

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

Final dates for receiving News:

Sep. 11, Oct. 9

HOUSTON, Texas—8008 Junius St.—Sunday School 10 a.m.; Breaking of Bread, 11 a.m.; Lecture every third Sunday 7:30 p.m.; "Eureka" class other Sunday evenings at 7 p.m.; "The Visible Hand of God", Wednesday 7:30 p.m.

AGAIN we have reason for great rejoicing and encouragement in the things of our high calling in Christ Jesus by the obedience to the faith of one of our Sunday School scholars. Miss LINDA LANDERS met with the examining committee on June 18 and gave a good confession of her faith. She was immersed into the saving Name June 21, and received into fellowship June 23. Linda is the daughter of sister Ouida Landers of this ecclesia.

We thank God and take courage that another has taken up the journey with us, that as strangers and pilgrims together, we may unitedly labour for an abiding place in that city "which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God."

On April 5, bro. Charles Banta, Jr. and sis. Dottye Mason were united in marriage. May they strengthen each other to continue faithful and abound in the great work of preparing a people for our Lord's imminent return.

Visitors around the table of the Lord have included sis. Jessie Hatcher of San Saba, bro. & sis. W. C. Muter from the Eden ecclesia, bro. & sis. Harry Sommerville of the Honesdale, Pa. ecclesia, bro. & sis. Ross Wolfe of the Lampasas ecclesia, and sis. Carolyn Thompson of Tyler. Bro. Sommerville gave us stirring words of exhortation. We are deeply grateful to our Heavenly Father for the fellowship and association of those of like precious faith. —bro. C. Banta

* * *

PAINT ROCK, Texas

THE members of our ecclesia were greatly encouraged by having the following visitors on Sunday, June 23: bro. & sis. Bill Edwards of Harper, bro. & sis. Urbane Edwards of Bandera, and sis. Dora Tinsley of Mason. Bro. Bill Edwards gave us uplifting words of exhortation at the memorial service.

We met in the home of bro. Aris Edwards, Mereta Route. San Angelo, and there were twelve members present.

We hope to have more visiting brethren and sisters with us to encourage us on our way.

—bro. Melvin Edwards

* * *

SOUTH CALIFORNIA—Corner of E. Pearl & N. Palomares Sts., Pomona, Cal.—Sundays: Class 10:30 a.m.; Memorial Service 11:30 a.m.; Lecture 3:30 p.m. first Sunday of the month.

WITH much joy we convey to the brethren and sisters of the Berean fellowship that bro. William M. Biggar and sis. Margaret B. Biggar have informed us that they are at one with us in fellowship, and that they are in agreement, both as regards doctrine and practice, with the position set out in the Restatement published in the Berean Magazine for July, 1960.

Therefore bro. and sis. Biggar are now members of this meeting. We quote the closing sentence of our brother and sister's letter which conveys their feeling as it does ours—

"We have therefore decided we should join hands in the work of making ready a people prepared for the coming of the Lord, hoping that our association with the Bereans will be mutually beneficial."

We are indeed comforted and strengthened with this event. We are very sorry to add, however, that sis. Biggar had an accident last December and is still very unwell as a result. It would give bro. & sis. Biggar much joy to receive letters of love and understanding and welcome into our association and fellowship. Their address is: 5458 Village Green, Los Angeles 16, Calif.

We also have been very much encouraged in having our sis. Eva Banta of the Houston ecclesia, and sis. Icle Osborne of the Denver ecclesia, visiting us for several weeks. To our two sisters, as to bro. & sis. Biggar, we extend a welcome to be with us around the table of the Lord.

We are glad to report that we continue our monthly lectures and have had several strangers present. With love in the Truth from us all, —bro. John Randell

* * *

TORONTO, Canada—Leaside Memorial Community Gardens, 1073 Millwood Road—Sunday School 10 a.m.; Memorial 11 a.m.

June 9th was a day we in Toronto will remember with joyous thankfulness. Bro. Growcott, of Detroit, gave us words of exhortation that stirred us and encouraged us to greater faithfulness.

In the afternoon, bro. Fred Higham Sr., lectured on the timely subject of "Jewish National Rebirth, an element of the Gospel." Although well advertised, no strangers were present, but we had a good attendance of visiting brethren and sisters. We all felt that we were experiencing a Fraternal Gathering. In facit, it was.

Our visitors for the day were, bre. August Fabris, G. V. Growcott, Fred Higham Sr., Fred Higham Jr., and sis. Beth Higham of Detroit; bre. Clifford Cope and John Fotheringham, sisters Evelyn Cope and Jenny Fotheringham of Hamilton; bro. David Clubb, and sisters Grace Cartlidge, Ruth Clubb, Dale Gwalchmai, Mary Gwalchmai and Ethel Ross of London.

And on the following Sunday we had the company of sister Dorothy Tinker of Montreal. We are deeply appreciative of their association and fellowship.

We have just completed a long and interesting study of The Law of Moses by bro. Roberts. As we proceeded slowly and carefully, paragraph by paragraph, we became deeply impressed with the calibre of his mind that enabled him to produce a work that is far superior to anything found in modern productions. The result of such a study is not only satisfying to the mind, but it shows how deeply he drank from the pure fountain of living water, and how richly he ate of the "unleavened bread of sincerity and Truth." There is nothing light or superficial in his thoughts, for wherever we go in his writings we find that they give forth the fragrance of the sanctuary. We thank God for his work.

—bro. G. A. Gibson

EDITORIAL

Preparation for Baptism

"When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women"—Acts 8:12

IN THE writings of the apostles, there are many references to the Gospel, but few where it is defined. The instructions of Jesus, given just before his ascension, as recorded by Mark, were—

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel."

And Paul, in the letter to the Romans 1:15, said—

"I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome."

If we examine the records concerning Paul's work in Rome, we will obtain the information we desire. Here, in the last chapter of Acts, we learn that "Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house." It was there that his desire to preach the Gospel was fulfilled, and the substance of his talks is given in v. 23—

"And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the Prophets, from morning until evening."

It will be noted that these particulars agree with the preaching of Philip as given in our quotation from Acts 8:12, and it further shows that if we would understand the Gospel, which Paul says "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," we must become familiar with what is written in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, concerning Jesus and the Kingdom of God.

By one deeply interested in these things, the pertinent question might well be asked, "How much must I know and understand about the Gospel before baptism?" You will recall that the Philippian jailer asked Paul a similar question, and Paul replied—

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Upon careful examination, it will be found that to "believe on the Lord Jesus" is exactly the same as believing the Gospel for, as we have seen from Paul's preaching in Rome, the Gospel is made up of the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

Early in the year 1868, brother Roberts gave this subject much consideration and, as a result, compiled a series of 172 questions which he titled "The Good Confession." From that day to this, with brethren who have had placed upon them the serious responsibility of examining candidates for baptism, the Good Confession has been used as a basis for such examinations.

Because of the tremendous responsibility, the examining brother should not have any doubt of the candidate's belief of "the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus Christ," and should be as certain as possible that the applicant is truly sincere in his request for baptism.

From the records that are available, and from long experience, it is our firm conviction that a person requesting baptism should have an extensive knowledge, appreciation and a sincere belief of the following first principles of Truth—

THE BIBLE,—Divine source and wholly God inspired.

GOD—His Unity, Personality and Attributes.

HOLY SPIRIT—The Power of God; not now possessed as in the days of the apostles.

MAN—Mortal; a Living Soul; his Spirit or Breath.

DEATH STATE—Unconscious in a Deep Sleep.

SIN—In both aspects—Transgression, and the Sin that dwelleth in us.

DEVIL and SATAN—Clearly Defined.

JESUS CHRIST—Son of God; Son of Man; his possession of the Sin Nature, yet Sinless in Character.

PROMISES to ABRAHAM—THE LAND OF ISRAEL; Relation to the Gospel.

COVENANT with DAVID—As it relates to Jesus and the Kingdom of God.

DISPERSION and RESTORATION of ISRAEL—Details of History.

RESURRECTION—All Responsible to be Raised and When.

JUDGMENT—Good and Bad; Light and Responsibility.

ESTABLISHMENT of the KINGDOM—How to be ruled.

THE MILLENNIUM—The Result of the Establishment of it.

AFTER THE MILLENNIUM—What is to take place and the Result.

SECOND RESURRECTION and JUDGMENT—God all in all.

TERMS of SALVATION—Belief of the Gospel, Obedience in Baptism and Godly walk.

A candidate for baptism should have a clear understanding, and a sincere appreciation of the items listed above and, in addition to that, an unwavering faith in God's Word. If he does not possess those characteristics, the baptism should be postponed, and assistance offered to help him in a better understanding of the way of salvation. There is a two-fold reason for such action. The peace of mind of the applicant would be set at ease, and the ecclesia would be protected against receiving into fellowship any without sufficient knowledge of the Truth. Cases have been known where the examining brother although aware of the candidate's lack of knowledge has recommended baptism, and the result has been disastrous to the applicant, and brought great sorrow and trouble in the ecclesia.

In his introduction to *The Good Confession*, brother Roberts has left us some intelligent advice. On page 5, he says—

"But some hold that examination is altogether unscriptural and that it is a practice savouring of priestly arrogance. Those who think so look at the matter from a wrong point of view.

"If the position taken up by the examining party implied the assumption that the efficacy of the candidate's immersion depended on the administration or sanction of the examiner, the objection would hold good; but this would never be the attitude of enlightened believers of the Truth.

"They would say to anyone asking to be baptized: We are under the law of Christ; that law requires a man seeking baptism to be a believer of the Gospel; and it requires of us not to receive into our fellowship those who do not believe the Truth, on pain of being held responsible for their guilt.

"You ask us to baptize you. As a matter of allegiance to Christ and defence of our own position, we must ascertain whether you believe the Truth. We cannot be parties to your baptism if you do not receive the Truth. We should be misleading you and implicating ourselves.

