

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.

Edited and Published by:
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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: June 19, July 17, Aug. 14, Sep. 11, Oct. 9

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

LAMPASAS, Texas—Christadelphian Hall, Avenue I East—Bible Study 10 a.m.; Memorial 11 a.m.

IT has been our pleasure to welcome the following visitors, whose company and fellowship has greatly encouraged us: bro. & sis. Lonnie Carroll, bro. & sis. Charles Banta Sr., bro. & sis. Charles Banta Jr., bro. & sis. Joe Burkett (Houston); bro. & sis. Melvin Edwards, bro. & sis. Bill Muter, and bro. Aris J. Edwards (Eden); and bro. & sis. Frank Truelove (Richard, Sask.).

In addition to those mentioned, we have had bro. & sis. Harry Sommerville with us during the latter part of the winter. Bre. Sommerville and Truelove have exhorted us to faithfulness, and bro. Sommerville's attendance at our Bible Classes has greatly benefited us. —bro. Wayne Wolfe

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NEWPORT, Mon., England—3 Constance St.—Memorial 11 a.m.

We are pleased to report that we were able to assist the Birmingham ecclesia in the examination and baptism of one of Adam's race into the Name of Christ.

After a successful scriptural examination at the home of the writer, we were able, in the mercy of our Heavenly Father, to travel to Birmingham on Saturday, March 23, where our bro. Hodge gave an introductory address and assisted in the baptism of our new sister, SUSAN ALLCOCK, the daughter of bro. and sis. Allcock.

The following day we assembled around the Table of the Lord, when an exhortation suited to the occasion was given, as our new sister was given the right-hand of fellowship.

We thank our Heavenly Father for giving us this opportunity of meeting those of like precious Faith. The strength of heart and mind received from such an occasion as this, has helped us on our journey to the Kingdom.

We hope and pray that we all, together with our new sister, may remain steadfast until the coming of the Lord, and may be accepted of him at the judgment seat.

To all of like Faith we send greetings,

—bro. Ken Williams

* * *

SOUTH CALIFORNIA ECCLESIA—Cor. East Pearl & North Palomares Streets, Pomona. Sunday: Class 10:30 a.m., Memorial Service 11:30 a.m., Lecture first Sunday in month 3:30 p.m.

WITH Greetings to all of like precious Faith, who with us have their faces toward Zion, the city of the Great King.

We are always very much comforted and strengthened when we have visitors from afar, around the Table of the Lord. Sis. William Blacker of the Lethbridge, Alberta, ecclesia was with us last fall, and in March, 1963, we had the company of bro. & sis. Frank Truelove of the Richard, Sask. ecclesia. Let us rejoice that scattered abroad, there are still some of the "Elect of God" who are endeavouring to uphold all of the principles of the Truth.

Bro. Frank Truelove gave us the exhortation at the memorial service, which caused us to search our hearts and our minds. Then, in the afternoon, a public lecture on the subject, "Is Christendom Astray from the Promises?" We were strengthened by our brother's labor of love.

In our ecclesia, we have started a monthly public lecture, being held on the first Sunday in the month. During the past three months, our subjects have been, "Having a Form of Godliness," "Contending Earnestly for the Faith," and "Narrow Is the Way Which Leadeth unto Life."

We need to be workers in God's vineyard even if, like faithful Noah, we make few or no converts. Not only are we obeying the Lord's command to be preachers of His Word, but we benefit ourselves in making the effort.
—bro. John T. Randell

EDITORIAL

The Miracle of the Exodus

"O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all"—Psalm 104:24

AMONG the many wonderful works that God has manifested in the earth, there is perhaps none greater than the wonders of the Exodus. Many people do not believe this record, but look upon it as the legendary exaggerations of natural events.

But the events of the Exodus are so interwoven in all other parts of the Bible, that it would be impossible for us to accept such a view. If we did, we would have to reject Jesus and the prophets, and that would leave us with nothing upon which we could base our faith and hope.

In the New Testament alone, there are at least 46 references to incidents recorded by Moses in connection with the Exodus.

If we examine the Psalms, we will see how repeatedly these events are mentioned, and how they are markedly emphasized as the beginning of Israel's history as a nation. Psalm 78 is a remarkable summary of the Exodus, beginning with the plagues in Egypt and ending with David enthroned in Jerusalem.

At the end of the 40 years wandering in the wilderness, just before entering the land of promise, in one of his exalted addresses, Moses spoke in this manner (Deut. 4:33-34)—

"Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?

"Or hath God assayed to go and take Him a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, by war, by a mighty hand, by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?"

Some speak of the miracles of the Exodus, but if we follow closely the various events, beginning with the Egyptian plagues, and ending with the conquest of Canaan, we must conclude that the entire narrative relates to one continuous miracle. Psalm 106 is almost entirely devoted to this gigantic event, and David points out the divine purpose in vs. 7 & 8—

"Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of Thy mercies; but provoked Him at the sea, even at the Red sea.

"Nevertheless He saved them for His Name's sake, that He might make His mighty power to be known."

The situation at that time was a desperate one with Israel, for the Egyptian persecution had brought them into a powerless position. It is therefore perfectly plain that deliverance could only come to Israel as a result of divine intervention.

As we look back, we can see that God had planned to show His mighty power in the earth, and it was to be done in a progressive and visible manner.

The beginning of this plan took place near mount Horeb, where Moses saw a bush in flames, but not consumed. As he turned aside to see this great sight, he heard a voice calling him, "Moses, Moses." It was the angel of the Lord, who gave Moses instructions regarding God's plan of deliverance for Israel.

Moses promptly left for Egypt, and on his way was met by Aaron to whom he made known all the words of the Lord, and the signs that he was commanded to use when he appeared before Pharaoh.

The next step was the calling together the elders of the people, to whom the plan was also explained. The result is given in Exo. 4:31—

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

Their faith in the message brought to them by Moses and Aaron became the starting point of their deliverance. That which followed was built upon that faith, and so must it be with us.

After hearing the Gospel, obedience must follow in baptism, and as we rise from the water, we begin walking in newness of life which, if we are faithful, will lead us to the Kingdom of God.

The wonders of the Exodus began when Moses gained audience to the court of Pharaoh, and addressed him, saying—

"Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let My people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness"— Exo. 5:1.

Pharaoh, not knowing the Lord, refused to let them go, and then instructed his officials to place heavy burdens upon the men of Israel. Little did Pharaoh realize that this was the beginning of that great struggle between divine power and the power of Egypt.

For a time, it brought Israel into the depths of despair, but gradually the scene changed, and the Egyptians were plunged into despair, while Israel rose to a state of freedom and exaltation. Moses was informed that God would (Exo. 7:4-5)—

"Bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by great judgments, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth Mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them"—

These great judgments were soon to follow in the form of plagues—a series of 10, and they were to be increased in intensity until the desired effect had been accomplished. From the first to the ninth, the plagues continued, and in each one Pharaoh promised to let Israel go, but in each case the promise was broken. The climax had now been reached, and Israel was soon to see one of the greatest dramatic events in the history of the human race.

Moses informed Pharaoh of the impending crisis, and then gathered the elders of Israel together, and gave them instructions regarding the Passover. Each household was to take a male lamb of the first year, and kill it on the evening of the 14th day of the first month.

Some of the blood was to be placed upon the entrance to their homes, and none were to leave their houses until morning. They were to roast the lamb, and eat it in haste—their loins girded, and their shoes on ready to begin a journey.

It was midnight when the angel of the Lord passed over the homes of Israel, and smote all the firstborn of Egypt. There was a great cry throughout the land, and Pharaoh was brought to his knees, and cried out—

"Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said.

"Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also"

—Exo. 12:31-32.

About six hundred thousand men, their wives and children and a mixed multitude, with their flocks and herds, departed from Rameses, and journeyed to Succoth. It was a mighty undertaking, and if God had not planned and supervised it, the whole affair would have ended in confusion and failure. He had given them favor in the sight of the Egyptians, and they did everything they could to help them escape. Thus was fulfilled a remarkable prophecy made to Abraham over 400 years before,

"Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them 400 years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out **with great substance**"— Gen. 15:13-14.

But the final stroke was yet to come. The children of Israel were led into a trap. Pharaoh regretted that his slaves had escaped, so he prepared his chariot, and with 600 others pursued Israel. The time had now come at the shore of the Red sea, and Moses was instructed to take his rod and hold it over the sea.

God responded and divided the waters and the children of Israel passed through to the other side. The Egyptians followed them into the sea, and once more Moses held his rod, and the waters returned to their former place, and the entire Egyptian host was destroyed.

Being overjoyed because of their great deliverance, they sang the song of Moses in which they magnified God's glorious power, and thanked Him for the great salvation by which they had been saved from the Egyptians.

But this song referred not only to the things then present, but is also prophetic of a greater salvation to be effected by the Lord Jesus Christ when he comes the second time and will be glorified in his saints, and will sing—

"The song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints.

"Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name? for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest"

—Rev. 15.3-4.

That Christ is to be the future king over all the earth, is one of the most glorious themes of revelation, but the Word of God is lightly esteemed, and faith is almost vanished from the earth. Even in the brotherhood, faith is fading, and worldliness is on the increase, and doubts are arising in the hearts of many.

But it shall not always be so, for some day a cry will go forth, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." Will we be prepared and ready when he comes? — Editor.

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.

"It Is Done!"

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever" — Rev. 11:15

THE seventh vial is identical with "the last end," in which the Little Horn of the Goat Power, (Dan. 8:9) "the king who doth according to his will" (Dan. 11:36), "the Assyrian" (Mic. 5:5), "Gog of the land of Magog" (Ezekiel 32:2), "the King of the north" (Dan. 11:40), Nebuchadnezzar's Image (Dan. 2), the four great beasts from the sea (Dan. 7), "the dragon," "the Beast and his Image," the ten horns (Rev. 12 & 13)—all terms representing "the kingdom of men" —will stand up in battle array against the Prince of princes and his chosen followers.

