

The Berean Christadelphian

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

Edited and Published by:
G. A. Gibson 294 Glebeholme Blvd., Toronto 6, Ontario, Canada

“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

BALTIMORE, Md.—2010 Mosby Ave., 21207—Breaking of Bread 10 a.m.

We are pleased to announce the return to the Berean fellowship of bro. George Falkinburg and sis. Bess Falkinburg of Taneytown, Maryland; also sis. Beulah Williams and sis. Betts Senkel of Baltimore, Maryland.

We pray to our Heavenly Father that we may be of help to each other in our walk in the Truth.

Being few in number we plan, God willing, to meet for the present each Sunday at the home of sis. Beulah Williams, at the above address. —bro. Russell Frisbie

* * *

DETROIT, Mich.—12954 St. Marys, Detroit 27—Memorial 10 a.m.; Sunday School 11:30 a.m.

SOME months have passed since our last report to the Brotherhood—months that have been filled with world-shaking events, as we have watched the Signs of the Times moving across the troubled sea of nations.

How thankful we should be to God that the revelation of His purposes has been committed to us in the final few years of Gentile rule of the world—that we can watch the swelling and receding of the seas, and know that they cannot pass their appointed bounds—that the nations of the world are but instruments of God to bring about conditions which are for the liberation and salvation of the servants of God. We are assured —

"ALL THINGS are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many rebound to the glory of God."

While realizing that the nations of the earth are but a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance with God (Isa. 40:15), we must also remember that the operation of world events for the sake of God's people brings great responsibilities. The selection of our lives as manifestations of divine mercy must be ever in our thoughts, calling to mind the words of the Psalmist—

"What is man, that Thou are mindful of him; or the son of man, that Thou visitest him?"

While our days, weeks and months go quickly into the bosom of the past, there must be evidence in our lives that we are advancing from stage to stage in God's purpose. Leaving the sincere milk of the Word by which we grow in stature to manhood in God's sight, we must seek the meat of the divine message, which will give us strength to stand against all the fiery darts of those who oppose the work of God amongst His people.

The only anchor of the soul in these troublous times is the Word of God. It is the impregnable rock and fortress of safety, when all around is as shifting sand in the troubled scene. It alone can give assurance of the future in an age when statesmen and world rulers find no common ground for agreement and security.

Do we treasure its message above the things of the present?

During the summer months we have been encouraged by the association of several around the table of the Lord: Brother David Clubb, Sister Ruth Clubb, Sister Dale Gwalchmai (London), bro. & sis. Charles Banta and sis. Eva Banta (Houston). Bro. Banta gave us the word of exhortation. We have enjoyed the visits of others passing through.

We have also benefited spiritually by meeting with our brethren and sisters of Toronto, London, Canton. Again we have felt the cementing bond of ecclesial fellowship, uniting us as one family in God's service.

The Texas Gathering, an earnest of the rest which remains for the people of God, was enjoyed in company with several from the Toronto, Buffalo and London ecclesias, who journeyed together with us. Our visits among the brethren and sisters of Texas, though brief, were a source of comfort and encouragement, adding to the spiritual values of this annual event.

Once again we are saddened by the news of the falling asleep of some of our brethren and sisters in various parts of the Household, who have maintained their stations in the Vineyard for many years. We are comforted, however, in the assurance that the Master will soon return to comfort those who mourn, and wipe away tears from all eyes, giving the oil of gladness for the spirit of heaviness.

We rejoice that several have taken a stand with the Berean fellowship, and have strengthened our hands in the things which remain. May the Lord give us strength and courage in the days before us, and His blessing that we may be knit together in love and good works.

With much love in the bonds of the Truth to our brethren and sisters far and near.

EDITORIAL

Remembering Christ

"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me"—Luke 22:19

ON the first day of each week, we come together for a three-fold purpose; to worship God in the beauty of holiness; to be exhorted to faithfulness, and to remember Christ, with special reference to his death and glorious resurrection.

This is as it should be, for without God we would have no Christ. Our minds are directed to Him by the hymns we sing, His Word that we read, and our opening prayer in which we offer our praise and express our thanksgiving for all His wonderful works, and His goodness to the children of men.

The exhortation is an important part of the memorial meeting, and is designed, as Peter said, "to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." It has been said that the purpose of exhortation is to cleanse our minds in preparation for a faithful participation in the Memorial Service. But is that not a mistaken notion? Would it not be more reasonable if we came to the meeting with our minds already cleansed? If we wait until Sunday morning to cleanse our minds, we have waited too long. The course of wisdom is to begin the cleansing on Monday morning, because it is a daily necessity in the life of each one of us. Solomon says—

"Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching **daily** at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors."—Prov. 8:34

And Jesus says the same—

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross **daily**, and follow me"—Luke 9:23.