"We cannot impart validity to immersion by compliance, nor can we vitiate it by withholding countenance, but as a matter of the commonest order and self-protection, we are bound to ascertain whether a man applying for immersion believes the truth of the Gospel or not."

This is good sound counsel for anyone desiring to make the most important step of his or her life. They should not, under any circumstances, permit personal feelings to enter into the transaction, and they will not, if they fully realize their natural position as explained by Paul in Eph. 2:12—

"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

But baptism removes this helpless and hopeless condition, and opens up for the believer of the Gospel a new and beautiful way of life, for, says Paul in vs. 19 & 20—

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the Household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone."
—Editor

King Over All the Earth

By BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

"He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron"— Revelation 2:26

THE destruction of the Fourth Beast of Daniel by the Rainbow Angel's pillars of fire will be the dissolution of the European commonwealth.

When the Old World hath fallen thus, what will be the destiny of the New? Will it escape "the burning flame"? When "the kingdoms of the Old World become the kingdoms of Yahweh and of His Anointed," will the colonial and republican institutions of the American continent remain intact?

Why should they so remain? American society is but an extension of European. Their civil and spiritual institutions are identical; their superstitions and blasphemies as God-dishonouring, Word-nullifying, and perversive of "His Way."

The earth is as corrupt as in the days of Noah, "for all flesh," in both hemispheres, "have corrupted His Way upon the earth" (Gen. 6:11-12). It is only necessary to understand the Way of Salvation as taught by the apostles to see this.

Seeing, then, that the Deity swept into the abyss the whole human family except Noah and his house for this crime, why should not the American world be punished, being guilty of the same iniquity?

There is every reason to conclude that judgment will fall upon it with great severity. Its idolatry of self is God-defiant; and it needs to be taught that there is One almighty than the dollar, and stronger than the human will.

There is no symbolical revelation of events to be developed upon the American arena. There are, however, general declarations, which show what must of necessity be developed in the course of the Rainbow Angel's mission upon this continent from one end of it to the other. Thus, the principle is oracular that (Psa. 22:27)—

"ALL nations shall come and worship before the all-powerful Yahweh Elohim."
And that (Isa. 26-9)—

"They will learn righteousness."

This necessitates instructors, and a system of instruction, such as does not exist on earth at this time—an enlightening power no less than divine. It also requires a disposition, a childlike disposition, which exists not in the public mind, neither in the ignorant people, nor in their blind and conceited guides.

To correct this fatal evil, and to break the power of ignorance, which is "the power of Satan," the angelic "pillars of fire" must march through the land; for it is written—

"When the judgments of Yahweh are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26: 9; Rev. 15:4).

And when they have learned this lesson, so difficult for individuals and nations, their lofty looks will be humbled, and their haughtiness will be bowed down, and Yahweh alone will be exalted (Isa. 2:10-11). British and American pride will be prostrate in the dust; and "the people the source of all power," an exploded fiction of the past.

"In that day, Yahweh alone shall be exalted" (Isa. 2:11).

Popular sovereignty will be dead putrescent carcase; and all who derive their power and authority from it will be abased. Such a consummation as this, and so devoutly to be wished, can only be developed by Omnipotence—by the powerful Angel of the Covenant.

The fate of the Old World must necessarily be the fate of this whole American continent; for it is written of the Spirit, saying to the Son of David—

"I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Psa. 2:8).

This is certainly comprehensive of the western hemisphere. The Eternal Spirit gives this to the Rainbow Angel. All power and authority here must, therefore, be derived from him, not from the people; and in these there will be no democracy or republicanism, but **divine and imperial despotism, pure and simple**, for—

"He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron" (Psa. 2:9; Rev. 19:15; 2:26-27).

"And Yahweh shall be King over ALL the earth; in that day there shall be one Yahweh, and His Name one" (Zech. 14:9).

This is conclusive. The Monroe doctrine, and the millennial perpetuity of the Union, will be a derision to the cloud-invested Angel, as they are now to all who have "the patience of the saints," "the commandments of the Deity, and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12).

All the states of the New World will be taken possession of by them; for—

"The kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole of the heavens is given to the people of the saints of the Most High Ones . . . and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 7:27).

It is manifest, therefore, that the destiny of all colonies, and republics, and empires, upon the American arena, has long since been decreed; and that destiny is unquestionably glorious and blessed — that of being delivered by judicial power from the debasing tyranny under which they now groan; and of becoming the flourishing and happy provinces of an imperial dominion, coextensive with the globe, under which life, liberty, and property, will be secure, where (Ps. 89:10)

"Mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace embrace each other."

And Luke 2:14—

"Glory will be to the Deity in the highest heavens, over the earth peace, and goodwill among men."

"Hitherto is the end of the matter" (Dan. 7:28).

The wars of the Angel of the Bow culminate in the conquest of a peace which extinguishes all conflagrations in the earth for a thousand years.

Answers to Bible Questions

By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

The Effects of Adam's Fall

THE article in the Christadelphian for March, 1869, continues to represent our convictions on the subject of which it treats, namely, the relation of Jesus to the condemnation which we all inherit from Adam.

On some details, however, of that general subject, we should, if we were writing it again, express ourselves more explicitly, in view of the searching controversy which has arisen on the subject of sin in the flesh. We should guard ourselves against forms of expression which seem to favor the false ideas that have come to be advocated.

In asserting, for instance, that there was no change in the nature of Adam in the crisis of his condemnation, we should add, that though his nature continued of the order expressed in the phrase

"living soul," a change occurred in the condition of that nature through the implantation of death, as recognized in the article in question on page 83, col. 2, line 15, in the statement that death ran in the blood of Mary.

And on the subject of sin in the flesh, while retaining the declarations on page 83, as regards the operation of our moral powers, we should add that the effect of the curse was as defiling to Adam's nature as it was to the ground which thenceforth brought forth briars and thorns: and that therefore, after transgression, there was a bias in the wrong direction, which he had not to contend with before transgression.

Our mind has not changed on the general subject, but some of its details have been more clearly forced on our recognition by the movements and arguments of heresy. —R.R., 1877.

* * *

Balaam the Soothsayer

QUESTION: "*Who was Balaam, and to what God was it to whom he appealed in his divinations against Israel? It is said he went to meet the Lord: where did he go for this purpose? Was there any other place than the tabernacle where Abraham's God was to be approached after the establishment of Jewish institutions?*"— E. J.

ANSWER: You will get considerable light on the subject in Eur. I, p. 288, under the heading, "The Balaamites." Balaam, a resident at Pethor in Mesopotamia, was a believer in the true God, as is manifest from the narrative contained in Num. 22 to 24.

This need not be matter for surprise, in view of the existence of the true faith in the family of Noah, from which it would descend to some of those who came after, though it might be in a corrupt form.

Traces of it are found in the case of Abimelech, king of Gerar (Gen. 26:26). Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God in the days of Abraham, is an illustration of it in its purity (Gen. 14).

But Balaam was also a soothsayer (Josh. 13:22), a practiser of magical arts, so called, and a pretended reader of destiny. This profession is often referred to in the writings of the prophets, and always denounced as an imposture, and its practisers as false prophets, though some of them might sincerely imagine that the magnetic power which they possessed to influence those subject to them for good or evil (which all men possess in a greater or less degree) was a divine faculty conferring authority.

Balaam had acquired a great reputation in this line of things among the Moabites and other idolatrous nations. Balak shows this in the remark (Num. 22:6):

"I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed."

Balaam used his imaginary gift for gain. Avarice actuated him in his occupation: this is manifest from all the allusions to him. Though he believed in Jehovah as the only true God, he was not animated by the enlightened love and fear of Him, or inspired by a desire to do His will or bless his fellows. Self-enrichment by the exercise of a supposed divine gift was the peculiar feature of his case.

Jehovah had nothing to do with Balaam's natural gift of soothsaying, except as He has to do with all natural power. It was merely the life-energy natural to Balaam's animal organization concentrated and applied in a particular way with results having a certain reality about them, which fostered the illusion that he was divinely endowed.

He might suppose Jehovah in whom he believed had to do with it, and that he was the object of His favor and the depository of His power. The same thing is exemplified in witches and spiritualists in our day, in another form.

When, however, he (Balaam) was summoned to curse a nation who was under Jehovah's protection, Jehovah did speak to him by His angel, to deter him from the enterprise, and afterwards to turn the curse Balaam wished to imprecate for hire, into a blessing.

As for the "meeting of God," alluded to throughout the narrative, Balaam's retiring from Balak would be as when a man retires to pray. He would retire for privacy, and not that there was a particular place or spot where God was accessible. God is everywhere present, and can manifest Himself anywhere; but the man receiving the manifestation naturally withdraws from contact with other objects of attention.

Balaam would not be surprised at the manifestation, because, so far as his perceptions went, it would seem akin to what he was accustomed to. When a man of high electrical power throws himself into a trance for preter-natural perceptions, he is subjectively in a state similar to that into which a man is thrown when the hand of God is really upon him by the Spirit.

The difference lies in the impressions made upon him in that state. In natural trances there are no impressions beyond those that come from nature, which are as useless for real prophecy or any other spiritual purpose, as the perceptions of the faculties in their normal state.

"In the spirit," God speaks to the man with a result very palpably different in the nature of the communications he receives. Balaam was in the hand of God, and felt he was powerless to direct his thoughts or speech in opposition to the afflation upon him, but it would not strike him as an extraordinary thing, in view of his ordinary practice of divination, and in view of his belief in Jehovah.

* * *

AS FOR "any other place than the tabernacle where Abraham's God was to be approached after the establishment of the Jewish institution," the evidence goes to show that God willed to be approached by Israel alone, and by such strangers in other nations as chose to join themselves to the Lord in His appointed institutions established in the midst of Israel (Isa. 56:3-8).