But affliction comes upon the tents of Cushan, and those of the land of Midian are made to tremble at the Ensign lifted up upon the mountain of Israel (Hab. 3:7; Isa. 18:3). Great and terrible is the power of the Holy One in the judgments of the seventh vial.

"He stands, and measures the earth; he beholds and drives asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains are scattered, and the perpetual hills do bow."
Or, in the words of Rev. 16—

"Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found" (v. 20).

Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but he who comes with dyed garments from Edom, is with burning and fuel of fire (Isa. 9:15; 63:1-6; 66:15, 16).

The armies of the kingdom of men issue forth as a whirlwind to scatter him; but vain are all their efforts; for he will march through the earth in indignation, and thresh the nations in anger; for he goes forth for the salvation of his people, and he will not be foiled (Hab. 3:12)..

"It is done!"—Rev. 16:17

As the result of the exhaustion of this vial upon "the air," the fourth beast of Daniel's vision will have been totally destroyed in all its parts, and the Kingdom of God established as the sole political organization for the government of the nations. It will then be said—

"Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith Adonai Yahweh; this is the day whereof I have spoken" (Eze. 39:8).
—whereof He has spoken by His servants the prophets that He would break the power of the Gentiles, when saviours should—

"Come up on Mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the Kingdom should be to Yahweh" (Obad. 21).

Such is the general result of the 7th vial upon "the Air."

* * *

THERE are, however, certain stages through which judgment passes to the subversion of the existing orders of things, and the establishment of that which is to last unchanged for a 1000 years—"the world to come."

This fourth section of the Seventh Seal is divisible into two acts. The first relates to the first angel mission of the seventh vial (Rev. 14:6); the second, to the 2nd and 3rd angel missions of the same (vs. 8-9).

The first angel mission forewarns the nations of what is prepared to burst forth upon them. It announces that the Hour of Judgment has actually arrived; and declares the glory of Yahweh among the Gentiles inhabiting Tarshish, Pul, Lud, Tubal, Javan, and isles afar off from Jerusalem (Isa. 66:19; Rev. 14:6).

This manifesto is proclaimed after the advent of Jesus and resurrection of the dead, the separation of the tares from the wheat at the judgment seat of Christ, and the occupation of Jerusalem by the Great King: and before the fall of Babylon, by certain "of those who escape."

They are sent as **moshkai kesheth**, "sounders of truth," to blow the great trumpet of the jubilee, and to invite all nations to do homage to the King of the Jews. (Isa. 18:3; 26:13; 66:19; Lev. 25:10; Rev. 10:11).

To this proclamation succeeds the day of affliction, in which a great sacrifice is offered by Yahweh for the birds and beasts of prey—

"The flesh of the mighty, and the blood of the princes of the earth" (Lev. 23:27-32; Eze. 29:17; Rev. 19:17).

The offering of this sacrifice is the punishment of the goats (Zech. 10:3-6; Matt. 25:31-46); and constitutes the second act of this fourth section of the seventh seal.

The offering is the mission of the mighty angel with the rainbow upon his head, whose countenance is as the sun, and his progress as moving pillars of fire (Rev. 10).

He places his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth, and thus takes up a burning position upon the territory of the 10-horned and 2-horned Beasts of Rev. 13.

"The earth and the whole habitable" thus become an arena of intense conflagration, in which the Gentile body politic is given to the sword and the burning flame (Dan. 7:10-11).

"The sea" is mingled with fire, and "the earth" becomes "a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. 15:2; 19:20)—"The Aion-Fire prepared for the Devil (Dragon—Rev. 20:2) and his angels" (Matt. 25-41); into which all are cast who are condemned to share in the punishment inflicted upon the goats (Rev. 20:15; 14:9-11).

THIS rainbowed angel is symbolical of the Eternal Spirit incarnate in Jesus and his Brethren, the glorified saints, in their warfare against "the Beast and his Image," over which they get the victory.

He is the "Four Living Ones full of eyes," in one symbol, giving utterance to the roar of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Joel 3:16; 2:11; Jer. 25:30-38; Isa. 42:13-16).

That which proceeds from the company of actors represented by this symbol, "proceeds from the throne," whence issue forth "lightnings, thunderings, and voices" (Rev. 4:5).

The rainbowed messenger is the embodiment of "the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne"—of the—

"Seven horns and seven eyes, the seven spirits of the Deity, sent forth into all the earth"
(Rev. 4:5; 5:6).

"When he had cried," or made the proclamation pertaining to the first angel mission, which is responded to by the armies of the Ten Horns rushing forth as a whirlwind to scatter him (Hab. 3:14; Rev. 17-14), "seven thunders utter their voices" (Rev. 10:3).

The details of these thunders are not specified. They will become history to be read by the generations to come when they shall have thundered down all opposition to the dominion of the saints. John was commanded to "seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and to write them not."

Hence, all we can say about them is, that as "thunder," which implies lightning, is the symbol of destruction, the seven thunders augur only a bitter practical prophecy to many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings (Rev. 10:9-11).

* * *

BUT IN the hand of this mighty heaven-descended Spirit-Messenger, (not naked spirit, but "clothed with a cloud" of the holy and blessed of the Father) is "a little scroll open." It is not closed or rolled up like the seven-sealed scroll, but open and unsealed.

It is the scroll of judgment, in bitter manifestation, in current outflow from the body of John and his co-workers in the execution of the judgment written (Rev. 10:9; Psa. 149:5-9). It contains the denouement of the apocalyptic tragedy — the issue of the plot, or, as Daniel was told, "The end of the matter."

In this little open scroll is written the performances of the actors in the last act of the seventh seal. It is, therefore, the key that opens or unlocks—

"The Mystery of the Deity as He hath declared the glad tidings to His servants the prophets"
(Rev. 10:7).

Upon it are inscribed the missions of the second and third angels, comprehensive of the judgment of Babylon, the conquest of the Ten Horns and destruction of the Beast, and the slaying of "the remnant" not included in the symbol, by the white-robed battalions of the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19).

The mission of the second angel is to destroy—

"Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and the Abominations of the earth"
(Rev. 14:8; 17:5).

Hence, they are the messenger-power of the second mission. They enlighten the nations with the glory of the co-working Spirit, so that they bring into contempt the Laodicean Apostasy in its Greek, Latin, and Protestant manifestations, causing the spiritual merchants of all sects of "Christendom" to weep and mourn (Rev. 18:11)—

"Because no man buyeth their merchandise any more."

The Ecclesiastical Corporation of the Fourth Beast, by the abundance of whose spiritual delicacies the great men of all nations, styled "demons, foul spirits, unclean and hateful birds," had waxed rich (Rev. 18:2, 3, 23), being tormented to utter and final extinction from "the Air" (vs. 8,15,21) by the second symbolic angel, or Yahweh Elohim and the Saints (vs. 6-8), these continue their work in the mission of the third angel to the tormentation and destruction of the beast and false prophet-power in their civil and military organizations.

* * *

THE adherents of these constitutions bewail and lament the breaking up of the priest and clergy craft of "Christendom" (vs. 9-10), showing that their political existence continues beyond the fall of that "Mystery of Iniquity."

These therefore, become the next object against which "the holy messengers and the Lamb" direct their exterminating judgments (Rev. 14:9-11). This work of destruction continues so long as the smoke of their torment ascends, which is till the body of the Beast is destroyed by the burning flame that issues forth from before the Ancient of Days, or, as it is apocalyptically expressed, "to aions of aions," which is to the commencement of the thousand years' reign (Dan. 7:10-11; 2 Th. 2:8; Rev. 14:10-11).

This whole burnt-sacrifice of the Fourth Beast in the day of Yahweh's vengeance would have consummated the tragic drama of the apocalypse had there been no Gentile Remnant beyond the jurisdiction of the Fourth Beast.

Had Daniel's vision presented before him only one beast, then there would have been no more to do than to celebrate the victory, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, and so enter upon the reign.

Or, had Nebuchadnezzar's Image consisted only of one metal, and been pulverized by a single blow of the Stone upon the feet, the Stone would at once have become a great mountain filling the whole earth.

But those suppositions do not obtain. There are **four** beasts to be disposed of, and four metals, and a grinding of the whole to powder **after** the fracture of their image-combination by the stone.

The fourth beast and the iron teeth and brazen claws thereof being in process of demolition by the second and third angel missions, "the remnant" (Rev. 19:21), or "dragon" (Rev. 20:2-3), or first three beasts of Dan. 7:4, 5,6,12, are being also collaterally and contemporarily subjected to the sword of the King of kings and his white-robe squadrons of the heaven. This great Potentate, riding this "white cloud" or body of celestial horse (ch. 19:11, 14)—

"Having on his head a golden wreath and in his hand a sharp sickle" (Rev. 14:14-15) —reaps the harvest of the earth, and gathers the clusters of the earth's vine, and casts them into the great winepress "without the city," which he treads to the earth (Isa. 63:1-6; Joel 3:13; Rev. 14:20).

THE result of the reaping the winepress is the binding of the harvest and treading the great Dragon-power and the shutting of it up in the abyss for a thousand years; in other words, the taking away of the dominion of the Assyrian lion, the Medo-Persian bear, and the Greco-Egypto-Anglican leopard, for a season and a time (Dan. 7:12).

These organizations of people are not destroyed, as was the Babylonian Fourth Beast embodying the Laodicean Apostasy. They are conquered and deprived of dominion, which is transferred to their conquerors the saints, who will have brought down their strength with a sanguinary, and mighty overthrow.

Thus, Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Khush, Elam, Shinar, and the islands of the sea, will have felt the edge of their two-edged sword, as well as Europe and the West; for, like birds of prey, their tribes will—

"Fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the West; they will spoil them of the East together;

"They will lay their power upon Edom and Moab, and the children of Ammon shall obey them" (Isa. 11:11, 14).

The face and condition of the East will then be altogether changed. With the present spiritual and temporal constitution of "Christendom" destroyed, and the East brought into subjection to Deity, the nations will then be truly "blessed with" and "in Abraham and his seed," as predicted in the Gospel of the Kingdom—

"Yahweh will be made known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know Yahweh in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation.