Remembering Christ, the third and focal point of our assembly, is of extreme importance. If we examine the matter carefully, we will see the great wisdom by which Christ instituted the breaking of bread, and made it a matter of duty for us to come together each first day of the week, and partake of the bread and wine in memory of him.

But what do we bring to remembrance concerning him? Is it to remind us of how he came into the world? How he went about in the land of Judea preaching the Gospel; how he was taken by wicked hands and slain; how he rose from the dead, and now sits at the right hand of the Father in the heavens? These are all important features concerning him, but is that the limit of our remembrance? It

seems to us that if we are to please Christ by our remembrance, then we must thoughtfully consider him from every angle of his redemptive work.

When we think of that, our minds go back to Eden, and there in Genesis we behold the purpose of God in its early stage of development. By the power of faith, we see Jesus as the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. We also see him as the seed of the women, and of Abraham and, when we think of him, our minds are flooded with the knowledge of the Covenants of Promise.

From that point, we go on to the days of Moses and the institution of the Passover where we see Jesus symbolized by the slain lamb, and the sprinkled blood. Later, we learn of him in that prophetic declaration given through Moses in Deut. 18:18-19—

"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My Words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My Words which he shall speak in My Name, I will require it of him."

Another important element in our remembrance is the Covenant God made with David. In his masterly address, given by Peter on the day of Pentecost, he said in Acts 2:30—

"Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would rise up Christ to sit on his throne."

That Christ is to return to the earth, and restore the kingdom to Israel, and to sit upon the throne of his father David, and rule over the house of Jacob, and bring peace to a troubled world, is one of the most beautiful features of revealed truth.

To remember Christ in all its fulness is to bring to mind in great detail the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus. Those are the things which constitute the Gospel, or the teaching of the apostles in the first century.

We come now to the particular matter in question—the appointment of the weekly assembly where we partake of the bread and wine as Jesus has requested. What is the determinate object in sharing the emblems? Is it not to bring into the remembrance the things involved by them? How could it be otherwise, when we consider the circumstances under which the memorial was instituted? It caused Paul to say in Phil. 3:10-11—

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.

"If BY ANY MEANS I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead!"

"The sufferings of Christ," is an impressively comprehensive term. It does not refer only to his actual suffering, but to what was accomplished by it. What then was the result of the giving of his body, and the shedding of his blood?

Under the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" he was put to death. This resulted in the condemnation of sinful flesh, through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all as a propitiation to declare the righteousness of God, as a basis for the remission of sins. Therefore, all who approach God through this crucified, but risen, representative of Adam's disobedient race, are forgiven, and, by a figure, his blood cleanses from sin.

To become familiar with these things, it is essential that our minds be fed daily by the reading of the Word of God. By this means our memory is refreshed, our knowledge is increased, and our faith strengthened.

Therefore, if we are to remember Christ in a way pleasing to him, we must begin on Monday, and continue faithfully throughout the week. Then when we assemble together on the first day of the following week, our remembrance will reach its climax when we partake of the bread and wine, and that will become the pivotal point in our spiritual activity. —Editor.

Lords Over God's Clergy

"Call no man your father upon the earth . . . neither be ye called masters . . . for ye are all brethren"
—Matt. 23:8-10

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

THE church was associated with the apostles in the ministry of reconciliation. By "the church," I mean, not that multiform thing called "the church" by the world in these times; but that one, undivided body of disciples, collected together by the personal labours of the apostles and evangelists; and all through subsequent generations, who should believe and practise the same truth.

To this "one Body," energized by the "one Spirit" (Eph. 4:4), and "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10; Acts 4:32), and styled "THE BRIDE" —is committed the work of making known "the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10), as contained in the Word; and of inviting the world to be reconciled to God (Rev. 22:17).

No member of this body is exempt from the obligation of co-operating in this work. It is the duty and privilege of every one in his own sphere to endeavour to turn men to righteousness; for there is no distinction of "clergy" and "laity" in the family of God.

* * *

IN the days of the apostles, things were very different from what they are now. There were many congregations, or churches, but they were all one flock, or "denomination," and men endowed with spiritual gifts were their rulers.