The certainty seems to be that any knowledge of the true God existing among the Amorite nations before the time of Moses, was on the point of disappearing when Israel was used as the sword of the Lord to destroy those nations for their wickedness.

In Abraham's day "the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full" (Gen. 15:16). It was four hundred and thirty years afterwards when Israel came out of Egypt under Moses on their way to the land of the Amorites. We may conclude that at that time their iniquities were "full," and that therefore darkness covered the limited earth of those days, and gross darkness the people.

In Judah only was God thereafter known, and even among them, as we know from the divine record, the light often came near extinction. Jerusalem was the place where He chose to place His Name. Men seeking Him had therefore to seek Him there.

Nevertheless, when God chose, He spoke elsewhere, as to Nebuchadnezzar by dream, and Nineveh by the prophet Jonah.

— R.R.

* * *

The Use of the Term "Brother"

QUESTION: "*The apostle, in writing to the Hebrews (2:11), speaking of Jesus Christ, says, 'He is not ashamed to call them brethren,' but it appears, by the next verse, that it was only 'in the midst of the Church' that he addressed them thus. Is it not, therefore, a question if the brethren of Christ should address each other as "brother" or "sister," except at their respective meeting places? At their homes, or in the street, it might be very inconvenient. A poor brother, for instance, might degrade one in a better position by addressing him as 'brother' in the street, especially if the rich brother happened to be in the company of gentlemen friends. Be so good as to define where the line can be drawn*"

— C. F. W. R.

ANSWER: Hebrews 2:12 does not prove that Jesus limited the term brethren to the occasion of his assembly with them. It rather leans the contrary way. When he says, "I will declare Thy Name to my brethren," it implies that he estimates them as brethren previously to the act of declaring the Father's Name to them.

This inference he confirms by so describing them on dissimilar occasions. Thus in the presence of the common multitude, while refusing to acknowledge his mere relations in the flesh as such, he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples and said—

"Behold my mother and my brethren; for whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother" (Matt. 12:50.)

And again, to the women after his resurrection he said,

"Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me" (Matt. 28:10).

The idea that the use of the term "brother" was restricted by him to ceremonial occasions, is inconsistent with the fact expressed by the term. If a man is a brother of Christ, he is so always, and in all relations. He is Christ's property in the absolute sense (1 Cor. 3:23; 6:19); and the use of the term expressing this fact cannot therefore be restricted to the occasions of formal association.

It may suit the members of benefit societies and such like to limit the use of the term "brother" to their gatherings and their official relations, because in truth their brotherhood is confined to the limited objects for which they associate themselves.

But brotherhood in Christ is a more thorough affair. It lays hold of every moment of existence and every relation of life, imparting to it a colour and imposing on it obligations not appertaining to the lives of the alien.

A man is either a son of God all the time or not a son of God at all. If a son of God all the time, he is a brother of Christ all the time; for the two characters are corollaries one of another.

This excludes the idea that Christ would call us brethren only in formal assembly. The idea is absurd and pedantic and sickly, and could only exist where our relation to Christ is but feebly apprehended. Saintship is a more real and robust affair than such a notion would imply.

If, then, Christ is not ashamed to call us brethren, on what ground shall we hesitate to own the relation in any circumstance?

You say it is "inconvenient," and sometimes "degrading" for the term "brother" or "sister" to be used away from the meeting, say in the street, or in the house; especially where the term is addressed by a poor brother or a sister to one in good circumstances, in the presence perhaps of genteel friends.

Suppose it is; would that be a reason for avoiding it? If so, then honor from man would be a rule of action, and we should find ourselves moved to omit other things that would interfere with our respectability in the estimation of the present evil world. On that principle we should have to cease the profession of the Truth altogether before man, and what then about the words of Christ? (Matt. 10:33)—

"He that denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father Who is in heaven."

If Christ is not ashamed to call us brethren, ought we to be ashamed to call our fellows in the faith "brethren?" Is it not a rule laid down in advance by Christ, that **what we do to the least of his brethren we do to him** (Matt. 25:40)? If so, would not our refusal to acknowledge a brother in the presence of the alien be a refusal to acknowledge Christ? And how should we feel if this were brought up to us in the day of account?

Besides, why should we be so careful about the opinions of genteel friends? Are they not the enemies of God? And should we defer to the scruples and delicacies of those whose friendship Jesus declares is only to be enjoyed at the terrible price of God's enmity?

It argues an altogether unhealthy state of things spiritually with any man who is so anxious to propitiate the good opinion of carnal acquaintances, and so palpitating and uncertain in his acknowledgement of the things appertaining to Christ.

You ask where the line is to be drawn. The answer is, IT CANNOT BE DRAWN. Christ declares the impossibility of all attempts to reconcile the service of God with the service of the god of this world.

The Kingdom of God is not to be reached by the feeble enterprise which temporises with Christ for the sake of present reputation and convenience. His teaching on this subject is very strict. His illustrations are very thorough. A man discovering where an inestimable gem lies, sells all he has to obtain possession of the field where it is to be found.

Unless a man coming after Christ is prepared to deny himself and take up his cross, he is not fit to be his disciple. So he says (Luke 9:23; 14:27). The man saving his life shall lose it, which has many applications besides martyrdom.

Christ made himself of no reputation, and made himself the companion of illiterate and poor men, whom he was not ashamed to acknowledge as brethren in the presence of the highest respectability of his age. If we are unable to stoop in the same way, we shall be unfit for association with him when the time comes to abolish the carnal and purse-proud refinement of this age, and to establish a new order of respectability based on submission to God and that humility amongst men which is most rational.

If a man is in earnest, he will not parley with the question. A half-and-half adhesion will be a failure. It will spoil a man's position now and ensure his rejection hereafter. A man should count the cost, and having made his choice of Christ, accept all the issues of that choice without reservation.

No doubt it is difficult for rich and genteel people to do this. We experience the truth of what Christ said, that it is hard for rich men to enter into the kingdom of God. Rich and genteel people do sometimes make the attempt, but there is a great danger of their corrupting the practical doctrine of Christ to make it harmonize with their refined participations in the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life.

Through the influence of this class, corruption came in like a flood at the end of the apostolic age, and, through a similar influence, the Truth resuscitated in the 19th century would suffer a similar misfortune if its stewards and friends did not set the stout front of their opposition against all scruples and objections which have their origin in that love of human deference which is—no less in our century than in the days of Christ — inconsistent with genuine discipleship. —**R.R.**

When He Cried Unto Him, He Heard

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? . . . All things must be fulfilled, in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me"— Luke 24:26, 44

A STUDY OF PSALM 22

WE KNOW that David was truly a type of The Christ, and that Christ is the Head of the Body which is the Ecclesia of the Living God. As Christ has suffered, so also the Body must suffer until these are all filled up; and then will come the glory promised; as with Christ, so also with the Body.

But all the faithful, as with Christ and David, must look above and beyond sufferings, to the glories which shall soon be revealed. As we reflect upon God's Word we must ever keep this important truth in mind—looking beyond suffering, which is temporal, to the soon-coming eternal glories.

Psalm 22 is replete with the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. In enduring the cross Jesus was offered vinegar to drink, mingled with gall. "This potion," we are told, "was stupefying, and given to criminals just before execution, to deaden the sense of pain." But of Jesus it is recorded (Matt. 27:34)—

"When he had tasted thereof, he would not drink."

He knew, as no one else knew, that he should drink to the full the cup his Father would not pass from him.

The title of this Psalm, we note from our margins, is "The Hind of the Morning," or, as some render it, "The Deer of the Dawn"—a very appropriate title to the Spirit of Christ in David in this 22nd Psalm.

The hind, under the Law, was a clean animal; chewing the cud and cloven-footed. The hind cloven-footed not only depicted surefooted walk, but surefootedness, coupled with agility and speed. Thus the hind was stable and sure in his steps, but also active, spirited and earnest. We find David saying—

"It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hind's feet, and setteth me upon my high places" (Psa. 18:32-33).

And in Gen. 49:21 we read—

"Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words."

This surefootedness and spirited energy of the hind, then, is especially fitting to represent the faithful of God meditating on the things of the Spirit and earnestly directing their steps therein.

This is so full of truth that we find David, as a shepherd of the field and lover of peaceful, quiet streams, likening himself unto the hind in Psalm 42—

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so also panteth my soul after thee, O God.

"My soul thirsteth for God, for the Living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"

* * *

THE opening verse of Psalm 22 is most familiar, having been quoted by Christ on the cross:

"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

In what way did God forsake His Anointed? Jesus' words may be better understood by the rendering, "My strength, my strength, why hast thou forsaken me," meaning God's Spirit Power was withdrawn from him. Our brother John Thomas so interprets these words in Eur. I, p. 13—

"Messiah the Prince, or High Priest, was 'cast off,' or covenanted, as the Spirit had revealed to Daniel. But before he died, he cried with a loud voice, in the words of Psalm 22:1, saying, 'My strength, my strength, why hast thou forsaken me?'"

"Before he had uttered this exclamation, the Holy Spirit, which had descended upon him from the Habitation of Light and Power, in the form of a dove, and rested upon him, from the time of his immersion in the Jordan, had been withdrawn.

"The Father-Spirit had evacuated the Son of David's daughter, who is styled, in the Songs of Zion, 'The Handmaid of Jehovah' (Psa. 116:16). The Son was, therefore, left without strength or power, and consequently without God."

Continuing verse 1—

"Why art Thou so far from helping me, and from the voice of my roaring?"

God is not far from any one of us, but is an ever present Help in the time of need. So certainly He was not far from His obedient Son dying on the cross.

But God was far from helping him, in the sense of delivering him from the cross and thereby preventing his sacrificial death.