"In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.

"In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the land; whom Yahweh shall bless, saying—

"Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance" (Isa. 19:21-25).

As to the leopard, or "Philistines toward the west," the third beast, of which Egypt is a part with Tarshish and Javan, these also become a spoil in the war of the great day of Yahweh Ail-Shaddai. The Tyrian commerce of the Great Sea is turned from Britain to Palestine as a flowing stream; and—

"Her merchandise and her hire is holiness to Yahweh; it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before Yahweh, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing" (Isa. 23:18; 60:5,9; 61:6; 66:12; Psa. 45:12; 72:10).

* * *

IN THE development of the second and third angel-missions, and in the harvesting of the earth and treading of its vintage, all the work of the seventh vial will have been accomplished. All its voices, thunders, and lightnings, will have been hushed into eternal silence; the vibrations of the

greatest earthquake that ever shook the nations will have ceased their tremblings for ever; the threefold divisions of the great city will all have been confounded in the fall of Babylon, and the flight of every political island, and disappearance of the imperial mountains of ancient date.

Jesus and his Brethren, energized by Yahweh, the Eternal Spirit, descending as a tempest of hail, a destroying storm, will have beaten down the Assyrian, and swept away all refuges of lies.

The Laodicean Apostasy will have been demolished and for ever abolished; and "the smoke of the Temple from the glory of the Deity, and from His power," will all have cleared away, and men will enter into the Temple and go out no more (Isa. 30; 30; 28:2,17; 32:19; Eze. 38:22; Rev. 11:19; 15:8; 3:12; 16:17-21).

"IT IS DONE!"

"The Air" is purified of "the spirituals of wickedness in the heavenlies" (Eph. 6:12), and nothing remains but for the victorious saints and the conquered world of nations to celebrate the victory.

We are very happy to send the Berean free to any who desire it that way. Please do not hesitate to ask. We desire the circulation to be as wide as possible, and all to have it who would like it. Whether or not it is paid for is a secondary consideration. All may be assured that expenses are taken care of without burden on any.

1963 Texas Fraternal 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.

Answers to Bible Questions

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

The Families of the Saints at the Coming of Christ

THERE is not a "Thus saith the Lord," regarding the manner of our gathering together to the judgment seat of Christ, that is, as regards the literal details. The nearest approach to precision is the statement of Paul, that the saints are to be "caught away in clouds"—1 Thes. 4:17— (Paul did not say "caught up").

But this is not specific as to the mode. It has no more force than the words "taken away:" it reveals nothing as to the mode of the taking. It only tells us we shall be taken, and perhaps carries this additional idea with it, that the taking will be compulsory.

Jehovah said to Israel, when He had brought them out of Egypt (Exo. 19:4)—

"Ye see how I . . . bare you on eagles' wings and have brought you to Myself."

Literally, the Israelites marched; but because the marching was accomplished by divine co-operation, Jehovah says He "brought them." If we had no information beyond the general statement

that He bore them on eagles' wings and brought them, it might be argued that He wafted them in mid air from Egypt to Sinai.

The possession of the narrative of how it was done excludes this speculation, and shows us a process in which, while angels superintended, the subjects of the process had themselves to supply the subordinate parts of preparing, packing, walking, etc.

This shows that we cannot make use of general statements to exclude details that may be involved in them. Jesus said "I came down from heaven." On this some might argue that he was therefore not born in Bethlehem.

We are to be "taken away," "caught away," and "gathered together" when Christ appears; shall we, therefore, say the angels will not come to us? Resting on such statements merely, it would seem we might conclude so; but Jesus says he shall (Matt. 24:31)—

"Send forth his angels and gather his elect from the four corners of the earth."

Therefore, in our understanding of "caught away," etc., we must leave a place for the coming of the angels. And if they come, it must be for some purpose of practical detail, as in all other cases in which they have been sent. Consequently, it may be that we shall be taken in a natural way.

* * *

IF SO, what about families? Will they go with us? We are not told, but we have examples. Noah's sons and wives were saved in the ark, though we hear nothing of their righteousness, but on the contrary, of the wickedness of one of them (Gen. 7:13; 9:23-27).

Lot's daughters, and their husbands and families were invited to escape from Sodom with him. (Gen. 19:12).

Whoever feared the Lord among the Egyptians escaped the plagues, and a mixed multitude were allowed to depart with Israel (Exo. 9:20; 12:38).

Rahab's relatives were all preserved, subject to certain conditions, when the inhabitants of Jericho were put to the sword (Josh. 6:23).

It was a usual thing for sons and daughters to be delivered from calamity, because of the righteousness of their fathers— a rule suspended when the wickedness of Israel became great. (Eze. 14:18-20).

Now, God is the same today as He was in ancient times. Consequently, there is a little light on the subject, though it does not amount to a "Thus saith the Lord." The time is close at hand when the Lord—

"Cometh forth from His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." (Isa. 26:21).

At such a time they are angelically invited to enter into the chamber and shut the door about them for a moment until the indignation be overpast (v. 20). Are we not justified in concluding that at such a time families of saints "brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" will share in the refuge from the destroying judgments that are intended only for the ungodly?

If so, how is this refuge to be shared except by departing with the saints to the appointed refuge under the shadow of the Great Avenger in the wilderness of Sinai?

* * *

THIS expectation is strengthened by another view of the case. The time of judgment on the nations is also the time for Israel's gathering. The saints of the present age are not Jews according to the flesh; but they have become Jews by adoption through Christ — fellow citizens in the commonwealth of Israel. In this position, they are not less Jews than, say, Peter or James.

Now suppose Peter or James were living now and had sons, would not their sons, as Jews, be included in the measures for the gathering of Israel? Nay, would not Peter and James themselves have to do with those measures? If so, would their own sons be less objects of their care than other Jews?

Our children, doubtless, inherit as much as the flesh can give them, and that is, a status, according to the flesh, in the national house of Israel; consequently, we may hope for them a place in the re-building of the tabernacle of David, when the hour arrives for the glorious process to visibly and ostensibly begin.

* * *

BUT it may be objected that the question to which their parents stand related is—eternal life or rejection at the hands of Christ; and that children having no relation to this issue, they have no standing-ground in the case.

If this were the only issue in the day of wrath about to break, the objection would be a valid one. But it is not the only issue. While there are to be immortal rulers, there are to be mortal nations in the happy day beyond; and one of the questions of the time will be, who among the nations of the earth are to be allowed the privilege of surviving the judgments of the period, and obtaining a place among the mortal subjects of the kingdom of God—a place which will involve the opportunity of obtaining a title to everlasting life at the close of the thousand years?

Because this will be a question of the time, the children of the saints have a standing-ground of hope, apart from the question of eternal life and governorship in the Kingdom to which the saints themselves stand related: for who more likely to be qualified for the privilege of mortal citizenship than children brought up within sound of the Truth, and more or less subjected to God thereby?

Finally, the question is of little practical moment. A knowledge of the details of the crisis in these particulars would be of no value to us till the moment itself arrives; and when the moment does arrive, we shall be duly instructed by the heavenly messengers who shall come to superintend the great and awe-inspiring work of the judgment period—R.R., 1878

Subject to Vanity—in Hope

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" — Rev. 22:14

SIN is a very small word in our language—just three letters, S-I-N—one short, sharp syllable.

But a word of such vast consequence, and such sinister meaning!

To this, the principle involved in this little word, is attributable ALL that is undesirable in the world — ALL the trouble, misery, sickness, pain and DEATH—yes, AND DEATH. All can be laid at the door of sin.

Its removal, and so the removal of all these evils FROM THE EARTH, is a consummation much to be desired. That consummation is as certain a future event as the fact of their presence today.

* * *

AT FIRST glance, we recognize two aspects to the subject:

- (1) evil from present causes —shall we say sin's **present** work?—and
- (2) the more basic and vital one of the **origin** of it all.

The consideration goes deeper than the known effects of the evil deeds of evil men— or condition seen, resulting from some definite and perceived line of wickedness **now**.

Something in the past has left its permanent searing mark on all mankind'. This can be realized from the omnipresence of the companion evils, decay and death. These prevail irrespective of any effort of man one way or another—and no legislation of man can stay them. We have this present cancerous condition of all mankind to be explained.

We would like to consider the natural, usual points of view first — take the facts — analyze them in a simple way — get things in their place so to speak —and then come to the Bible for our final answers.

To commence with — WHAT IS SIN? We may not all at first be agreed. It does not mean the same thing to all people.

It is true all see alike on the broad principle — that sin is something bad, wrong; but ALL will not have the same definition of wrong.

The first impulse, simply to describe it as wrong doing is not sufficient. It raises another question, one of standards. This of course has to be settled first. What IS wrong, and what is right? How can we tell?

You see how much we need —must have—a standard, and a **standard with authority**.

* * *

REFERENCE is made to conscience, as the guide to right and wrong. This is a useful point and very fine in its place. We do not deride conscience— far from it.

It is a good thing to have—for it is a sense or consciousness of right and wrong, and that is what we need—a good conscience, a perfect conscience, if possible—and if this sense were perfected in every individual, there would be little trouble.

But conscience is not inherent in man, nor even uniform. It comes only with acquired knowledge, and that appears in the meaning of the word. It is a Latin compound: **con** — "together, with," and **science**—"to know." So it means "with knowledge."

This "inner voice" in an individual is the direct result of education and experience.

It will vary widely in relation to the direction that education has taken—this is positive.

In the recent World Wars the German patriotic conscience said: "Kill the British," and the British conscience, "Kill the German," while the training of another man's conscience compels him to say, "It is wrong to fight."

There will be as many ideas in the world as peoples — at least. We know what differences on this score there can be even in small communities—so we see how necessary it is to have a standard set by authority.

* * *

Allowing this, the logical mind will conclude that sin must be the overstepping or breaking of some stable law—AND THIS INDEED IS APPROACHING THE WHOLE TRUTH OF THE MATTER.