But even these were not distinguished from their brethren as "clergy," or priests; but as ministers, or servants. Well knowing the presumption, pride and arrogance of the flesh, the Spirit commanded them especially to feed the flock, and not to fleece it; to oversee it willingly and of a ready mind, but not for the sake of compensation; and to be examples to the flock, and not to lord it over the heritages (1 Pet. 5:2-3).

The word "clergy," as the title of an order, is assumed by men who have no right to it. It is a word which comes from the Greek **kleros**, a lot or portion; and is applied by the apostle in the text quoted to a single congregation of disciples; so that when he speaks of all the congregations of the flock, he styles them "the heritages," **ton kleron**.

But, in after years, the ministers of the heritages, or clergies, disregarded the commandment, and set themselves up as lords of the heritages, which they fleeced, and oppressed for lucre's sake. They even made the clergies of God believe that they were nothing more than mere commoners; while they themselves, the usurpers of the believers' rights, were God's peculiar lot, or portion, as the tribe of Levi were among the Israelites; and the distinction was then set up of "clergy" and "laity," from **hoi laoi**, the multitude!

But the distinction belongs to the apostasy, and not to God's oppressed and scattered sheep. When "clergy" get in among them, it is "as grievous wolves, not sparing the flock, but speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them" for their own worldly gain (Acts 20:29-30). They have nothing to do with the Word of reconciliation except to pervert it, and to bring it into disrepute.

Not of This World

"When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness . . . let favour be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness"—Isa. 26:9

By **BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS**

BELOVED brethren and sisters, once more we are assembled, to hold in quietness and peace that festival of love and hope which Jesus has instituted as the rallying point of his people while he is away.

Certainly, in these times, it is a very great privilege that we are able to come and hold this festival; because, for the time being, we are withdrawn from the toilsome world, and seated in the calm presence of God's promises and of God's revealed will.

There is an advantage in being able to come face to face with these things, particularly at a time like this, when all the world around us is upturned with its own excitement, and engrossed in its own schemes, and when the things that are of God are at the lowest possible discount; for the Truth, of which Jesus is the center, shines with a very dim light indeed in the presence of the torch-glare of an English election; and we, who belong to the Truth, are considered fools because we choose to stand apart from this busy work, waiting in faith and patience for the things that God intends to bring about—for the promised return of Christ to **DO** the things which these men are **TRYING to do**, and which they can only try to do, for do them they never can.

It is not in the power of politicians to bless the world. Even supposing they could do all they seem to imagine possible to be done, it would not touch the root of human misery.

There is no doubt that by means of sensible contrivances and regulations, it might be possible to cheapen food and increase employment, and generally to multiply those substantial advantages that are much set by in the world, and which, in their proper places, are unqualified blessings; but the simple bringing about of these things would not confer upon the world the real conditions of well-being.

Supposing, under the leadership of the party which is most prominent and most popular in the country at present, everybody received higher wages and was more plentifully supplied with the good things of life, which is about as high as political benefaction aspires to reach, or can possibly reach, we should only have an extension of the conditions already existing in the well-to-do part of society. And we have even to look at the state of things prevailing among the higher ranks of society to see how utterly such privileges fail in bringing about a true state of happiness.

Where is there more secret crime, more false pride, more disregard of God, more feasts and revelries and wasting vanities, than among the titles and the wealthy, who have more time and money than they know how to use?

And who is more impervious to considerations of principle?—who is more unkind?—who is more selfish?—who is more wretched than the successful commercial man of the day?—who, with so much money and plenty to do, is, generation after generation, finding out the truth of Solomon's verdict—

"All is vanity and vexation of spirit" (Eccl. 1:14).

Those bulls of Bashan, those great creatures of success and sin who flaunt a pompous presence in our busy streets and market-places, are no better off as respects happiness or purity than the more refined sinners of the upper ten.

And if this is the case amongst those who have plenty, what guarantee have we that the world would be any better with a more general diffusion of wealth than now exists? I think it would not be

very difficult to show that a greater diffusion of wealth, under present circumstances, would involve a greater prevalence of wickedness.

The mass of the population now is compelled by poverty to be quiet and well behaved. The force of hard circumstances acts as the lance on the full-bred horse; it reduces the violence of disposition which would grow with good living, and curtails those evil acts which would increase with greater opportunity.

But suppose they had plenty of every necessity; suppose they were so well to do that it was not much an object to them to gain their daily bread, we should have a very different state of circumstances.

Plenty of wealth would, doubtless, reproduce the sin of Sodom on a large scale; and what was her sin? It is mentioned in Eze. 16:49—

"Behold this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, **fulness of bread and abundance of idleness** was in her and in her daughters;

"Neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

"And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me, therefore I took them away."