God's love would be manifested according to His Righteousness, which Jesus knew, yet his roarings, like Job's, continued to pour out like waters. These roarings are further expressed in v. 2—

"O my God, I cry in the daytime, but Thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent."

He is not quiet any time, day or night. So long as deliverance does not come, his roarings are sustained. He does not become discouraged by what appears to be long delay. He does not let up for a moment, let alone cease altogether. There is neither rest nor relief day or night.

If Jesus had faith in ultimately being delivered, and that through death, why did he not bear the cross quietly, biding his time?

Because that would not be the earnest spirit seeking God. The true spirit importunes God ceaselessly. We, too, must follow Christ's example and teaching. We should not drift into that frame of mind which says—

"God will send Christ back to earth to establish the kingdom at the set time, and not before, so we need not persistently pursue these things in prayer. Our inward desire for these things is enough testimony to our own conscience of our sincerity."

But is that true? We may only **think** we desire Christ's Return and God's Kingdom. The real test of our longing desire is EXPRESSION. Both Christ and David are paramount examples of this. The true desires of the heart and mind must and will be expressed in both word AND DEED. If we desire and yearn for the things of God, they should break forth like roarings, loud and steady.

God will hear, He will answer and deliver, for He is Holy and True.

"But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel."

Truth and righteousness are the sure foundations of faith in God. God cannot deny Himself, His character, or His purpose, for He is true and righteous altogether: in the past, in the present, and into the future.

Vs. 4 and 5 carry us back to God's dealings with the faithful of old—

"Our fathers trusted in Thee; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them.

"They cried unto Thee, and were delivered: they trusted in Thee, and were not confounded."

The fathers of old, in faith, cried unto God, Who answered. They cried often and ceaselessly. They were not confounded—not ashamed in not receiving an answer. God answered them with deliverance. As God delivered the faithful fathers of old, so also He will deliver David and the Son of David and all the faithful.

Then Jesus says (v. 6).

"But I am a worm, and no man."

The comparison in Jesus' words is between a worm and a man. Can there be any greater contrast? Jesus was esteemed a worm; that is, insignificant, next to nothing.

Outwardly, this was so, since he was a fleshly, mortal body. Men looked only on the appearance of things, forgetting that which was more important, even his words and deeds. And there is Another Who esteems, besides men.

"That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."
—and the reverse is true also. Jesus further says he is—

"A reproach of men, and despised of the people" (v. 6).

A reproach, a shame, worthy only of derision and to be scorned of men. Truly he was despised of the people when he came unto his own and his own received him not. His own people and nation of Israel rejected him, esteeming him not by delivering him up to the Gentiles to be crucified.

Paul spoke of this shameful and spiteful rejection of Jesus by men in general and Israel in particular in 1 Cor. 1:22-23—

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness."

In vs. 7-8 Jesus tells us of the people's reactions to him as he hung on the cross—

*"All they that see me laugh me to scorn. They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying—
"He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver him. Let Him deliver him, seeing He delighted in him."*

Such were the actions and attitude of mockers and scorners. If they had the slightest inclination that what they were doing was wrong, would they crucify him and treat him thus?

Suppose Jesus was right? Then what? No, they were fully convinced in their own minds. They KNEW their taunts would not return upon their heads! It has been pointed out that Jesus was scorned and mocked from all quarters: they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads; the chief priests mocked him, with the scribes and leaders; the soldiers also mocked him; and finally, the thief on the cross cast the same into his teeth.

Verse 8 is fulfilled in Matt 27:43, words reflecting the blind ignorance of those who uttered them. Though they were supposed to be steeped in the Word of God (a lesson of warning to us), they erred, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. It was not God's will and purpose to save His Son at that moment. God's righteousness would be declared through death, and salvation from the grave would surely come.

God was not to save His Son FROM death, by keeping him from dying—but to save him OUT OF death, making him alive from the dead. Christ was to gain the victory over the grave and be the firstfruits from the dead.

But men thought that when death came it would be too late for help! They wanted him to come down from the cross NOW. Later would be too late. Death, they thought, would justify their not believing in him. (They had Moses and the Prophets.) Jesus, during his ministry, taught in parables to prevent all such from understanding and conversion.

Yet God gives His Own people more than ample evidence on which to base faith in Him. Beyond that which is just, right and reasonable ("Come, let us reason together"), He will not be driven, permitting the exercise of faith in all those who believe in Him.

The words of mock and scorn against Christ were a rejection of God. The Lord, the Eternal, was not His God, the scorners claimed, and therefore God would not deliver him. But Jesus says in vs. 9-10—

"But Thou art He that took me out of the womb. Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breast.

"I was cast upon Thee from the womb: Thou art my God from my mother's belly."

Contrary to the taunts of his enemies, God was always his God, from his conception and birth.

"Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breast" is not correct. It makes the babe Jesus capable of hoping in God at such an age. But, rather, he was "kept safe" or "made secure" while on his mother's breast.

Even in his infancy, then, when he was most vulnerable to his enemies, when he was seemingly unprotected, God was his God, caring for him and keeping him safe.

V. 11—*"Be not far from me."*

We may add the word "now" —"Be not far from me NOW," or, "Do not stay far from me." The urgency of his anguish is incited by what is mentioned in the rest of this verse—

"For trouble is near: for there is none to help."

We behold the circumstances which prompts Jesus' cry unto God: the nearness of the danger and the remoteness of any help —and if God does not help, no one will. And yet there is no one to help no, not one, except God.

"Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion" (vs. 12-13).

These figures accent the helplessness of the prey, the Hind of the Morning. These bulls of Bashan were noted for their size and strength. When size and strength are exerted in an evil sense, the evil is evil indeed. The idea is pronounced by Amos (4:1)—

"Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, Bring, and let us drink."

But as if the strength and size of these wild bulls of Bashan were not enough to give the true picture of evil-wickedness, another figure is superadded for extreme emphasis: these strong bulls have mouths "as a ravening and a roaring lion." These large, fierce, strong, ravenous wild beasts encompass—surround—hem in—the Deer of the Dawn, so that there is no way out, no escape possible.

But we should recall that, during his ministry, there was a time when men sought to lay hands on him, but could not. And so, though encompassed about in the midst of a belligerent multitude, he went out from amongst them—he escaped—for his time was not yet come.

But when they came out against him in the garden, he knew—

"The hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."

So the time had come when he would be surrounded by his preying enemies to be rejected, scorned, tormented and, as it were, devoured to death. For fierce bulls of Bashan had hemmed him in on all sides, "panting for him open-mouthed, like lions roaring as they rend."

Jesus' sufferings were both mental and physical, brought out abundantly in this Psalm, as in vs. 14-15.—

"I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

"My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and Thou hast brought me into the dust of death."

"Poured out like water"—the solid turned into liquid, expressing the ultimate in physical exhaustion, the lowest point of weakness. "All my bones are out of joint"—another point of emphasizing weakness, a body without its necessary frame to hold it up and in physical form.

These symbols paint a picture of extreme debility: strength of body reduced to the frailty of spent water, and the body-frame of bones collapsed.

His heart was like wax, melting in his breast. The heart here representing the center of power within, the seat of fortitude. This, too, was reduced to an extreme state of incapacity, the extreme once again being stressed, this time by melting wax.

His total strength is symbolized by a potsherd, which is a piece of broken earthenware, dried up, and ready to crumble into still smaller pieces.

The complete loss of strength and fortitude, of both mind and body, surrendered to the will of His Father, would end in the dust of death (though God would not permit corruption), but there would be no loss of trust in his Heavenly Father.

* * *

"For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me. They pierced my hands and my feet" (v. 16).

Dogs are among the lowest animals mentioned in Scripture; and they represent the Gentiles. To be likened unto a dog implied contemptibility and cowardice. Wild dogs forage in packs. As the bulls encompassed him, likewise the dogs encircle him.

There have been attempts to cast doubt on the rendering, "they pierced my hands and my feet," stating that it does not mean pierce, but "crippled," "bound" or "disfigured." It is a modern trend to attempt to weaken and obscure the strikingly clear prophetic Scriptures, and such efforts usually serve only to strengthen the picture by their own pettiness, as in this case. The scriptural picture is broad and consistent and, as here, one scripture strengthens another.

Jesus was NAILED to the cross—his hands and feet—just as dogs sink their teeth into the prey, into the exposed limbs, into the hands and feet. The prophecy must yet be accomplished when certain ones "will look on him whom they have PIERCED."

Those who took the Lord and with wicked hands crucified him, are in symbol likened unto these wild beasts; bulls, lions and dogs, who are the fierce, ravenous, vile and abominable. They join forces against the Deer of the Dawn, to surround him completely to keep him from getting away.

In v. 14 we were told that his bones were all out of joint. Now, in v. 17, he says he can count all his bones. We may turn to Job 33:21-22 for comment on this—

"His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers."

All these extremes are now converging in his physical and mental sufferings and agony: pain, fever, thirst, exhaustion, grief and sorrow. And v. 17 adds—

"They look and stare upon me."

With gloating satisfaction they feast their fleshly eyes upon him in his dire extremity.

Then, concerning his few earthly possessions, that which he wore, his garment and vesture, they divided as a spoil.

"They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (v. 18).

This prophecy, concerning the sum total of his "wealth," was truly remarkably fulfilled, as recorded in Matt. 27:35 and John 19:24. A thing so seemingly little becomes, at the foot of the cross, an incident which stamps anew the authenticity of these words being inspired by God.

In the next few verses Jesus repeats his cry for help, for deliverance from the sword, from the power of the dog, from the lion's mouth. The end—"It is finished"—is coming. He cannot suffer any more, he cannot sink any lower, for the next degree downward means death. And we hear him say—

"Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns" (v. 21).