And the question becomes — **what law?**

We are here going to quote Webster. For definitions on scriptural subjects, the dictionary is not always reliable. It will just give a popular view. It was therefore very refreshing indeed to find that Webster gives the **primary** definition of sin as—

"Transgression of the Law of God, disobedience of the Divine Will."

And we use this because it is exactly what we want to say. And because of its importance, we stress it as a foundation truth to be held with all our power, just as stated. Sin is—

"Transgression of the Law of God, disobedience of the Divine Will."

Nothing more—nothing less.

This is most assuredly the general teaching of Scripture, but here are some direct quotations—

"Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4).

"By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20).

"Where there is no law there is no transgression" (Rom. 4:15).

"Sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13).

—all speaking, of course, of God's law.

CONSIDER—God alone has the right (and the power) to specify right and wrong. Of that there can be no question. His will is sovereign, and He varies His commands according to His Own purpose —

(1) He has laid down **general** laws for all time.

(2) He has also prescribed **particular** laws for particular periods in the history of man.

And—

(3) He has given **specific** instructions for specific occasions.

All this is His prerogative, and in all we find nothing out of harmony with His righteousness.

To illustrate: The injunction against murder was always in force. The general law says: "Thou shalt not kill." The Lord Jesus Christ, moreover, enjoined an attitude of love in which there could be no violence at all.

No man, therefore, can take the matter of life and death into his own hands.

But, as mentioned, God has openly and directly legislated the opposite instruction for particular occasions — AND CAN AND WILL DO SO AGAIN.

He instructed king Saul of Israel to destroy the Amalekites—every living thing. And when Saul saved some of them alive, he sinned, and sinned most grievously, and the prophet Samuel told him so in very heavy words. Saul, convicted, said (1 Sam. 15:24)—

"I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord."

The emphasis was placed on obedience. Samuel said—

"To obey is better than sacrifice" (v. 22).

* * *

THE KEY therefore is the **expressed will of God**. Sin is "disobedience of the Divine Will" as Webster says.

We have no **direct** voice today. If we had, it would be just as imperative as ever it was. God alone is the arbiter.

But we do have the law of the written Word, preserved for our guidance, and from which, incidentally, the world is as far away as it possibly can be. We have only to quote one passage (Matt. 5:44) where Jesus said—

"I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you—that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

It is quite unnecessary to point out that this law of God is ignored by the world—even the religious world—today.

But leaving the world—what of **ourselves** and **our** reaction to this command and many others which indicate a course contrary to our natural desires?

We know it is not natural for the human to follow that course —it is hard. WHY? Here is the crux of the matter. To do it provokes a continual fight inside us — between the enlightened mind, and this body, which has to be kept under. The apostle Paul said—

"I keep under by body and bring it into subjection; lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27).

He shows there is something radically wrong with us — ourselves, with this human nature, and some physical remedy is required.

It is logical that the search for remedy should take cause into account. Origins, root causes, are the primary goals of investigations. In wondering on the possible outcome, we would want to know how this wretched, sin-laden, dying state of things came to be.

And Paul tells us. We turn to Rom. 5. You will clearly see that in the latter half, he is placing the redemptive work of Christ against the damage done by some "one man," and we realize from v. 14 that he is speaking of Adam, the first man. Of him, he says in v. 12—

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.
"And so death passed upon all, for that (or 'in whom,' margin) all have sinned."

And note the first part of the couplets in vs. 15 to 21—

"Through the offence of one many be dead,"
"By one that sinned,"
"By one man's offence death reigned,"
"By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation,"
"By one man's disobedience many were made (constituted) sinners,"
"Sin hath reigned unto death."

These are similar to two in 1 Cor. 15:21-22—

"By man came death."
"In Adam all die."

Truly a heavy list!

* * *

WE consider, therefore, the case of this first man recorded in the first book of the Bible. It is a curious case. He was a full-sized man (an adult) without experience. At the time we are considering him he had not grown up through the varying influences of life, as you and I.

Adam was constituted a very privileged but singular creature. A perfect physical specimen, he consorted with the Elohim — the messengers and ministers of God—but he had a character to form. He was not proven.

Let us spend just a minute considering character. Have you ever meditated upon this wonderful thing. It is the effect of all the impressions received and acted upon by the mind — absorbed, shall we say, as part of the individual.

As free-agents, the reaction of the mind—our reaction—to any influence, is part of the process of character formation.

We are our own character-builders in the use we make of our faculties, and we have the privilege of choosing our own material to a great extent.

God, of course, estimates us according to all this, and the Scriptures teach us that He desires men and women with strength and purpose of character.

Adam was a beginning — a novice. He failed on the first test — disobeyed — sinned. The record is very simple and clear. In the Garden of Eden he had but one restriction. It was a law, and the consequence of transgression was clearly indicated to him. It is stated in Gen. 2:17—

"Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it."
There is the law.

"For in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die (Marg: dying thou shalt die)."
There is the consequence.

But in a sense he listened to the suggestion that God was lying, did not mean what He said, or was mistaken. He gave way, disobeyed, and very quickly received passage of the sentence.

This was an extended sentence, as we see from Gen. 3:19—

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return."

Thou—Adam—the sinner himself. (How meaningless to say the sentence was just on his "body," and not on the real man that sinned!)

He thus became a dying creature, subject to corruption, ending in death.

At this time, the fixed law of his being was the knowledge of good and evil, with a tendency to evil, and the possession of a body of death.

And whatever he became, we inherit.

This is "the body of death," "the earthy body," "this mortal," "this corruptible" of which the Apostle Paul speaks in his various references to our body. It is the body we have from Adam, and according to the sorrow imposed upon Eve.

We have all had a lot of experience with it now—and we know what it is like. It agrees precisely with the apostle's description, and we know that something has to be done about it if sin has to be disposed of.

Whatever is done to eradicate sin must materially affect the body—for there it is, quite at home—

"Sin that dwelleth in me."
—says Paul (Rom. 7:17)—
"The law of sin which is in my members" (v. 23).

This ego, this self, whose perpetual lusts wage continual war against the instructed sense of right and wrong—against the "law of the mind," as Paul says. This is sin in the flesh—the sin principle — also called the **diabolos**—the deceiver.

* * *

THERE is more than a hint of the remedy in that chapter we have been considering (Rom. 5), concerning the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But there is first a broad query we would like to notice. It is: what of the ages before Christ?

One view would seem to infer that God, having condemned the race for Adam's sin, abandoned them to this death-stricken condition without making any immediate provision. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The fact is, that the great Creator, in His foreknowledge, knew what would happen and provided for it in prospect from the first.

The promise to Eve (Gen. 3:15) that her seed should bruise the serpent in the head, refers to the victory of Christ over sin, and Jesus was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" in the various sacrificial types.

One aspect of the matter is that God (Gal. 3:22)—

"Concluded all under sin that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."

It was part of God's great plan that would separate a multitude of tested and tried faithful ones from earth's teeming myriads, and fit them for a glorious and everlasting future.

The work of Christ is to be operative for the faithful of all ages—many of whom are in the dust awaiting the trumpet call to resurrection.

The emphasis is on Faith— faith in God—in His promises— leading to Obedience.

Let us make no mistake on this:

God has had HIS laws, HIS way to be followed as a basis for Faith FROM THE BEGINNING. And the obedience of faithful men, securing His approval, has been the seal of their salvation to be ultimately accomplished in Christ.

There was always a Redeemer to come, a Salvation to be revealed, a Messiah in view—hoped for—expected.

This law, this way of God, was adapted and applied as necessary to the various dispensations of man on earth.

Abel's offering shows that sacrifice was an early institution—and the old worthies could only have pleased God on the basis of His requirements of them and of which they would have to know—belief of promises, obedience to commands.

Certain ones (Abraham in particular) received direct specific and detailed direction, and later, the Law of Moses carried through many centuries.

But the keynote is an obedient faith (Col. 2:12)—

"Faith in the operation of God."

Whatever His law at any time, obedience has been the proof of that faith, which has been necessary for men to please Him.

Salvation through a promised seed, who should be born of the race, was the record. Paul plainly tells us the seed promised to Abraham was Christ (Gal. 3).

The Lord Jesus said of Abraham (John 8:56)—

"He rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."

The work of the Lord Jesus Christ in taking away sin, is almost universally misunderstood, and illogically so. The doctrine of substitution is totally unreasonable.

If Jesus died **instead** of us —then WE should not die—but if it be said that **eternal** death was meant, the answer is, he did not suffer **that** death. Nor is there any "righteousness of God" manifested in one dying as a substitute for another.

The Scripture teaching is altogether different. It shows Christ as a REPRESENTATIVE of the race—the second Adam.

By and through the first came death: by and in the second, is life.

Christ came in the inherited and condemned nature of the first Adam — just as we find ourselves—

"In all things made like unto his brethren" (Heb.2:17).

"The captain of our salvation, made perfect through suffering (Heb. 2:10).

"Tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

"Who in the days of his flesh, offered up strong cryings and tears unto Him who was able to save him from death, and was heard" (Heb. 5:7).

He was saved, not **from** the cross and that death, but **out of** that death.

"He died unto sin, once" (Rom. 6:10).

—but because of his perfect obedience and in accord with the righteousness of God (Acts 2:24)—

"Death could not hold him."

* * *

It is recorded—

"There is no man that sinneth not" (1 Kings 8:46).

—the Lord Jesus Christ being the one exception.

How then do WE escape the universal condemnation, for (Rom. 6:23)—

"The wages of sin is death."

This is where the mercy of God is shown. The Psalmist said (130:3)—

"Lord, if Thou shouldest mark iniquities who should stand—but there is forgiveness with Thee."

The Apostle John said in that well-known verse (3:16)—

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."

* * *

You will note in those couplets in Rom. 5, that this effect of the work of Christ is put in as many ways and from as many angles as the effect of sin and death through Adam. This is the last one (v. 21)—

"As sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Sin and death came into the world together and must necessarily go out together. They are inseparable companions. Wherever there is sin there will be death.