Now even in her present condition with so much poverty, misery and ignorance, England is a very proud nation; she delights in those national songs that pander to the national vanity, by exaggerating the national importance; and if she is proud when she is poor, what would be the case if wealth was general?

Why, her pride would increase to the dimensions which characterized Sodom, and brought down the burning vengeance of the Almighty. We should have a state of things in which there might be more animal enjoyment, more creature luxury, but so far as moral and intellectual excellence and true happiness are concerned, we should be in a worse position than we are at present.

We see this lesson taught in the fact that God has chosen the poor of this world as the heirs of His Kingdom. He has chosen poverty as the condition of preparation for those whom He shall deem worthy to be entrusted with the administration of His power in the Age to Come. And we may depend upon it that if poverty were not a good thing for such a purpose, poverty would not be chosen.

God is much wiser than we are; and perhaps it is not difficult to discern wisdom in this arrangement by which His children are first poor, and subjected to circumstances of slight and adversity to begin with. By this they are tried and developed, as they never could be were they nursed in the lap of plenty.

So even supposing we were for a moment to admit that these political world-doctors could do all that they promise, we can see that what they might accomplish would be of very questionable advantage. They would bring about a state of things in which evil would reign to even a greater extent than now.

If people were richer than they are now, they would become more lawless than now, more wanton, more proud, more generally disregardful of those principles whose acquaintance can only be made in circumstances of adversity. There would be no fear of God before their eyes—

"Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?" (Psa. 12.4).

"We are the people who should make the laws; we will dispose of the earth and all things therein as we please."

Such would be their cry.

A spirit of Tower-of-Babel democracy would become rampant, and we should speedily have a state of things more obnoxious in the sight of God than the present, if that were possible. I do not mean to say the present state of things is well-pleasing to Him, far from it; only the blood of well-fed wickedness is let out on every hand.

The wicked punish, frustrate, and impoverish the wicked. God providentially dashes one against the other, so that they cannot combine to carry out those mad schemes which in time would extirpate all righteousness from the earth.

The schemes of the politicians, therefore, contain no blessing for the world. But the scheme with which we are identified is far different. It is one that does really involve the highest good for all mankind, and which will develop, in course of time, realities of glory and excellence far beyond the brightest visions of the most sanguine politician.

We are identified with a power that is able to conceive and carry out a government of unmixed blessing; we are identified with "another king, one Jesus," who will clear the way for true reform, by overcoming all kings, and putting down all governments, and breaking in pieces every dominion under the sun, and who will then establish his authority as the standard of universal law.

When this comes to pass—when a righteous and single despotism brings wisdom, and love, and power, to bear in the government of the world, we shall see every difficulty touched.

There will be no social or political problem too hard for solution or too insignificant for notice. Jehovah's king will be able to do what the poor political tinkers of our day cannot do; he will bring about an equal division of wealth; he will justly diffuse and distribute the abundance of God's liberality, which is now scantily and unequally divided by the selfishness, and injustice, and impotence of man.

He will do more than that; because mere plenty without wisdom to use it, would not be a blessing. Plenty with wickedness is a curse. Therefore He will do something which these men cannot do, and never pretend to do, and never wish to do; He will teach men righteousness by the judgments of God in the earth. He will, by a period of trial and great destructive judgments, train the nations of the earth to recognize their subordination to the Deity. He will enforce, as the first law of the world—

"Glory to God in the highest."

He will teach them that God must be first, before there can be true blessing. He will bring them to obedience before he bestows benefit. He will teach them wisdom, which politicians cannot do, because they know not wisdom themselves. He will teach them how to be happy, which no human power can do.

He will teach them how to make a beneficent use of things, which in the hands of wickedness are accursed; and he will abolish those standing sources of misery and poverty, of which political men complain, but which no human hand can ever get out of the way, namely, standing armies, huge armaments, and immense fleets, the maintenance of which absorbs a great proportion of the world's wealth, and embarrasses the operations of peaceful industry. He will abolish them by abolishing the necessity for them.

Armies and fleets owe their existence to the fact that the world is divided among many governments, each of which can only hold its own against the rest by the right of might. Christ will put this plurality system of government out of the way, and erect a simple and absolute monarchy "by divine right," exercising supreme power unquestioned throughout the earth, and his iron hand will keep down all opposition for a thousand years.

He will thus bring about the possibility of beating swords into plow-shares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and for that period will exhibit the prediction of the prophets, and the hope of saints, as a blessed reality.

