense and fearful of what the future holds for them.

With Syria and Iraq already allied with Egypt in a new United Arab Republic, Yemen favourable to such a Union, Jordan is in a state of internal crisis touched off by violent demonstrations for union with the U.A.R. Jordan's government, like all Arab regimes, is shaky, and with Nasser assistance could be forced into the U.A.R.

But the road that lies ahead for Nasser will not be an easy one. Organizing a new Arab Republic is one thing; making it work is another. The reasons:

(1) Arab disunity and instability. Ever since the Arab nations were formed at the close of World War I, there have been 26 armed uprisings among them in which one government after another has fallen, by political coups, assassinations and wholesale slaughter. Jealousies, lust for power and tribal hatreds prevent any stable government from being formed. Ishmaelites they were and still remain.

(2) Distrust of Nasser is widespread. While he has many loyal admirers, he has also many enemies. This is reflected in the attitude of Yemen and Jordan. While they are more or less favourable to an Arab union, they are unwilling to make Nasser the head ruler in that union.

(3) Mideast oil is controlled mostly by British and U. S. oil companies, and seeing that Nasser's ambition is to seize these rich oil fields, Britain and the U. S. will be vitally concerned over any move in that direction. Oil continues to be one of the chief interests in the destiny of the Mideast.

The fact also that this area, at the juncture of two continents is a vital strategic area, and any rise to great power by Nasser would be of deep concern to Britain the U. S. and Russia.

"Arab unity," so far as Nasser is concerned, is only a means to an end—to make himself head of an Arab empire and avenge himself on Israel, and this Israel well knows and is preparing to meet the situation.

The greatest obstacle of all in the way of a complete Nasser triumph is divine providence. Egypt must remain a "base kingdom" to conform to prophecy (Eze. 29:14-15), and his purpose to destroy Israel seals his own doom (Zech. 2:7-8). O.B.

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