Continuing the thought of Christ as a representative of the race (in possession of this sin-cursed nature) we see two reasons given in Heb. 2.

The **first** (v. 14) states that Christ partook of our flesh and blood constitution that he might, through death, destroy that having the power of death, the **diabolos**.

Here is the simple explanation of that seeming paradox. He had our nature—he had the same fight against the motions of sin but always came out the victor. Right to the point of his death he thus destroyed its power in himself in that he was obedient in all points, even to the death on the cross.

When he died, the motions of sin ceased, destroyed for ever in his case.

But more than that. In the plan of God a definite basis was now laid which would eventuate in the destruction of sin from the earth altogether. Potentially then, that too was accomplished in his death and resurrection.

As to the means, or the source of his strength—it is sufficient for our present purpose to point out that the Lord Jesus Christ is foreshown as (Psa. 80:17)—

"THE MAN WHOM GOD MADE STRONG FOR HIMSELF."

God's righteousness is thus declared and upheld, and sin openly, publicly, eternally condemned — condemned in the very nature that bore it.

The **second** reason given in Heb. 2 (repeated in Heb. 4:15; 5:2) is that Christ, having been of our nature, can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and so became a faithful High Priest.

In that position (High Priest) Jesus is now our mediator and his is (Acts 4:12)—

"The only Name given under heaven, among men, whereby man can be saved."

And God is pleased to receive us for his sake—that is, "Whosoever WILL" — there is something for us to do too.

* * *

GOD still has His required way. Intelligent baptism into Jesus Christ is the initial step towards participation in the effects of God's glorious work and purpose in him.

Rom. 6, on baptism, is a beautiful exposition of the present effect—showing that even now, men and women in that position (baptized into Christ) should—

"Walk in newness of life."

—become new men and women — reckoned dead unto Sin — henceforth servants to Righteousness — Sin's dominion broken.

We should read that chapter very carefully.

It does not mean they are sinless creatures, except in the sense they are forgiven, justified, in a completely new relation—in Christ and of the family of God, having crossed the threshold of an entirely new life, a life to be devoted to His service.

A life of probation and trial before Him, but one in which they can obtain forgiveness for failure caused by the infirmity of the flesh.

And the end (for the faithful)—everlasting life.

The Apostle expressed their case in appropriate words in 1 Cor. 15, where he says (v. 52)—

"The dead shall be raised . . . and we shall be changed."

Continuing (vs. 54-57)—

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written—

"Death is swallowed up in victory.

"O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?

"The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law.

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

The victory cry of the redeemed!

* * *

THE tale is almost told. They (the redeemed from this age) shall live and reign with Christ 1000 years (Rev. 20:4-6).

This is the inauguration of the Kingdom of God on earth. The Scriptures reveal that as a result of that beneficent reign, sin will be so curbed that most evils will disappear and the mortal span of life be lengthened. Psalms 37 and 72, and Isaiah 65 give the beautiful picture.

At the end of that period, there is to be a second resurrection, a general judgment, the redeemed of the Millennial Age will enter the company of the immortals, and sin will disappear from the earth altogether.

Briefly, Paul puts it this way in that same 1 Cor. 15 (vs. 24-28):

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

"For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

"And when all things shall be subdued unto him (Jesus), then shall the Son also be subject unto Him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Then will be consummated that glorious finality of all the travail of these long dark ages of sin, sorrow and death (Rev. 21:3-4)—

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

—G. G. Sr.

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Wisdom Is the Principal Thing

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction"
— Prov. 1:7

WE HAVE only just recently in our daily reading been in contact with the Proverbs of Solomon. How beautiful, how enlightening, are the words of the Great Deity through Solomon, as revealed in this portion of the Scripture! A wonderful example are the words as contained in v. 18 of this 4th chapter—

"The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

The "just" are the wise, the faithful, the righteous, who have obtained that wisdom, and with that wisdom have gotten understanding to such an extent that their path is a "shining light."

The wonderful Name of "Yahweh," the Glad Tidings of the Kingdom of God, and those things in relation to His Beloved Son, even Jesus Christ should shine more and more in us. The shining of our path should become brighter and brighter as we continue our journey, as we labor in the Lord's vineyard that leads unto that perfect day—that day when our loved Saviour shall appear.

To return to Proverbs 4, v. 7 says:

"Wisdom is the principal thing".

The definition of this word "principal" is—"first in place, time, order or rank." Therefore wisdom is the essential, the necessary, the most important thing.

Spiritual wisdom and understanding and knowledge and continuance in the commandments of our Heavenly Father, should be our governing law and right rule of our conduct in "The One Faith" as it is in Christ Jesus, which leads to uprightness and acceptance; for are we not told in Prov. 2:21—

"For the upright shall dwell in the land and the perfect shall remain in it."

This "Wisdom" which is the "principal thing" is definitely spiritual wisdom, the wisdom of God, that which is from above, and not by any means the wisdom of man, as the Apostle Paul makes clear (1 Cor. 3:19)—

"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

Herein lies one of the greatest faults in man, he is wise in his own conceits, his own understanding, self-glory and honor, but as to the knowledge of God he is in total darkness. There have arisen and departed amongst men, great inventors, geniuses and scientists, but all these having not the wisdom and understanding, the love of God, are counted as nothing, like sheep they are laid in the grave, the memory of them is soon forgotten.

But not so, however, with those who have obtained that spiritual wisdom and keep the same. The prophet Daniel says in this regard—

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3).

And Daniel continues in v. 10—

"None of the wicked shall understand . . ."

—which includes practically the whole population of this vast universe—

". . . but the wise shall understand."

—these being the "few in number little flock."

* * *

PROVERBS 8:1 records—

"Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?"

Wisdom doth cry daily but there is none to answer; there is none to seek her. Understanding puts forth her voice constantly in an open Bible which we must continually read, study, and meditate upon.

This wisdom, knowledge and understanding of God's wonderful plan and purpose with this earth and the inhabitants thereof can never be obtained from a closed book.

The whole sum and substance is totalled up in v. 9 of this 8th chapter. "They"—that is, "the words of my mouth" (v.8) the mouth of the wisdom of the Father and His Beloved Son—

"Are all plain to him that understandeth and right to them that find knowledge."

Further instructions in v. 11—

"For wisdom is better than rubies; silver or gold and all things that may be desired are not to be compared to it."

We desire not, seek not, treasure in earthen vessels, we labor not to be rich, all of which is temporal, ending in corruption, but rather that we may be rich in faith, in the wisdom and love of the "Great Deity," seeking first that which is Eternal.

Beloved brethren and sisters, when we put off the "old man of the flesh," when we first saw the glorious light, and came to an understanding and knowledge of the Scriptures, the "Truth as it is in Christ Jesus," and were baptized into his great Name, this "Wisdom" which is the principal thing—the most important thing—the only thing —was revealed unto us.

Therefore, above all, let not our work stop here. As a matter of fact, it is just beginning. Let us fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life.

We cannot hope to lay hold on eternal life, to reap the great reward, if we continue not in well-doing. It is our duty to continually seek and do those things which do please the Father, neglecting not our daily readings, attendance at the meetings, and assisting brethren and sisters of "like precious Faith" in whatsoever they are in need of. John tells us (1 John 3:17)—

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

The answer is, if we do these things the love of God does not dwell in us. Wisdom speaks to us (Prov. 8:17)—

"I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me."

Now is the time to seek God early, today while it is not too late, thus do we find "Wisdom"—in this way only and no other way. And—

Wisdom is the principal thing.

—F.P.

Richard, Sask., Fraternal Gathering

The brethren and sisters at Richard, Sask., plan a Fraternal Gathering for Friday to Sunday, July 19-21, if the Lord will. They cordially invite all of like Faith to attend. Due to their location, visitors are relatively few, and are very welcome.

If you plan to attend, or for further information, please write:

Bro. Fred G. Jones, Route 1, Richard, Sask., Can.

This Is the Whole Man

"There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour" — Ecclesiastes 2:24

THE BOOK of Ecclesiastes is a book for deep study and meditation. It is concerned with the age-old search for happiness and satisfaction. What is good? What is real? What is worthwhile? What is the great purpose and meaning of life?

Its theme is summed up in its opening and closing verses. It begins (1:2)—

"Vanity of vanity, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

And it ends (12:13)—

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:

"Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

(We note from the italics that the word "duty" is not in the original. The thought is really broader and deeper. Literally it says—

"This is the whole man."

—that is, this is everything for man—all his meaning and purpose—all his life and happiness.

* * *

THE Hebrew title is **Koheleth**. The Septuagint Greek version translated this, "Ecclesiastes," which means the same.

Have we ever wondered what connection of meaning there is between "Ecclesia" and "Ecclesiastes"?

The basic meaning all through is the same: Koheleth—Ecclesiastes—Ecclesia: "a calling out, an assembly of called-out ones."

This word also has a political aspect—it means an assembly of citizens. Throughout the Scriptures it is used to designate the assembly of the citizens of the Holy City—called-out to be such, from the generality of the world.

Specifically, Koheleth or Ecclesiastes appears to designate a member of this assembly—particularly the Chief Member—its Head, or Teacher, or Leader.

So in Ecclesiastes we clearly see a very outstanding example of what Peter terms the "Spirit of Christ in the Prophets" (1 Pet. 1:11). This gives much more meaning to the teaching of this book.

* * *

"Vanity of vanity, saith the Koheleth, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.

"What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?" — vs. 2-3.

Where does it all lead to? What does it accomplish? What is the basic purpose of life? We are reminded of Jesus' words—

"What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own life?"

Vs. 4-11: The Sun, the wind, the rivers,—an endless cycle, over and over, generations come and go, and are forgotten—millions upon millions—there is nothing new. In our brief hour of existence, we are but a tiny speck in the endless, apparently meaningless stream.

Vs. 12-18: He considers knowledge and wisdom, the study of all things that exist, the endless marvels and beauties of creation. Is **that** the answer?—the purpose of our life? **No, not of itself.** Fascinating as such study is—still **of itself** it has no purpose or final satisfaction.