The horns of the unicorns (wild oxen) is one thing. The horns of the altar, to which the sacrifice was bound (Psa. 118:27), is quite another. From the horns of the wild oxen Jesus said, "Thou hast heard me."

This was the darkest period of his agony throughout the final storm of blackness and thunder when the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom. It is "the voice of the Lord" (God thundereth marvellously) which "maketh the hinds to calve" (Psa. 29:9). Though childless, the Handmaid of Jehovah would see the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

"After the example of Abraham," our bro. John Thomas comments, "at the typical confirmation of the covenant, 'a horror of great darkness fell upon him.'"

Just before this happens—before the blackest part of the night that must come before the dawn breaks—Jesus said—

"Thou hast heard me."

These words speak of God answering by deliverance unto salvation. They mark the turning point of this Psalm — from suffering to glory—from darkness to light—from dark to day—the light of dawn brings God's Salvation. Jesus' words promise that Glorious Morning dawning—a Day without clouds, wherein all the faithful are brought to deliverance, safety and a glorious salvation.

We must mark these words well, fully realizing in heart and mind that there was no other possible way in the Wisdom and Power of God for His Glory to be made manifest. Christ on the cross in suffering agony, ending in death, is God's righteous judgment against sinful flesh.

This is not to pacify the wrath of a vengeful God, but an extension of His Love, an invitation to Life to those who look up in faith to Christ crucified. We are invited away from sin and death to partake of righteousness and life.

We can no longer put our trust in men, or in the arm of flesh, or in this world which consists of the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. But rather let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, ever approaching Him in prayer through our Saviour and High Priest.

"Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him! All ye the seed of Jacob, glorify Him! And fear Him, all ye the seed of Israel!"

"For He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, neither hath He hid His face from him; but when he cried unto Him, He heard" (vs. 23-24). —N.M.

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.

The Bond of Perfectness

"Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"—1 John 3:17

FOR acceptable walk in the Truth, and for ecclesial health and harmony and a state of true mutual spiritual joyfulness to which we as the sons and daughters of God are freely invited, it is necessary that the Spirit's teachings on the subject of love be continually and repeatedly presented before the mind.

The love which the Scriptures present to us as the fundamental characteristic of godliness is not a natural thing. It is contrary to all that is natural. It is purely a spiritual thing. It is a divine, transforming, unearthly principle of life.

It is a power and force that overcomes and subdues all that is natural. It is the "bond of perfectness" — the bond— the binding together—the uniting, the unifying power of perfection—unity of perfection—perfect oneness—based upon the only possible basis for perfect oneness—an enthusiastic mutual striving toward perfection.

Any aim short of perfection is not unifying, but dividing and breaking up. **No group can have true unity unless it is wholly and wholeheartedly dedicated to the pursuit of divine perfection.**

* * *

AND Love is the "bond of perfectness." Unless we as a group mutually possess this bond together, we might as well go our separate ways—because we shall never have any true ecclesial unity or spiritual life without it.

Let us face this basic fact of ecclesial life. If we are not prepared as a whole body to love each other with a pure heart fervently, then our assembling together is utterly meaningless; we are just another poor little lost group among millions of others. It is worse than meaningless—it is a sad, pitiful delusion—destined only to failure.

The Body of Christ is not a lot of little isolated individual compartments. It is not a limited association merely for form and convenience—it is one intimate, closely-knit, intensely interdependent unity—

"By one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body.

"The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of thee.

"God hath tempered the body together . . . that the members should have the same care one for another."

These are Paul's remarks toward the end of 1 Cor. 12, where he is leading up to the revelation of the "more excellent way" of love so beautifully delineated in chapter 13.

The Scriptures are very specific about what this love is of which he speaks—what are the evidences of its presence or absence among us.

It is a terribly sad fact that many accept the Truth and spend their whole life in it—often very actively—without ever perceiving this basic first principle of godliness.

* * *

IT IS always more profitable, wherever possible, to allow our train of thought and meditation to be shaped and guided by some specific portion of Scripture, for there is never any better, or more

powerful, or more effective, way of presenting a subject than the way God Himself presents it in His holy Word.

The principle of love is very prominent all through the Scriptures. As Jesus points out, the two greatest commandments of the Law concern love, and furthermore he says that love is the fulfilling of the whole Law—that all the Law hangs upon these commandments concerning love.

Love is the declared basis of all God's dealings with Israel, throughout both the Old Testament and the New.

But when we think of a specific portion of Scripture in relation to this subject, we naturally turn to the 1st Epistle of John.

John's words throughout are beautiful and sublime. If we could continually live in their atmosphere, it would cleanse and purge us of all fleshliness and earthiness.

John's first use of the word 'love' in this epistle emphasizes a truth which it is essential to make clear at the outset—that love in the true, scriptural sense is not the flabby, shapeless, foggy sentimentalism as presented by the churches of the world, but a **clear, precise, careful adherence to specific divine instructions** based upon a pure zeal and affection for God.

Love is not something contrary to law and command, but rather that which gives all divine law its power and purpose and life and meaning and beauty (1 John 2:4-5)—

"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar . . . but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected."

This expression, "the love of God," involves more than either our love for God or God's love for us—it implies the love that appertains to God—that divine, spiritual, mutual relationship between God and the child of God. For love to be perfected, it must be a mutual, reciprocating love.

The keeping: (that is obeying) of the Word is the only path to the perfecting of the divine relationship.

In vs. 7 to 9 he speaks of the new commandment which was not a new commandment, but which was the same from the beginning.

Jesus said, speaking to his disciples during the last evening before the crucifixion—

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

He gives this command special emphasis in circumstances, too, that add to its weight and importance.

We may ask ourselves: **Are we Jesus' disciples?** He said this could clearly be determined from whether we manifest love for one another in the special, spiritual way he describes.

Brotherly love was an **old** commandment in that, as Jesus pointed out as regard the Law, it was at the heart and root of all commandments.

It was a **new** commandment in that it was the foundation of the new man, the new birth, the new and living way, the new creation, the new Name, the new covenant, the new Jerusalem, the new heaven and new earth. It was new in the depth and beauty which his own example gave it—

"As I have loved you . . .

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

* * *

BEFORE John goes further into the subject of love, he speaks of what must not be loved—vs. 15-17 of this 1st epistle, chapter 2—

*"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.
"If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."*

These are serious words, and we do well to ponder them deeply, and honestly test ourselves by them. We all desire eternal life. We all recognize the great desirability of God's favor and blessing and acceptance.

Let us then have the wisdom to face and accept this clear instruction in the way of life. It is very small and unworthy and childish to want to have it both ways.

What are the "things of the world" we cannot love if we truly love God—if we truly understand what the love of God means? They are its honours, associations, activities, pleasures and amusements. The world is pressing in on us during all our waking hours—seeking our love and attention and interest. It takes a deep and strong comprehension of the love of God to withstand and hold firm.

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

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

There is the great contrast between life and death.

John is about to tell us of the life-giving joys and glories of divine love, and he must clear the ground first. He must make the issue crystal clear. He must leave no misunderstanding about the fact that we must put away all interest, desire, and affection for the things of the world if we want to be part of the glorious company that are united in the unspeakable joys of the love of God.

In the remainder of ch. 2 he speaks of the unfaithful ones who had not remained steadfast to the love of God. He speaks of the promise of eternal life and urges them not to be drawn away but to hold fast to what they had received and faithfully abide in him.

* * *

Then, beginning ch. 3 he returns to the subject of love—

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"

It is fitting that he should begin there for, as he tells us, the love of God for man is the root and well-spring of all our love for God and for each other. It is the motive and force behind all love.

God's love for man, as supremely manifested in His only begotten Son, is the transforming power and incentive of all holiness and righteousness—

"We are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Rom. 8:37).

"The life I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

"The love of Christ constraineth us (2 Cor. 5:14).

"We love, because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

* * *

BEGINNING ch. 3, and arising from the thought of this marvellous manifestation of God's love in calling us, as weak, erring mortals, to be His children in glory, the apostle stresses how this hope and promise must lead us to holiness, how out of place and out of harmony any worldliness or ungodliness is with this divine relationship.

Then he says (v. 10)—

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil."

"Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

Any ill feeling to any of our brethren cuts us off from relationship to God.

"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."

We notice that he divides all mankind into two relationships—the children of God and the children of the Devil.

This is a very sobering thought—if we are not one, we are the other. There are no neutrals—we are either of the Seed of the Woman—that is, of Christ in harmony with the mind of Christ, or we are of the Seed of the Serpent.

And he gives two identifications of the children of God—

1. *Doing righteousness.*

2. *Loving his brother.*

Let us try to fully realize the prominent and vital place this matter of loving our brethren is given in the commands of God. We find that John returns to it again and again.

Let us closely follow his thought here as he continues, v. 14—

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

Here is a simple, but deeply searching test that we can each apply to ourselves, to see if we really have passed from death to life—to see if we really are "in the faith," or just living a lie.

Do we find ourselves powerfully moved and motivated by love, kindness, concern, gentleness, sympathy, patience, and desire to render comfort and service to all our brethren? Not just a limited few who happen to please us and appeal to us, but to all—especially to those who seem least lovable—these are the ones most in need of patience and guidance and brotherly kindness.

If this is not honestly true of us, then we must face the implication of John's searching words—we have not passed from death to life—we are not "in Christ"—we are not "in the faith"—we have not properly learned the Gospel—we have not entered the divine family—we are still "children of the devil," for John continues in this 14th verse—

"He that loveth not his brother ABIDETH IN DEATH."

He says in v. 16—

"Hereby perceive we love, because He laid down his life for us."

As other versions put it—

"By this we know love," or "From this we learn what love is"—"that he laid down his life for us."