It is idle for men to dream about such a thing now. At best, all expectations that it can be realized in the present state of things can only be dreams.

The facts are against them. Political deceivers assure listening audiences that the world is getting better, and is getting towards the realization of peaceful principles, when actually there are

more armed men in the world now than there ever have been in the whole course of the world's history!—and there is a greater tendency to, and danger of war, than there ever has been in recent times!

The increase of these armaments going on before our eyes, is itself a disproof of the fair speeches and plausible theories by which they seek to secure the votes of electors.

Now, witness how great a cause **WE** are on the side of, and you will realize what an indignity it would be for any Christadelphian to be deluded by the glosses, and the silver lies with which these men tickle the ears of the people; and to be thus induced to lay hold of the defiled machinery of electoral power. Such a mistake would be to compromise his position as a son of God. It would be to play the human reformer on the basis of the devil.

Let us stand apart in the holiness and the dignity of our position; as those who have no continuing city, but seek for one to come.

It is true that the maintenance of this position involves present self-denial and obloquy. It is not agreeable when everybody is busy and enthusiastic, to be looked down upon as a religion-warped lunatic, nursing Utopian dreams, and letting the present substance slip.

It is not agreeable to be isolated in the corner, and considered as belonging to those whose society is to be avoided. Yet the eye of faith, the mind of conviction, the soul that really and resolutely believes the Gospel, will have no difficulty in "tiding" over the trial, and in keeping a tenacious hold of the invisible link of connection between a suffering and degraded present, and a glorious future—such a future as the world has no conception of and can never realize.

It is only the mind of those whose faith is weak, whose vision of the promises of God is very dim, whose confidence in the Truth is faltering, that would hesitate as to their duty in such a crisis as this.

No doubt there will be some such; for there are some whose faith is weak. But what we must do is for those who think themselves strong to help those that are weak to envelope themselves in the mantle of faith and spiritual vision, through which the darts of the wicked will not be able to penetrate, and within which they will feel themselves to be calm and serene and confident, when all the world is upheaved with vain excitement, or a prey to well-founded fears.

The world desires and believes in coming plenty and glory of its own creation; but all its hopes are vain. Rest and peace and blessing will only come from God, and in His Own way, which will be manifest in Jesus Christ at his coming.

So it is pleasant and profitable to come round this table, and hold as it were, an invisible interview with him who is the center of all our hopes, and who is the instrument of all God's designs to the world. It strengthens us in our determination to abide by him and by his cause at such a time as this, when the association of his name with the future affairs of the world, is an occasion of laughter to the fool.

We remember that when he was on the earth, he was all by himself; he took no part in political movements—he was esteemed a madman, and of no reputation. His words to us are:

"Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world; if they hate you, ye know that they hated me before they hated you; if they listen to my words, they will listen to you also."

We know that they did not listen to his words. He was an outcast, despised of men and afflicted, whose generation even was cut off from the earth because he asserted his kingship in antagonism to the authority of man. He was crucified because he said—

"I am the king of the Jews."

And the culminating consideration with Pilate was put before him by the Scribes and Pharisees, in these words—

"If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend; for whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Caesar."

When Pilate heard that, he gave him into their hands to be crucified: and so we stand by the side of the crucified Jesus, and we are prepared to be socially crucified with him, and to have nothing to do with the polling booth. —Bro. Roberts, 1869.

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Comfort

"This is my comfort in my affliction; for Thy Word hath quickened me"—Psalm 119:50

THERE are many kinds of comfort. There is that associated with physical ease. Again, we have all witnessed the attempts of a mother to soothe a disappointed child.

And there is not one but who has been in distress, and experienced the soothing effects of consolation, as imparted by the words and actions of those who are really our friends. That is another description of comfort, indeed worthy of the name.

But it is quite a distinct kind, though allied to this last, of which I wish to speak—the consolation alone derived from a contemplation of the Word of Truth.

The God-fearing men of old were fully and personally aware of its sustaining influence—Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David. Call to mind the position of David for instance, just previous to his occupying the Throne of Israel, in that anxious period when he became the author of those touching utterances we have so often before us in the Psalms—

"Remember the Word to Thy servant, wherein Thou hast made me to hope.

"This is my comfort in my affliction."

These expressions seem to have been wrung from him. He says again—

"In the multitude of my thoughts within me . . ."

David had plenty of time to think, while hiding from those who sought his life, and we can imagine how disturbed his mind must have been at these times—

"In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul."