This is a very important point—that we do not get side-tracked into the mere pursuit and esteeming of knowledge for its own sake—

"Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth" (1 Cor. 8:1).
Knowledge of itself and for itself is sterile, and caters only to pride.

Truly creation is marvellous, and natural curiosity is continually delighted with its infinite variety, but such knowledge of itself — though fascinating — is lifeless and vain.

Even the knowledge of the Scriptures,—though this is the only important knowledge—pursued simply as knowledge, is empty and dead if it does not transform the character and purify the heart.

"For in much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow"
— v. 18.

Knowledge and wisdom of themselves just open up the heart to a greater experience and discernment of grief and sorrow and the utter vanity of all earthly things.

Chap. 2:1-3: Is **pleasure** the answer? He said: "I will try everything—every excess of sensation, indulgence and excitement."

What did he find? It was madness and folly. It mocked him with empty disillusionment. There was no real happiness, no satisfaction.

Vs. 4-11: I will try great accomplishments—great buildings, great enterprises, great public works, monumental labours, vast possessions, honours, power and riches.

"Then I looked on it all, and behold all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun" — v. 11.

He says that all through this—

"My wisdom remained with me."

All was done in a purposeful, calculated effort to find the true meaning and value of life. But all was vanity. So (v. 12)—

"Then I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly" —v. 12.

If wisdom is sorrow, is it better to be just stupid and contented like the cattle of the field, without the capacity to wonder about life's meaning?

No. That too is not the answer. He could clearly see, throughout it all (v. 13), that—

"Wisdom excelleth folly as far as light excelleth darkness."

But still (vs. 14-16), all end up the same, the wise and the fool both come to the same final end in the grave.

"And I said in my heart: This also is vanity . . . Therefore I hated life" — vs. 15-17.
—What good is there in anything?

Vs. 17-23 are the expression of a complete revulsion against life itself. Nothing is worthwhile at all. It is better never to have been born.

Every aspect of natural human life from the highest and most noble and most worthy right down to the lowest and most abused is alike vanity and mockery when analysed through to its final end.

Have we not seen how the highest accomplishments and labor of one generation are abused and abused by the next?

Think of the wonderful inventions of the past 100 years. Have they made man better? Is he using them for worldwide good, or for evil, selfish ends?

Every development of the past 100 years — which could have made the whole earth a practical paradise—is rather being prostituted to the superhuman effort to build up colossal means of domination and mass destruction. There is more fear and misery and oppression in the earth than ever before in all history.

How much more true and forceful are the Preacher's words in the present generation than they have ever been before!

He has reached the climax of his analysis of all that is human and natural.

* * *

V. 24 (of chap. 2) starts a new theme. He brings **God** into the picture, and from here on we start to see **meaning** in the picture. We stand further back for a broader view, and what has seemed to be but an endless, hopeless, meaningless repetition of futility, begins to manifest form, and order, and purpose, and development.

"There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor.

"This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God."

We must try to get the basic meaning of this, for he repeats this theme many times throughout the book. It is the underlying message—**to rejoice in what God has provided, and to rejoice in one's labor for God.**

Paul, from his dark prison cell, emphasizes this deep, basic theme of godly living throughout his message of comfort to the brethren at Philippi (4:4)—

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice!"

The expression "to eat and drink" is sometimes used of thoughtless indulgence in the present, as—

"Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die."

But it has a better and deeper meaning, which we believe is the meaning here. That meaning is a **contentment and rejoicing: in God for the basic simplicities of life, contrasted to pride and seeking great things.**

This is illustrated very clearly in God's words through Jeremiah to Jehoiakim, the wicked son of the good king Josiah (22:15)—

"Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thyself in cedar?

"Did not thy father **eat and drink**, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him . . . but **thine** eyes are but for thy covetousness."

The words of Nehemiah too help us to perceive the meaning of "eating and drinking" as related to contentment and rejoicing in God's goodness. He says (Neh. 8:9-10)—

"Mourn not, nor weep . . . eat the fat, and drink the sweet . . . for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry, for the JOY OF THE LORD is your strength."

This we believe is the meaning of the first half of Ecclesiastes' simple, 2-fold creed of life — contentment and rejoicing in God, because rejoicing is a mighty power for good — a mighty power for the purifying and softening and sweetening of the character. As soon as we allow the pressures and problems of the present to dislodge us from this haven of strength, we begin to flounder and sink.

"THE JOY OF THE LORD IS YOUR STRENGTH."

An essential part of this same picture, and built upon this literal aspect of rejoicing in the basic provisions of God's goodness, is the figure of the eating and drinking of the marvellous feast of God's revealed Word and thus growing in spiritual grace and knowledge, which Job says he considered more important than his necessary food.

The 2nd half of this creed of life is equally important—

"That he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour."

Labour is not in itself the curse. The curse was the sorrow and hardship and handicap under which man was condemned to labour because of sin. Labour itself is good. Labour is the purpose of life. Jesus said—

"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17).

Paul exhorted the brethren to (Phil. 2:12)—

"Work out your salvation."

To be—

"Always abounding in the work of the Lord."

"Workmen that need not to be ashamed."

"Workers together with God."

But the Preacher's principal point is **rejoicing** in labour, **enjoying** it, **thankful** of the opportunity and ability of doing it.

It is only the **cheerful** giver that God loves (2 Cor. 9:7). Anything done or given grudgingly or self-pityingly lacks the pure oil of rejoicing that was required to make a sacrifice acceptable to God.

The manna in the wilderness—the spiritual food—had the taste of fresh oil (Num. 11:8), because God's mercies are "new every morning" (Lam. 3:23). A joyful recognition of God's goodness must be the spirit with which we greet each new day.

The Preacher does not define the labour, because he is just giving the general principle here, but it includes every activity of the well-ordered life, for everything that is done should be done with rejoicing as unto the Lord (Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:23).

"For God giveth to a man that is good in His sight wisdom and knowledge and joy" — v. 26

All good is of God. The introduction of God changes the picture from futility to rejoicing. Man can accumulate wisdom and knowledge in the natural sense of which the Preacher has spoken earlier, but only God can give it life and meaning with the great gift of joy.

* * *

Thus he concludes ch. 2, and ch. 3 begins the great lessons of God's goodness.

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven" — v. 1

What a wholesome, orderly contrast to the former gloomy picture he has given us!

Here is the first great lesson for man to learn—that all God's work has wisdom, and purpose, and order, and arrangement which our puny little finite minds cannot hope to fully comprehend, but which we must accept in faith and joy.

Vs. 1-8: There is a time for everything. Life is **not** just an endless, meaningless cycle, but an orderly, purposeful arrangement. All things we see and experience — birth, death, killing, healing, weeping, laughing, loving, hating — all have their place in the purpose of Providence.

Each contributes in its own mysterious way to the accomplishment of that glorious divine assurance to God's children—

"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."

* * *

"Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever. Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it" —v. 14

Here is a contrast between natural man's endless, ever-changing cycle of futile, perishing efforts, and the eternal, purposeful, unchanging work of God. God's plans will stand forever, and man—to be happy— must adjust himself to them.

"God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every purpose, and for every work" — v. 17.

This is the first mention of judgment in the book, and it adds more significance to the first part of the chapter about a time for everything. The whole book ends on the thought of judgment.

Man is seen to have a responsibility for his actions. The book is about the human search for happiness and good, and the eternal facts of responsibility and judgment have a major bearing on this search.

The preacher goes further than saying a man must adjust himself to the **fact** of an all-powerful and unalterable God, if he would seek happiness.

He must also adjust his life to the equally real fact of **a God who calls to account** and metes out reward or punishment according to a man's actions.

V. 18 to the end of ch. 3 emphasize another basic lesson a man must master if he is to adjust himself to reality and learn the way of life — man's oneness with the beasts in physical constitution and nature—

"As one dieth, so dieth the other. Yea, they have all one breath (ruach: spirit).

"All go to one place. All are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" — vs. 19-20.

Ch. 4 treats of instances of the vanity of this present life.

Vs. 1-3: Wrongs, injustice and oppression. These are basic characteristics of the way of man. There is no worthwhile happiness or satisfaction to be wrought within the limits of this framework.

All natural human activities not related to the divine purpose are futile and vain, like sand castles on the seashore, for the great tide of oppression and injustice and wickedness in power keeps flowing over them and sweeping them away.

Ch. 5—contains further observations on the vanity of natural life, and the course of true wisdom.

Vs. 1-3: The folly of much talking. A wise man will talk little and weigh all his words well, always aware of his own limitations, and God's infinite wisdom and greatness. The fool is known by his thoughtless, foolish, trivial chattering.

Vs. 4-7: The folly of rash vows—thoughtless promises— ill considered statements. In our present dispensation the command is carried further and all vows are forbidden, but the basic principle

is the same—care and thoughtfulness and restraint, instead of impetuosity and rashness—in what we say we will do.

How often we speak thoughtlessly and hastily and do not carry out what we say, in dealing with children especially. This is fatal for any discipline or respect. Far better to say nothing at all, than to keep making hasty decisions, thoughtless commands and impetuous warnings that are never carried through. All this is childish, immature undisciplined folly in God's sight and will be called to account. "God hath no pleasure in fools"—and all natural reactions and spur-of-the-moment decisions are foolishness before God.

Vs. 9-17: The folly of seeking pleasure and security and satisfaction in this world's goods.

V. 18: The refrain is repeated again—

Eat and drink in thankfulness, and rejoice in godly labour.

* * *

Ch. 6 is a continuation of the theme of the vanity of the present. Great possessions, a multitudinous family, mean nothing of themselves. These are not the basic realities of life, and true success and accomplishment cannot be measured by them. For with all these things, what is the end result but death?

And even while life lasts, these things give no assurance of happiness or peace. We must go much deeper for the answer to life's great purpose.

"Better is the sight of the eye than the wandering of the desire" — v. 9.