When the Scriptures speak of love, they do not mean some puny little part-time hobby. Love in the scriptural sense is a tremendous, all-consuming passion for goodness and service to others—and if we haven't got it we are not the children of God. John goes on—

"And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

Not just be willing to face death for them in some very unlikely far-off emergency — but give our whole PRESENT lives for them.

The next verse should be imperishably engraved on our hearts. It carries the seeds of a deeper, broader, more world-shaking revolution than this planet has ever yet seen—

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

It is for each alone to search his heart and, as standing in the presence of God, to decide just what, and how much, that statement means to him, remembering that it is impossible to obey it too much, but fatally easy to obey it too little.

***"WHOSO HATH THIS WORLD'S GOODS, AND SEETH HIS BROTHER HAVE NEED
— HOW DWELLETH THE LOVE OF GOD IN HIM?"***

And let us remember that the Scriptures are not speaking of little, conscience-salving, token handouts, but on the large scale of the love of Jesus—

"Love one another, as I have loved you."

Are we BIG enough to be children of God, or are these teachings too vast and noble for our petty selfish, earthy natures to rise to?

John presses the point further:

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (v. 18).

There is much—SO much— talk about love, but where shall we find that life-giving, self-sacrificing love of which John speaks as essential to salvation? Is it the rule among us? Are we the children of God, or is our "love" that of word and tongue, such kind words of sympathy—

"Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled—we are so sorry to hear of your trouble, we hope everything will be all right. We'll come and see you again."

What a noble feeling it gives us to be so kind and sympathetic "in tongue and word"!

"Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

There is a terrible reckoning in store on the matter of selfishness and unfaithful stewardship.

* * *

IT would be profitable at this point to give some thought to just what the Scriptures mean by love. For that, 1 Cor. 13 is the most informative. Paul tells us there in detail just how true love acts, so that **by comparing ourselves with what he says, we can easily determine whether or not we are really children of God, and on the way of life.**

After saying, with the strongest possible emphasis, that no other service or sacrifice is of any value in the absence of this scriptural love, Paul says—

"Love is long-suffering."

Long-suffering means long and patient endurance of offence. Long continued gentleness in the face of provocation. Why? Because love desires only good.

Love is saddened by the failure of others to manifest goodness, but it has the divine wisdom to realize that only by infinite patience can good be accomplished, and yielding to impatience is failure and defeat.

This word "long-suffering" carries the sense of a tremendous power of self-restraint and self-control—more powerful than the natural passions of anger and impatience. Love is—first and foremost—long-suffering.

When we find ourselves becoming angry or impatient or annoyed, that is the danger signal—the time to stop and examine our hearts, and seek the help of God to overcome, for it is a sign that the diabolos is forging another link in the chain of our bondage to sin and death, and only the power of God can break that fatal chain.

"Love is kind."

"Kind" means having a consistent disposition to do good and confer happiness and to avoid anything that offends or creates unhappiness. Kind is the opposite of harsh, stern, unfeeling or selfish.

No one who is kind in the scriptural sense can be any of these things. Kindness often has to be firm, but it is never harsh or bitter or rough or changeable, or erratic, or coarse, or rude.

No one who manifests these opposites of kindness is kind according to the divine definition, and they do not therefore have the love without which, Paul says, all else is useless, and they are not, therefore, children of God.

These two characteristics, then, are the two main pillars of spiritual love—longsuffering and kindness, not just as surface efforts, and on certain occasions, but consistently manifested under all circumstances as the deepest and strongest motives of life.

Let us stand along side of the Scriptural standard and see what our actual stature is. The apostle continues—

"Love envieth not."

Love desires nothing that others have, but is completely satisfied and content with the infinite riches of the grace of God. Knowing that if a man truly has that he has everything for all eternity, and there is nothing more to have—nothing more to be desired.

"Love vaunteth not itself."

It does not boast or seek notice or attention. It does not seek gratification through the manifestation of its abilities or knowledge or accomplishments.

It is not always relating little incidents or circumstances of which it is the hero or center of attention.

With divine wisdom it sees through the pitiful childishness of seeking to impress others which is at the root of a vast proportion of all human conduct.

"Love is not puffed up."

It is free, not only from outward show, but also from inward pride. To be pleased and satisfied with ourselves is the most disastrous form of self-deception. Love knows that all mankind is weak and ignorant and helpless, and all good is solely of the grace of God. Jesus said—

"Why callest thou me good?"

"Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly."

"I can of mine own self do nothing."

If that was the mind of Christ, what room is there for any self-approval in the sin-stricken sons of men? The love of which Paul speaks as vital to salvation is no small or common thing.

"Love doth not behave itself unseemly."

Love does not act out of harmony with the holiness of its relationship to God — does not speak foolishly according to the sudden impulses of the flesh. Love is **always** gentle and gracious and courteous and well-behaved—nothing silly, or rude.

"Love seeketh not her own."

Her own **what**? Her own **ANYTHING**. Her own way, her own desires, her own rights, her own advantage, her own comfort, her own honor. LOVE DOES NOT SEEK AT ALL, BUT GIVES.

Love's great secret is the knowledge that all true, worthwhile pleasure is in giving, not seeking. There is no real satisfaction in seeking and accumulating, but only disappointment and frustration in the end.

But giving, whether it be goods, or labor, or time, or the foregoing or yielding of any advantage, is deeply satisfying and rewarding and uplifting and ennobling. It is getting closer to God, and the way He operates, and that always yields pleasure and blessing and satisfaction.

"Love is not easily provoked."

The insertion of this word "easily" by the translators is utterly unwarranted, and takes all the power out of the expression. All other versions correct this. The true translation is, as the Rev. Ver. has it—

"Love is not provoked."

When we say "I am provoked," or "That is provoking," we are actually saying, "I do not love; I am permitting the flesh to rule, and not the Spirit; I am not big enough to be on God's side."

If we examine ourselves by the light of God's Spirit-Word, we shall often find that in our fleshly, self-assertion we are declaring our own condemnation, and glorying in our shame. Let us think of this before we blurt out our feelings.

David, in Psa. 119, states this same searching truth that "Love is not provoked," and therefore if we are provoked we have not found the power of love without which all else is hopeless. He says—

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

"Love thinketh no evil."

The Revised Ver. gives the meaning more clearly—"Love taketh no account of evil." That is, "overlooks it, does not impute it, bears no resentment." Literally, it is—"Love reckoneth not the evil"—passes it by, makes loving allowances, "Love shall cover a multitude of sins."

All these tests of love are deep and searching, but this is one of the deepest. No ecclesia can be a true, joyous ecclesia of God where this loving passing over of evil is not practised.

It does not mean **condoning** of evil—never that. The Scriptures are very clear on that point. The Truth must be defended, both in doctrine and in precept, but the reference here is to personal reaction to personal injury—the attitude love takes toward the offender—

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

In ch. 5 John expresses a very important principle in this respect—one which we do not fully realize the importance and power of (v. 16)—

“If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and He shall give him life for them that sin not unto death.”

Therefore, when others injure us, or we see them doing things that grieve us as not in harmony with the Truth, we have a great responsibility, for **their salvation may be in our hands**, in the power of prayer. This is how love—instead of spreading a matter or taking offence, or causing agitation and trouble—may cover a multitude of sins and save a sinner from the error of his way. Nothing can stand before the invincible power of righteous prayer.

"Love rejoiceth not in iniquity."

Love enjoys no gossip—gets no satisfaction out of the trouble or suffering of others, even when it is deserved. Love can have no part in any unfairness or injustice or discrimination—gets no enjoyment from anything unclean or unrighteous or unholy.

"But rejoiceth with the Truth."

All love's allegiance and pleasure and rejoicing are on the side of the Truth.

In all our emphasis on love, we must never forget that it must always be grounded on and in the Truth. Love is the power of life, but Truth, and Truth alone, must be in its form and shape.

All these beautiful qualities of love, exercised outside the divine framework of the Truth, lose all their beauty and divinity, and become mere whims of the flesh. Divine love is always "rejoicing in—**within**—the Truth," and never wanders outside of it—anything masquerading under the guise of love, that is out of harmony with Truth, is a deceiving counterfeit.

"Love beareth all things."

The word for "beareth" means to contain, to hold in, to be watertight. Love is strong enough to hold in and contain all other emotions and desires, and love is the only power that can. Apart from this power—which arises, as John says, from prolonged contemplation upon the love that God has freely manifested to man—apart from this power, the control of the flesh according to the will of God is utterly hopeless.

But love **can** contain and restrain all things. The word means to keep out as well as to keep in. Love is an impervious shield and protection against all destructive, misleading or contaminating influences from without.

"Love believeth all things."

What are the "all things" that love believes, and is it particularly a virtue to "believe all things"?

Love's infinite capacity for belief of good is one of its greatest beauties—belief in God and belief in the capabilities and possibilities of man with the help of God.

James says the wisdom from above is easy to be entreated, or, literally, "easily persuaded." It takes a tremendous power of belief to truly forgive seventy times seven and wholeheartedly mean it. There is nothing cynical or pessimistic or sour about love—it is always willing to believe the best, and give the benefit of every doubt.

To the wisdom of the world, this is gullibility and stupidity, but love will be found in the end to have been the wiser way when all the wise of the world are exposed in the pitiful nakedness of their foolishness.

"Love hopeth all things."

Love comprehends all hope, as it does all belief, or faith. Love never gets discouraged, never gives up hope, regardless of circumstances or appearances. It is clear from the general trend and direction of the apostle's remarks that the hope he has in mind is hope for, and in regard to, others. He is speaking of love as a relationship—as a way of conduct and attitude toward others.

Love never gives up trying and hoping—is never soured or embittered by failure or rebuff.

"Love endureth all things."

The word means to stand firm, to be unshaken and unmoved in the face of difficulty, attack or hardship.

Finally—

"Love never fails."