"The Word unto Thy servant . . . this is my comfort in my affliction." Truly, brethren and sisters, there is a comfort from spiritual reflection, from dwelling upon the Word of God, not to be obtained elsewhere, and sufficient to heal every woe.

We cannot exhaust its resources. Close association with it does not detract from, but enhances its value. It is a case where familiarity does not breed contempt, but the deeper we draw, the purer becomes the flow, and the more lasting the satisfaction.

"Comfort one another."

This was to the Thessalonians, but we take it to ourselves, the same as we personally apply all Paul's epistles. Being the receptacles of God's Word, and having ourselves received the authority embodied therein, are we able to reflect spiritual comfort one to another.

We are indebted to Paul for most of the passages in this line of thought, so we must quote largely from his epistles, and we shall then be reminded that this comfort, though individually received, is mutually circulated. It is not one we are forced to partake of in isolated blessedness, so to speak.

In his letter to the Roman brethren, he says (Rom. 1:11):

"For I long to see you, that I may be **comforted together** with you by the mutual faith both of you and me."

And 2 Cor. 7:13.—

"We were comforted in your comfort."

An old truth, "Unity is strength," is exemplified here, in that we are thus inclined to the strengthening of each other. Now this unity of spirit is earnestly enjoyed by Paul. Again to the Romans (and remember the application to us also) he says—

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.

"Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another, according to Christ Jesus" (Rom. 15:4).

Christ prayed that his disciples might be one as he and his Father were one.

Unity—Strength. The literal meaning of the word "comfort" is "with strength," and it is an idea we can readily assimilate, both from our general observance, and also in regard to the Truth, but more particularly from the latter reason.

We meet together to consider the Word, the same Word that comforted the recipients of Paul's communications, and to derive encouragement from—

"The God of all comfort, Who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we are comforted of God"

(2 Cor. 1:3-4).

This is plain enough, is it not? This is the relation we bear to one another IF we are truly God's children. Not stumbling-blocks to each other, not standing in each other's light, not even for a moment refraining from helping each other, but **working together** in the love of the Truth, with which we are comforted of God.

Paul refers to certain "workfellows unto the Kingdom of God" as he calls them, as being a comfort to him. Who shall say that he did not require all the comfort they could give him?

From a worldly aspect, what a thankless task was his as the comforter of the Gentiles, yet through it all how sincere was his regard for the welfare of the ecclesias of his day. Being careful for them, his writings to them are necessarily of an anxiously pleading character. To the Philippians he wrote—

"If there be any consolation in Christ, any comfort of love . . . fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

"Let nothing be done of strife or vainglory. Let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

Christ was a perfect man, and we can understand what a great help and encouragement to him, was the comfort of God, pointing forward to the Hope and Glory that was set before him.

That cheering element is just as necessary to us as it was to Christ, and it **was** necessary to **him**. Without it, it seems impossible that he could have endured the cross, despising the shame. It was—

"For the joy that was set before him."

It is an element that can only be properly appreciated by a constant and earnest association with the things of God, and I trust we all, when we have finished our course, may, as we take a retrospect of the past, be satisfied that we have enjoyed the full consolation of God.

Brethren and sisters, let us conclude with this beautiful thought for our minds to dwell upon—

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father which loved us and gave us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and stablish you in every good word and work."

It will be so if we pay attention to the command of our Heavenly Father, and a glorious reward will be ours. —G. G. Sr.

The Key of the House of David

"The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open"—Isaiah 22:22

WHO is the possessor of this key? What does the key mean to us? And why is it carried upon the shoulder? Most likely we can find scriptural references that will throw light upon these questions.

We feel sure that most of us have read of the cities of ancient times with walls 120 feet high and 60 feet broad, like Babylon the great, one of the seven wonders of the world. Their iron gates were very strong and heavy; so the keys were fashioned accordingly — large and heavy; so for the gate-opener a man was selected who was very strong, and he carried the key upon his shoulder. It was an honourable position. The spies testified to Moses —

"The people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the sons of Anak there" (Num. 13:28).

There is nothing unusual that spiritual things are compared with natural in order to be easier for human conception. Who is the possessor or holder of the key of the house of David? In Isa. 22:20-21 we read —

"It shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah: and I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy

government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open."

Eliakim in Hebrew means, "God is setting up," and, Hilkiah, "God is protection."

It would appear that we have found the man that fits the picture, but we find upon further investigation that this man Eliakim was only the king's counsellor, and master of King Hezekiah's household, successor of Shebna, about 710 B.C. He is long since dead.