Happiness lies in the appreciation and quiet enjoyment of what we have—not in the restless yearning for what we have not—in casting out **desire**, and replacing it with **rejoicing**.

How hard this lesson is to learn, and yet how simple it really is! Desire has **never** brought happiness, but only unhappiness. But contentment—an inner state of the mind beyond the control of any outside influence—is an **immediate** guarantee of happiness and peace.

What we have—or **can** have freely—life itself, the assurance of immortal joy if we walk worthy, the understanding of the Scriptures, the revelation of the beauty and goodness of God, the gracious invitation to companionship and comfort and joy in Him—all this is so infinitely more valuable than any thing in the world that we could desire, that if we cannot be content and happy and abundantly satisfied in this, we could never find happiness or satisfaction in anything. So the problem of happiness is entirely within ourselves —not in anything outside of us that we think we desire.

These are deep and basic facts. Ecclesiastes presents the Gospel in a different way. It shows that the way of the Truth is not only a command, an obligation, a responsibility, but that it is the only **sensible** way—the only way to find what all mankind is seeking—happiness, contentment, satisfaction, the greatest good, the most lasting joy and pleasure.

Ecclesiastes examines all the things men strive for—all the things they attach value to—all the things they think will bring them satisfaction,—and logically traces them all through to the same final conclusion—vanity.

So the Preacher concludes ch. 6 (vs. 10-12)—and the Rev. Version is a little clearer here—

"Whatsoever hath been, the name thereof was given long ago . . ."

(There is nothing new, nothing that has not been tried as a way of happiness and satisfaction, and all has been shown to bear the name "vanity") . . .

"And it is known what man is."

The word here used for 'man' is 'Adam,' which speaks of his frailty, his dust constitution, his end in the grave . . .

"Seeing there are many things that increase vanity, what is man the better? . . .

"For who knoweth what is good for man in his life, all the days of his vain life, which he spendeth as a shadow?"

Who among: man knows what is best? Where shall he look, for all human activity is so futile, when measured in the scales of eternity?

* * *

Ch. 7 is different in tone. It gently tells some of the things that are better. It lays down wholesome principles that point the way to the light.

V. 1: A good name is better than precious ointment. Precious ointment was very pleasing and refreshing. It stands for all that is pleasant and enjoyable and luxurious. It speaks of comfort and honor and wealth.

But a good name—a good character—is much better. A good character, purified through trial and patience, is the sweet-smelling savour of a costly sacrifice unto God.

The good Name is Yahweh Elohim—The Memorial Name— the eternal purpose—God manifested in a host of mighty ones—all joyful and all glorious!

The Koheleth continues (v. 1)—

"The day of death is better than the day of birth."

What a reversal of the world's views! But how irresistibly true when viewed in the light of the Scriptures! One is the beginning of trouble, trial, struggle, effort, warfare—the other is the end of all these, the accomplishment, the deliverance, the victory.

"It is better to go into the house of mourning than the house of feasting" — v. 2.

Here again, how contrary to all our natural inclinations, but how clearly true when we have the wisdom and courage to face the real facts.

"Sorrow is better than laughter" — v. 3.

How could anyone say that?—"Sorrow is better than **laughter**"! Are we not constantly exhorted to rejoice, and rejoice, and rejoice?

The strange and marvellous thing is that these two apparent opposites are both beautifully true, and it is the sorrow that engenders the rejoicing.

Paul, writing to the Romans of the wonderful workings of God's wisdom, speaks of the same deep truths, and borrows the very wording of Ecclesiastes when he says (8:20)—

"The creation was made subject to **vanity**, by reason of Him Who hath subjected the same in **hope**."

We suffer with Christ (he says—v. 17) that—in order that—we may be also glorified together.

And he says that the suffering—the sorrow—the light affliction which is but for a moment—worketh for us an eternal weight of glory.

Paul uses the same strange and beautiful paradox to describe his own condition and course through this evil world (2 Cor. 6:10)—

"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

Here is how the sorrow is related to the rejoicing. Here is why in this present dispensation of probation, sorrow is better than laughter.

It is more wholesome. It is more sound. It is more constructive—more purifying—ininitely more powerful for the development of calmness and peace and kindness and sympathy and love. So the Koheleth continues—

"By the sadness of the countenance, the heart is made better."
—and out of the heart are all the issues of life.

Can we not, even now, even in our own limited experience of the reality of life—can we not of ourselves perceive the deep truth of the principle that "Sorrow is better than laughter?"

Therefore the heart of the wise chooses to dwell in the sobering influence of the house of mourning, but the heart of thoughtless fools is in the emptiness and shallowness and giddiness of the house of mirth.

"The laughter of the fool is as the crackling of thorns under a pot."

And so the Koheleth gives many deep words of wisdom— deep, spiritual words well worthy of all the pondering and meditation that we can give them.

Every verse is a well of knowledge—a well of living waters. As we read them let us remember that they are the words of life to the Ecclesia of God — Ecclesiastes — a message to called-out ones.

And let us remember the closing words—

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter—

"Fear God, and keep His commandments, for this is the whole man."

The full, complete, perfect man—the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ—the called-out, multitudinous Son of Man—the Yahweh-Elohim who shall bear God's Name and in whom He will be glorified for the eternal ages.
— G.V.G.

Signs of the Times

"A LOOK around a troubled world" might be considered a trite saying, but it seems to best describe the present world situation, as revolution and threatened uprisings plague many nations; as "evil goes forth from nation to nation."

Evidence mounts that the "soft line" used by Mr. Khrushchev for some time is now reverting to the "tough line" that has characterized Soviet policy for many years. Any hopes that better relations were developing between East and West have been dashed by recent words and actions.

A communiqué prepared for the NATO Council of Ministers meeting in Ottawa, Canada,

"Set forth a four-point program to beef up the nuclear power of NATO; expressed concern over continued presence of Soviet forces in Cuba, and issued a pledge to guard West Berlin against the persisting menace of a Red takeover."

In Europe

PREMIER Khrushchev has virtually wiped out all hope of any agreement on a nuclear test ban and inspections. Soviet harassment of Western air travel to West Berlin has resumed, and in a recent interview Khrushchev demanded settlement of the Berlin issue along Soviet lines only. Despite Russian acceptance of the Geneva agreement insuring a unified and neutral Laos, they have winked at

continual Communist guerrilla incursions into Laos and placed all the blame for the resumption of hostilities on the U.S.

Russia has made a mockery of what was supposed to have been an agreement to remove all missiles and army personnel from Cuba by refusing to permit proper inspection, leaving serious doubts as to what extent this agreement has been complied with.

At the same time it is without question that Cuba is still a Russian base for further operations, and every Soviet Embassy in Latin-America is being used for espionage and aiding Communist subversion, while Moscow gives a royal welcome to Castro, with promises of more economic and military aid.

The announcement that France will eventually shift from atomic tests in the Sahara to hydrogen tests in the Pacific has upset all plans for keeping nuclear power within bounds. The French plan, it is predicted, will intensify Soviet opposition to a test ban, accelerate the armament race and promote mass production of nuclear weapons by many nations. It is significant that a recent statement by DeGaulle indicates that France expects to be the dominant nuclear power in the NATO Alliance.

Southeast Asia

THE "neutralist" government in LAOS, having failed to carry out any provisions of the Geneva accord, which was supposed to bring peace, is now hard pressed as the Reds are pursuing a campaign of infiltration and subversion, while many neutralists are defecting to the Communists. Laos is going to the Communists fast, with little opposition, and is in grave danger of becoming a Red Chinese bastion, as Cuba has fallen to the Soviets.

IN SOUTH VIETNAM an endless guerrilla war goes on, where decisive military victories are impossible, and the peasant population takes little interest in defending the country from Communist encroachments.

Meanwhile there is building up in Southeast Asia a new British commonwealth nation which may change the whole complexion of the perplexing situation in this troubled area. It is the Federation of MALAYSIA, composed of Malaya, Singapore and British protectorates of Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo. It is the richest and most prosperous area of Southeast Asia, the world's largest rubber producer.

But even before the Federation is made official, its future is menaced by Red China from the North and Indonesia from the South, who look with envious eyes upon this rich, productive area. This is of great significance in the fact that any attempt to invade its territories by Communist forces would clash directly with British interests.

Latin-America

AS Castro enjoys a love feast with Khrushchev and other Soviet dignitaries, the tension over Cuba grows as evidence piles up that Cuba is nothing more than a Communist stronghold. While Cuba's people exist on short rations, Castro, as a mere pawn in Khrushchev's hands, must allow the Soviets to use the island's resources to further their own purposes.

It is also evident that Communist strength is growing in South and Central America, especially in British Guiana, Venezuela, Brazil and Guatemala. At present a critical area is on the island of Hispaniola, 40 miles from Cuba, occupied by Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Haiti, during its 159 years of independence, has been ruled by one cruel and tyrannical dictatorship after another; has had 130 revolutions, and the present ruthless dictatorship is tottering as Communist forces stand by to take over. It is the consensus of many political analysts and book writers that it is "close to midnight in Latin-America;" that a gigantic upheaval is near at hand as the population turns against dictatorships in favor of Communism.

In The Mideast

OUTWARDLY there appears to have been little change in the Mideast situation during the past month, but underneath the surface political tensions are at work.

In Iran (Persia), oil-producing ally of the U.S., what began as a revolt by a few tribesmen, has grown into a major conflict, requiring seven battalions of Iranian troops to quell it, and the situation is still tense and the Shah's government is in grave danger of being overthrown, and in a country where Communism is already strong. If, and when the present government falls, there is little doubt that Communists will seize power, aided by Soviet Russia which borders Iran on the north.

Although beset with many difficulties, chief of which is fear of Nasser domination, his efforts to establish a United Arab Republic, and eventual unification of all Arab states is being pursued with vigor. The present crisis in Jordan has been called "Hussein's last stand," while the ailing King Saud of Saudi Arabia barely keeps a precarious hold on his shaky throne, as Nasser stands by to foment the internal strife and support any political or military group favouring his plans and purposes.