It never wears out, never dies, never comes to an end. The apostle points out that this is the only human attribute that carries over into eternity. If we have this, we shall endure. Lacking this, we pass away with the perishing world.

* * *

WE turn again to John's epistle, and read again the words at which we left it (3:18)—

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

And he continues—

"And hereby—by this—we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our hearts before him"

—that is, IF we are living and rejoicing in this divine love which the apostle has so beautifully described.

John goes on—

"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."

Do our hearts condemn us as we measure ourselves by this one and only way of life?

V.23 —*"And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the Name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment."*

Nearly 20 times in this epistle this same command is emphasized—that we MUST love one another. It is the key and theme of the whole epistle.

* * *

AFTER warning against false teachers in the early part of ch. 4, he returns to the same theme in v. 7—

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God: and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."

When we consider all that is involved in the love of which he speaks, we can well realize that we must be born of God to be able to manifest it, and that to achieve this love is truly to know God. And it further follows (v. 8)—

"He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love."

Now Jesus said that to know God is life eternal, so the implication is clear that the achievement of this love of which Paul speaks is a necessary step to obtain eternal life.

"GOD IS LOVE."

Here he reaches the heart of his subject. God is not just loving, but He is LOVE ITSELF—That is His essential nature and personality. As we shape ourselves to this divine ideal of love, we make ourselves one with God—we conform ourselves to, and lay hold on, eternity.

V.10—"*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*"

Love does not originate with us. It was not in return for our love that God sent His Son. All the love originated with Him, while we were yet loveless sinners.

He did not wait till we were lovable before He put His redeeming love into action on our behalf. Nor does He withdraw the offer and manifestation of His love because we continually fail and disappoint Him in our reciprocation of it. This gives force to the exhortation that follows (v. 11—

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

Love is needed most where it is at first deserved and appreciated least. God set His infinite love in motion toward the ungodly in order to create and kindle love in them. If, then, we are to follow God's example and be God's children we can never justify not loving by the fact that the recipient is not lovable, for that is all the more reason for giving him our love.

V.12—"*No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.*"

Here is a powerful promise and incentive indeed! We cannot see God. He is unapproachable. But if we love one another, God dwells in us. He will draw near. He will make His comfort and His presence felt. He will work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure, and He will perfect His love in us, so that we are one with Him.

Again the apostle repeats the glorious revelation and promise (v. 16)—

"God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

Love is the meeting place, the sphere of communion and communication.

V.11—"*Herein*"—(that is, in this way, through this divine bond)—"*is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness*—(that is—confidence, assurance, freedom from fear)—*in the day of judgment, because as He is, so are we in this world.*"

Are we, by this oneness of love, as He is in this world?—for that alone can be the ground of confidence.

He has shown us clearly what **HE** is—God is **LOVE**—infinite love—an endless, inexhaustible fountain of love, seeking to bring blessing wherever it flows.

V.18—"*There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment.*"
"He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

"Perfect love casteth out fear." Surely this is the deepest and most beautiful statement in all Scripture!

The world lives in fear. Its whole framework is based on mutual fear. It has always been so, but especially today. The special mark of the last days is—"All men's hearts failing for fear."

There exist today the two greatest human powers the world has ever seen, and they live in mortal fear of each other.

But fear goes deeper than international problems. Fear is at the root of all human life, and much of man's effort and contrivance is motivated by it.

Fear is a terrible, destroying thing. It is a weakness of the flesh that robs us of so much comfort and joy. How often the Scriptures remind us that all is in the all-powerful hand of God, and exhort us to "Fear Not!"—

"Fear not, Abram."

"Hagar, fear not!"

"Moses said unto the people, Fear not!" (Exo. 20:20).

"Fear not, neither be discouraged" (Deut. 1:21).

"God will not fail thee; fear not, neither be dismayed" (Deut. 31:8).

And so the endless chain of divine assurance could be extended throughout the Scriptures. Twelve times we find these words in Isaiah alone, as in 43:5—

"Fear not, for I am with thee!"

The Psalms express the confidence of the godly man—

"I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me" (23:4).

"God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present Help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed" (46:1-2).

And so throughout the New Testament also: "Fear not, Joseph," "Fear not, Mary," "Fear not, Simon," "Fear not, Paul." And the first words of the Son of Man similitude to John were (Rev. 1:17), "Fear not."

The Scriptures go right to the heart of the problem in declaring that the sacrifice of Jesus was to—

"Deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."
—the bondage and sorrow in which the whole creation groans.

Sin and death are the root of all fear. But—

"Perfect love casteth out fear. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

This is love's greatest beauty and blessing. Only God can bestow this glorious freedom from all fear, and He will bestow it upon those, and those alone, who dedicate their lives to love of Him and of their brethren.

V.19—"We love, because he first loved us."

All love must grow from the ever expanding realization of the glory of the infinite love of God — God's desire to draw near and to bestow good.

V.20—"If a man say, I love God: and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

What is the point? Why cannot we love God if we do not love men?

When we understand this, we understand the nature of true spiritual love. That love does not go out in limited beams, there is nothing limited about it—it is a universal irradiation. It is not a

limited attribute—it must be the whole fibre of our character. If our love is not shining upon and blessing all who are close to us—all with whom we come in contact, how do we expect it to be real and strong enough to reach God?

Furthermore, we have no direct contact with God. We can only manifest our professed love for Him by obedience to Him in relation to things that are close to us.

V.21—"*And this is the commandment we have from Him, that He who loveth God, love his brother also.*"

By this, then, we shall stand or fall in the great day of judgment—by the extent to which we comprehend and manifest the beauty of divine love toward all, in all our daily relationships, and especially our ecclesial relationships.

If we are too small and selfish and touchy and self-centered to love all our brethren according to the divine pattern, we are of no use in the great, eternal purpose of God. For God IS love. —G.V.G.

"Lord, Increase Our Faith!"

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the Faith: prove your own selves" — 2 Cor. 13:3

TO BE of any value, such examination must not be casual or superficial, but searching and proven beyond any question of doubt. The stakes are too high to allow of any mistakes or miscalculations.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6).

There are not any exceptions or deviations from this rule. It is just that—impossible—to please God without Faith.

But what kind of faith? Mere blind confidence that everything will come out all right in the end? Or does the faith pleasing to God involve nothing more than a belief in the "principles of the doctrine of Christ?"

A thousand times, No! The "devils also believe and tremble," says James. For, while one cannot have faith without belief, it is possible to have "belief" without the faith that is pleasing to God.

Saving faith involves, not only faith in God, but the faith of God — that strong, stable, living unshakable faith which one acquires only through such an understanding, belief and love of God's Word that it becomes the dominating force in directing the lives of those who have it.

Only God can bestow such a faith, and no amount of human reasoning can ever attain to it. Therefore we fervently pray, "Lord, increase our faith!"

True Faith is an active and powerful agent, as the following passages reveal. These processes, the work of faith, are essential to our salvation,—

"Hearts purified by faith" (Acts 15:9).

"Sanctified by faith" (Acts 26:18).

"Justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24).

"We walk by faith" (2 Cor. 5:7).

"Faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6).

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" (Eph. 3:17).

"The shield of faith" (Eph. 6:16).

"The breastplate of faith" (1 Thess. 5:8).

"Faith overcometh the world" (1 John 5:4).

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23).

Consider especially this last quotation: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Whatever is not done in faith toward God is sin. Faith must permeate every action to make it acceptable to God.

* * *

FAITH is presented to us in the Scriptures in two applications: first, the basis of things hoped for, or the divine plan of human redemption in all of its many parts, as revealed to mortal mankind as a means of his salvation; and, second, **a conviction of the truth, reality and certainty** of those holy things revealed in God's Word.

We have three kinds of faith mentioned in the Scriptures: strong faith (Rom. 4:20); weak faith (Rom. 14:1); and dead faith (James 2:26).

Strong faith is like the kind that Abraham had — "being fully persuaded."

Weak faith is the kind held by those who receive the basis of the faith, but who make little if any progress in improving their spiritual strength and understanding in the Word. These are content to remain a weakling in the body, supported by others who must provide them with the strength of faith which they lack.

Dead faith is that which was never perfected or made strong by works. It is an inactive faith which fades and dies for lack of use—a talent buried in the ground, and held by those who are under the delusion that faith alone will save them.

A faith which fails to put its possessor to work is like a wonderful machine which is capable of performing in an efficient manner; but which the owner never learns to use, but allows it to rust and fall into a state of decay and disuse.

A number of reasons might be given for weak faith and dead faith, but the most common causes are those described in the parable of the sower.

The seed which fell on shallow soil describes those whose faith died a sudden death, due to fatal weakness at the beginning.

The seed which fell among thorns "which sprang up with it," portrays faith that is choked to death by the cares of this life and the love of riches and pleasures, listening to the smooth and subtle words of the corrupters of the faith, crucifying conscience in order to give time and effort to fleshy desires. These have, says Paul, made shipwreck of the faith many once had.

Constant self-examination in the light of God's Word, and a determination to make up what is lacking in our faith, cost what it may, and with the prayer in our hearts, "Lord, increase our faith," is the only way of strengthening a weak faith.

Never before was the need for faith-strengthening more important than now, as we approach to that great event, the coming of the Lord. He left us a warning of how scarce faith would be when he comes.

Let us examine ourselves to see whether we can qualify as the few who still "hold faith in a good conscience," or whether we be found with the many whose faith is weak or dead, or ready to die.

— O.B.

I Set My Bow in the Cloud

"The bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature"—Genesis 9:16

THE RAINBOW is spoken of in the Scriptures as a symbol to convey to our minds more impressively what God desires to teach us in relation to His great plan of redemption. That symbols were given to be understood is made plain by the words of the Lord Jesus, who, in relation to Daniel's book of symbols, said (Matt. 24:15)—

"Whoso readeth, let him understand;"

And also the words of Jesus to his servants in Apoc. 1:3—

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."