So we are looking for a greater person than Eliakim. In Isa. 9:6 we read —

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the **government shall be upon his shoulder**: and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

Eliakim was a great man, but only a type of him who was to come 700 years later, of whom the apostle Paul said—

"Jesus Christ our Lord, was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:3-4).

THIS is the possessor of the key of the house of David. What then is our Lord going to do with that promised key?

Before we answer this question, we will note that in the days of his flesh Jesus promised to give certain keys to one of his apostles, as we read in Matt. 16:13-19, on the occasion when Jesus asked his disciples —

"Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"

They told him that some said he was John the Baptist, some Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. But when Jesus asked them, "Who say ye that I am?" Peter said —

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus replied —

"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church (ecclesia); and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

This was not the keys of the gates of hell (hades); Christ alone possesses them.

But what kind of keys were given to Peter, and when did he use them? Some of our Christian friends entertain the erroneous doctrine promulgated by religious bodies that the apostle Peter built the church in Rome and had the key for its door and another key to heaven, as he possessed two keys, given to him by our Lord.

Let us see if such a statement will stand the test. In Acts 2:1 we read —

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."

And in v. 4 we read —

"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

And v. 5 —

"And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven."

Verse 6 —

"When this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language."

"And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?"

In v. 14 it is said —

"Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them . . ."

— certain words that caused them to be pricked in their hearts, and to ask the apostles—

"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Then Peter said to them —

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ."

And in v. 41, we read of their reaction to what they had seen and heard—

"Then they that gladly received the Word were baptized . . . about 3,000 souls.

Here is the answer to how Peter used the keys given to him by the Lord Jesus. By his convincing words he opened their hearts and minds to a knowledge of the Truth as it is in Jesus.

To be sure that our understanding of the keys that Peter used and how he used them has reference to the knowledge of the Truth, we look at Luke 11:52 —

"Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the KEY OF KNOWLEDGE,

"Ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."

In other words, they kept them from obeying the Truth as taught by Jesus.

We are still looking for the key that the Lord Jesus has been holding for so long a time, and our expectation is that he will soon return and use it. Let us search for it in Rev. 1:9 —

"I John who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Reading further (vs. 10-11) —

"I was in spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last: and, What thou seest write in a book."

Now we come to vs. 17-18 —

"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the First and the Last:

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and HAVE THE KEYS OF HELL AND OF DEATH."

The apostle Peter did not have the honor of possessing these keys, only the Lord Jesus Christ.

The apostle John in his message to the ecclesia in Philadelphia said —

"These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the KEY OF DAVID, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth" (Rev. 3:7).

This confirms and explains the words of the prophet Isaiah (22:22).

The possessor of the key of the house of David will surely come (the man at God's right hand), to build Jerusalem.

Let faith and hope be strong, that we may be found worthy to meet the Lord when he returns, and so hear the words —

"Come ye blessed of my Father, enter into the joy of thy Lord."

—F.G.

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The History of the "Trinity" Doctrine

"For there is ONE GOD, and one mediator between God and men, the MAN Christ Jesus"

—1 Timothy 2:5

THE history of religion has always been one of degeneration from the originally revealed pure monotheism to various forms of polytheism. "Christianity," as popularly known, has been no exception.

The Bible, in both Old and New Testaments, is very emphatic about the absolute oneness of God. When asked—

"Which is the first commandment of all?"

Jesus answered (Mark 12:29)—

"The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD."

He was quoting from the words of Moses in Deut. 6:4. This is the consistent story of the Bible. **There is not a word about three gods in it from the beginning to end.**

"Christendom" today has degenerated to a belief in four gods, three good ones and one evil one. Some parts of Christendom have five gods, as the Roman Catholic Church, which has added a "Mother of God" who is in their system of belief the supreme deity beside a host of demi-gods, one for every day of the year (and more), all of which mythical and man-invented deities are worshipped and prayed to.

The doctrine of the Trinity is this—

"We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons; nor dividing the substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost.

"But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, so is the Son; and such is the Holy Ghost.

"The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal.

"And yet there are not three eternal, but one eternal. Also there are not three incomprehensibles, not three uncreated: but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.

"So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty. And yet there are not three Almighties, but one Almighty.

"So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet there are not three Gods: but one God.

"So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not three Lords but one Lord.

"For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every person by himself to be God and Lord; so we are forbidden by the Catholic religion to say, There be three Gods, or three Lords.

"The Father is made of none; neither created, nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

"So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons: one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.