Naturally, concern in Israel grows as their arch enemy, Nasser, gains strength. Recently Prime Minister Ben Bella of Algeria, in a conference with Nasser, promised the Egyptian dictator full support in his plan to "liberate" Palestine and curb Jewish influence in North Africa.

Meanwhile Israel relies on Britain and the U.S. cutting off aid to Nasser in the event he continues his aggressive moves against Israel. In fact Britain has reaffirmed her pledge to adhere to "The Tripartite Declaration" issued in 1950 by Britain, U.S. and France in which they guarantee present Israel-Arab frontiers.

A resolution has been introduced in the U.S. Senate calling for the reduction and control of nuclear armaments in the Middle East, and asking for an international police force to force such an agreement, obviously aimed at Nasser's arms build-up. The resolution also asks for U.S. reaffirmation of the Tripartite agreement "for the protection of Israel's sovereignty."

We can rest assured that, if Israel cannot defend herself, God will raise up friends to help her in their hour of need.

Seeking a Way Out

As violence, crime, immorality and general godlessness increases at an alarming rate; as the authority and influence of the churches decreases; as scientific speculation, Bible criticism and general scepticism takes the place of time-honoured creeds, the churches are now turning to what appears to be their last resort in an effort to revive a weak and decadent religious system which started out to reform the world, but has now come to the point of being absorbed by the world and having to resort to worldly methods in an effort to hold a weak and wavering membership.

The new plan is a movement to merge all the larger denominations of Christendom. Born of a feeling of weakness, as all mergers are, the plan is to first unite all Protestant denominations and then go on to unite, or at least cooperate and affiliate with Catholicism. Church leaders frankly admit that "the Protestant era is ending," and the "ecumenical movement within Protestantism, Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy is the most significant development of our age." How true! **But the significance is in an entirely different direction to what they think.**

Merging will not restore the churches to the Apostolic Faith. On the contrary, it will drive them farther away from it; that faith which was first corrupted during the first centuries after Christ (2 Thess. 2), and which they have corrupted more and more. The little truth they hold must be suppressed for the sake of peace.

The great ecumenical movement, instead of indicating a spiritual revival, is a desperate effort to save so-called "Christianity" from total extinction. It is a part of the great accumulation of evidence which confirms the fact that we are living in that era foretold by Jesus Christ "as it was in the days of Noah."

However, there is deep significance in this ecumenical movement in relation to the Signs of the Times. We see a rapid movement of decadent Protestantism (Rome's Daughters) back to the fold

of the Old Mother. All of which is in line with other evidence of a revival of the "Holy Roman Empire," which is to oppose the Lord Jesus Christ when He proclaims Himself the Imperial and Ecclesiastical head over all the earth. (Rev. 17:14; 19:19-20). —O.B.

Correspondence

1963 TEXAS GATHERING SUNDAY SCHOOL

Dear Parents and Sunday School Scholars:

Once again it is my pleasant duty to inform you of the Sunday School program for the Texas Gathering. We were pleased with the cooperation and genuine interest of all who took part in the program last year.

We have found it most profitable to divide the students into three groups. The following is the arrangement, if the Lord will.

The teachers of the first group will draw lessons from the lives of Bible characters and give them present day applications to our every day lives.

The second class will consider the period from Adam and Eve to Israel's entry into Egypt, bringing out fundamental scriptural beliefs as illustrated by our first parents and the patriarchs.

The theme of the Senior Class is to be: "**Prophetic Steps to and Including the Advent of the Personal Return of Christ to the Earth.**" This class will be a prayerful endeavour to bring out those fundamentals which are so needful for proper growth both in knowledge and in faith. Such questions as: "When am I ready for baptism?" and, "Can I live the life of a baptized brother or sister of Christ?" will be studied. We will be attempting to cover a great deal of historical background in the development of our subject related to our actions in the present day. Three days will be spent considering the developments leading up to this time. The 4th day is to be given to our present situation in relation to the outside world. Finally, on the last day, we will show that baptism and covenant relationship with Christ are necessary to our eternal salvation. The program of this class is:

Monday, July 29: From the Pronouncement of the Prophecy to 1870

Nebuchadnezzar's image (Dan. 2) and the little horn of the 4th Beast (Dan. 7). The beginning of the "time of the end." The 6th Vial on the River Euphrates (Rev. 16). The end of the 1260 year period.

Tuesday, July 30: From 1879 to 1948

The Jewish Question and the Land of Palestine. Continuation of 6th Vial. Three unclean spirits like frogs. Beginning of the spirit of devils and development up to 1948. World War I and its result. World War II and impact. Germany's place in the picture. Palestine released, Jewish return, and the state of Israel.

Wednesday, July 31: From 1948 to the Coming of Christ

The arms race. World unrest. Gog of Magog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. The Space Age. Ten horns receive power one hour with the Beast. The Image on has feet. "Behold I come as a thief," (Rev. 16:15). The 7th Vial.

Thursday, Aug. 1: The dangers to the Sons of God and their children in the Time of the End, of being led into Gentile influence, and therefore away from identification with Christ and the Purpose of God.

Higher Learning. 2 Tim. 3:1-7 considered. "As it was in the days of Noah." The Sons of God and their departure. These are all signs of the impending return of Christ.

Friday, Aug. 2: Baptism and After

Necessity and importance of baptism. Covenant relationship. Its effect on the individual. No longer an individual alone or "without God in the world"; now in the love of the Father, the Son, and the brethren and sisters. The impact of this relationship. The danger of individual or group departure from the purity of the Truth. The warning as a prophetic step. "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments." (Rev. 16:15).

On Saturday, at 3, we will have our annual children's program where those who wish to participate will recite psalms and proverbs or give resumes on scriptural topics, and we will once more enjoy hearing the singing of hymns of praise to our Heavenly Father.

We urge parents and scholars to tell your friends and fellow scholars about the benefits of attending the Texas Gathering. Remember that enthusiasm is contagious, and that enthusiasm is necessary to make any activity a success.

And what is the success of the Texas Gathering? We are successful only if we can bring our minds into submission to the Divine will and offer our bodies as a living temple to the glory of God.

I leave you then with this thought, and hope that we will see each other once again at the 1963 Texas Gathering.

—bro. Ellis Higham, 1963 superintendent. Apt. 2, 142 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre, Cal.

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Many tapes are available, to any who would like them, including the Hye, London, Boston and Worcester Gatherings for the past several years, lectures, exhortations, etc.

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1963 BEREAN CHRISTADELPHIAN TEXAS FRATERNAL GATHERING

HYE, TEXAS

If the Lord Will

JULY 29-AUG. 4

Mon.,

July 29

	SPEAKER, Bro.:	SUBJECT
9.00 a.m.		BUSINESS MEETING
11.00 a.m.	G. A. Gibson	"Patient in Tribulation" (Part 1)
3.00 p.m.	N. Mammone	REVELATION 7:1-8
8.00 p.m.	O. Beauchamp	ONE GOD, NOT THREE: THE ETERNAL CREATOR, THE FATHER, THE SOURCE OF ALL THINGS: The Man Christ Jesus, God's Son; The Holy Spirit God's Universe-Filling Power and Presence; The Angels His Immortal Messengers

TUESDAY, JULY 30

9:30 a.m.		READ and DISCUSS DAILY BIBLE READINGS
11:00 a.m.	G. V. Growcott	"The Apostle Paul"
3:00 p.m.	Wayne Wolfe	REVELATION 7:9-17
8:00 p.m.	John Randell	THE BIBLE, GOD'S PERSONAL MESSAGE OF SALVATION TO MANKIND; INFALLIBLE, ALL-SUFFICIENT: The Only Guide to Life; A Knowledge of it Essential to Salvation.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31

9:30 a.m.		READ and DISCUSS DAILY BIBLE READINGS
11:00 a.m.	G. A. Gibson	"Patient in Tribulation" (Part 2)
3:00 p.m.	Fred Higham	REVELATION 8:1-8
8:00 p.m.	N. Mammone	MAN A MORTAL, DYING CREATURE OF DUST BECAUSE OF SIN: THE DEAD UNCONSCIOUS: The Immortal Soul a Pagan Invention; Resurrection the Only Hope of Life; Judgment at the Lost Day; Light Brings Responsibility; Unenlightened Man Perishes Like the Beasts.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1

9:30 a.m.		READ and DISCUSS DAILY BIBLE READINGS
11:00 a.m.	Fred Higham	"Arise: Go Up to Bethel"

3:00 p.m. G. V. Growcott
8:00 p.m. John Randell

REVELATION 8:9-13
BAPTISM IN WATER THE ONLY APPOINTED WAY OF
ENTRANCE INTO CHRIST; NO SALVATION OUTSIDE OF
CHRIST: Complete Immersion the Only Method; True Belief Must
Precede Baptism, Faithful Obedience to the End Must Follow it;
Sprinkling False and Useless; Infant Baptism an Unscriptural
Invention of Man.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2

9:30 a.m.
11:00 a.m. C. H. Thomson
3:00 p.m. Troy Haltom
8:00 p.m. O. Beauchamp

READ and DISCUSS DAILY BIBLE READINGS
"Walk in the Light"
REVELATION 9:1-11
**THE RETURN OF CHRIST TO SET UP THE KINGDOM OF
GOD ON EARTH: HE WILL DESTROY ALL PRESENT
POWERS
And Rule All Nations in Righteousness; The Fulfilment of the
Promises through Eve, Abraham and David; The Regathering
of the Jews; The Hope of Israel; The House of Prayer**

SATURDAY, AUGUST 3

9:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m. John Randell
3:00 p.m. Ellis Higham
8:00 p.m. Fred Higham

BUSINESS MEETING
"Feed My Sheep"
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM
**SIGNS OF THE TIMES: A COUNTRY BY COUNTRY
ANALYSIS OF WORLD CONDITIONS
In Relation to Prophecy and the Last Days.**

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4

10:30 a.m. G. V. Growcott

"Bear Ye One Another's Burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ."

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