Now symbols are like flowers, affording variety and beauty, as well as pleasure and interest; and containing a wealth of significance in a very small compass. Jesus calls attention to the lilies of the field—

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these"

(Matt. 6:28-29).

And so it is with the symbol of the rainbow, when considered in connection with its usage in the Scriptures. Bro. Thomas has this to say about the rainbow, in Eureka, Vol. 2, p. 22—

"The rainbow is never seen except when the sun is shining, and when rain is falling between the spectator and the part of the horizon where the bow is seen.

"These facts must not be lost sight of in considering the significance of the rainbow when used as a symbol.

"Sun, light, rain, cloud, are elements necessary to the production of the natural bow; so are they also to evolution of a symbolic arch in the heaven pertaining to the throne.

"In the absence of the Sun of Righteousness from the heaven, and of the light of life, glory, honor, and power, which he will irradiate, the rainbow encircling the throne cannot be seen.

"Neither can the light irradiating from him, be reflected to the spectator-world from the clouds of immortals about the throne, until the rain-showers of the heaven shall descend upon the mown grass to fertilize the earth.

"These are indispensable conditions to the evolution of the bow, which is a symbol of the clear and blessed sunshine after previous 'lightnings, thunders, and voices from the throne,' contemporaneously with gently descending rain."

* * *

IT IS a beautiful coincidence that as the rainbow is composed of many colours, so the covenant which it betokens is comprised of many items of detail that enter into the composite purpose of God for man's salvation.

The red (scarlet) of the rainbow was also incorporated in the vail of the Mosaic tabernacle, pointing to the flesh of sin, in the process of redemption, by the institutions which God had provided for the purpose.

The blue would symbolize the heaven-sent healing influence that will at last swallow up death in victory in the case of those who come within the scope of its life-giving power.

The yellow or golden colour would foreshadow the faithful works of obedience and service exhibited by those who at last find a place around the rainbow-encircled throne.

The purple (a colour which is formed by combining red and blue) points to the exalted position of Christ and his saints when, as the royal house of David, they sit on thrones ruling the earth in righteousness.

The emerald greenness symbolizes life and vitality, sustained by the water of life—the opposite of dryness and death. The original words in Scripture for "green" means "moist, fresh, flourishing, etc."

Then like gentle showers on **green** herbs, the blessings of God will come down upon the people of the earth bringing peace, joy and the glorious light of God's truth, as the everlasting covenant, symbolized by the rainbow, becomes a reality.

May the rainbow, as we see it in the cloud, always remind us of the glories and blessings that will come when Abraham and his Seed, the Christ, will rejoice together at the consummation of all the promises of God to fallen man. May we be there!

—W. J. P.

Signs of the Times

THE Soviet-Chinese unity talks in Moscow ended without accomplishing anything in the way of resolving the feud existing between the two Communist giants, according to statements released from Moscow and Peking.

Although the Chinese acknowledge failure of the unity talks, they left the door open for further negotiations at another time, and official Chinese news agencies said, "We want unity, not a split," and added that "The present situation is very grave."

While the Communist world views with alarm the widening breach in the previously solid wall uniting the two Communist nations, the Western world rejoices, and hopes are raised that better relations between Russia and the West may be established. There is talk of a "deal" being near at hand between Kennedy and Khrushchev in an effort to settle the cold war.

However, sober consideration of the whole situation presents many uncertainties:

1. Does the present Soviet-Chinese rift consist of anything more than a family quarrel, or does it indicate an actual rupture of Soviet-Chinese relations?
2. Is the West's exultation based on actual fact or mostly wishful thinking?
3. Is it possible that China feels strong enough to "go it alone" and cast Russian aid aside, or, does she hope to win the rest of the Communist world over to her policy of pursuing a militant course in establishing world Communism?

These are questions which may perplex world diplomats for some time and already raises fears that an irresponsible Chinese dictator might plunge the world into war in an effort to make China the dominant power on earth.

We can be sure that all the talk of ideological differences is just that—talk. The contest between Mao and Khrushchev is a struggle for power to decide who dictates the future course of Communism; a struggle which could cause an upheaval in Russia or China, or both, which might create a crisis in the world not hitherto anticipated either by East or West.

Prophecies concerning just how or where the last great war between the nations will start are somewhat indefinite; we only know how and where it will end—by divine intervention on the mountains of Israel (Eze. 38; Dan. 11:40-45).

CHINA MAKES THE BOMB

THE Chinese are planning to make their first and many subsequent tests of nuclear missiles.

"As a political and psychological weapon to terrorize the rest of Asia, blackmail their way into the United Nations and enhance their prestige in the coloured world and the world Communist movement."

So one "expert" phrases it.

It is generally conceded that it would take a long time, and would require more capital than China can afford, for them to risk a big nuclear war, but it would be comparatively easy for them to make short range nuclear weapons sufficient to strike terror to all Southeast Asia, including India and Japan, a group of nations which would be defenceless in the face of nuclear war.

This, many believe, is China's chief objective, and has much to do with their quarrel with Russia, as it is evident that the Soviets would not approve of such conquests. However, it is a big question as to just what course Russia would take if China should start a large scale war in an effort to take over any or all of Southeast Asia.

TEST BAN HOPES

AS THIS copy is being written, representatives of Russia, the U.S. and Great Britain are meeting in Moscow in a friendly, even jovial atmosphere, to begin talks on another nuclear test ban agreement, with hopes higher than they have ever been before of coming to some kind of a workable agreement which might serve as a deterrent to the nuclear arms race. There are several reasons for the optimism. Failure of the Soviet-Chinese unity talks raised Western hopes of better Soviet-West relations, and an attitude of willingness to compromise by both sides caused expectations of an early agreement.

But a hard look at the whole situation makes it certain that once again wishful thinking, rather than sober calculation, is the basis for the optimism. It appears more likely that the willingness to compromise is because weary diplomats feel that this is the last chance to come to any agreement.

The best that can be expected from any test ban agreement is merely a moratorium on open-air explosions, without any certain method of inspection, cessation of such testing being contingent upon all parties faithfully keeping such agreement.

Under the circumstances, any permanent and effective ban on such testing is as futile as disarmament agreements. There is no intention on the part of any of the nations involved to cease experimentation in nuclear power, underground explosions, or manufacture of nuclear weapons on the basis of knowledge already acquired. Neither are there any plans for destroying the huge arsenals of atomic weapons now possessed by Russia and the U.S.

At the same time, it is certain that neither Russia, the U.S., Britain nor any other nation is going to scrap all nuclear missiles and cease manufacture of the same while Red China forges ahead in the nuclear race. Test bans, arms reduction and peace pacts are hard to make, but easily broken. Not until war is abolished by divine decree will the nations cease to "prepare war."

THE MIDEAST

FOR the past month the Mideast has been unusually quiet, with Nasser's plan for Arab unity making little or no progress.

The exception to Mideast tranquillity is the little kingdom of Yemen, bordering on the Red Sea on the west, Saudi Arabia on the north and British-held Aden on the south. Ten months ago the government was overthrown by a "republican" group backed by Egypt's Nasser, but they have not been able to take over all the country.

It is generally conceded that this impoverished desert country is not worth fighting for, but its strategic position and the political issues involved make of Yemen a trouble spot involving Saudi

Arabia and Jordan which are in danger of being overthrown if Nasser should succeed in getting full control of Yemen.

Meanwhile Britain, the U.S. and Russia are deeply concerned, all of which makes of the Yemen affair a potential threat, not only to the peace of the Mideast, but to the whole world.

The U. S. has completed negotiations with Israel for the sale to Israel of enough Hawk supersonic anti-aircraft missiles to equip one battalion at a cost of \$25 million. At the same time it was announced that a U.S. jet fighter squadron had arrived in Saudi Arabia for air defence training exercises to be conducted jointly with Saudi Arabian forces.

It begins to appear that the "Merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof" (Eze. 38:13), as well as Russia, are becoming more and more involved in Mideast affairs.

A dispatch from London reveals that, since 1945, U.S. aid to Egypt exceeded \$840 million, while Soviet aid to Egypt since 1955 totalled three times that sum.

Jewish leaders are issuing protests because the Ecumenical Council had refused to adopt a resolution condemning anti-Semitism. The reason given for such failure was fear of Arab reaction against such a resolution, and it is frankly admitted by members of the Council.

"Although a majority of Catholic bishops would favor a statement by the Ecumenical Council against anti-Semitism, political considerations might prevent such a declaration."

All of which reveals the utter futility of the whole Ecumenical movement, and that political, rather than moral and spiritual considerations, is the guiding principle behind the movement to merge all faiths in a united effort to bring peace, unity and brotherhood to the whole world. The Ecumenical Council knows nothing of the "Hope of Israel" or God's purpose with the Jews. They would sacrifice the Jews to establish better relations with their enemies who are greater in number. —O.B.

London Fraternal Gathering

October 5-6

Wells Academy Bldg., 306 King St.

If the Lord Will

"THE NATIONS IN PROPHECY IN THE LATTER DAYS"

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

First Address: "Britain in Prophecy"

Bro. William Davey, Worcester

Second Address; "Russia in Prophecy"

Bro. Victor Gilbert, Buffalo

SATURDAY EVENING

"Israel's Future in Prophecy and the Establishment of the Kingdom of God" Bro. John Randell, California

SUNDAY SCHOOL

"Suffer Little Children to Come Unto Me"

Bro. Gilbert Growcott, Detroit

SUNDAY MEMORIAL

"The Unsearchable Riches of Christ"—Eph. 3:8

Bro. George Gibson, Toronto

SUNDAY LECTURE

"Truth, the Golden Key That Unlocks the Palace of Eternity"

Bro. William Pickford, Lethbridge

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