"And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other, none is greater or less than others; but the whole three persons are co-eternal together; and co-equal. So that in all things, as is aforesaid: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

"HE THEREFORE THAT WILL BE SAVED MUST THUS THINK OF THE TRINITY."

This is the prize and tragic example of the natural mind of man speculating upon divine things rather than being content to humbly accept the simple testimony of Scripture.

In all Scripture, there is nothing to justify this absurd and self-contradictory mizmaze. While truly we can never hope with mortal minds to comprehend God, still the revelations He gives of Himself, and of His Son, and of His Holy Spirit—His power and presence which fills all immensity and works His will—is clear and simple and reasonable and a tremendously satisfying relief from the befuddled speculations as quoted above.

The doctrine of the "Trinity" is nowhere found in the Bible. The following quotations from recognized historians will give the background of the period in which this doctrine was developed, showing the general conditions of Christendom of the time, the philosophic influences at work, the methods of reasoning and argument used, and the political forces that finally established the doctrine and enforced it by confiscation, prohibition, punishment and murder.

This will clearly show the frail, human foundation the doctrine of the Trinity rests on, and dissipate the weight it appears to have from centuries of "orthodox" acceptance.

Of the Council of Nice, 325 AD, where the doctrine of the Trinity was first officially formulated, the well-known trinitarian historian Mosheim, a Lutheran, admits (Century 4, Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 1)—

". . . the discussions concerning the three persons in the Godhead, among those who approved the decisions of the council of Nice.

"There is so little clearness and discrimination in these discussions, that they seem to rend the one God into three Gods.

"Moreover, those idle fictions, which a regard for the Platonic philosophy and for the prevailing opinions of the day had induced most theologians to embrace, even before the time of Constantine, were now in various ways confirmed, extended and embellished.

"Hence it is that we see on every side evident traces of excessive veneration for saints in heaven, of belief in a fire to purify souls on leaving the body, of partiality for priestly celibacy, the worship of images and relics, and for many other opinions which, in process of time, almost banished the true religion, or at least very much obscured and corrupted it.

"Genuine piety was gradually supplanted by a long train of superstitious observances, which were derived partly from a preposterous disposition to adopt profane rites.

"To the temples, to water consecrated with certain forms, and to likenesses of holy men, the same efficacy was ascribed and the same privileges assigned, as had been attributed to the pagan temples, statues and lustrations before the advent of Christ."

This is a trinitarian's description of conditions in the Catholic Church during the time the doctrine of the Trinity was being formulated and imposed. In the same chapter, Section 5, Mosheim says:

"The doctors who were distinguished for their learning explained the sacred doctrines after the manner of Origen (see notes below on Origen)—on whom they fixed their eye—in accordance with the principles of that philosophy which they learned in their youth at school, namely, the Platonic philosophy as corrected by Origen.

"Those who wish to get a full insight into this subject may examine Gregory Nazianzen among the Greeks and Augustine among the Latins who were regarded in the subsequent ages as the only patterns worthy of imitation, and may be fitly styled, next to Origen, the parents and supporters of philosophic or scholastic theology. They were both admirers of Plato."

Plato was the heathen Greek philosopher (around 400 BC) who popularized the Egyptian doctrine of the immortality of the soul. He was the brightest star and greatest influence in the pagan system of philosophy that Christianity in its original purity set out to combat (See 1 Cor., chapters 1 & 2).

But Platonic philosophers became dominant in the Catholic Church, and Platonic philosophy has dominated the beliefs of "orthodox" Christendom from the 3rd century AD to the present. The earliest Christians bitterly fought heathen philosophy; the later "Christians" adopted it.

Origen, mentioned by Mosheim as influential in this Platonizing movement (around 200-250 AD), was one of **the** greatest (and perhaps the greatest) influences in establishing this trend in the Church. Of him, Mosheim says (Cent. 2, Part 2, Chap, 1, Sec. 5)—

"A new class of philosophers had grown up in Egypt . . . they much preferred Plato, and embraced most of his dogmas concerning God, the human soul, and the universe.

"This philosophy was adopted by such of the learned at Alexandria as wished to be accounted Christians, and yet to retain the rank of philosophers. All those who in this century presided in the schools of the Christians at Alexandria are said to have approved it."

Translator's footnote at this place in Mosheim—

"This cultivation of philosophy by Christian teachers greatly displeased those who were attached to the ancient simple faith, as taught by Christ and his apostles; for they feared, what afterwards actually happened, that the purity and excellence of divine truth would suffer by it. The issue of the long contest between them was that the advocates of philosophy prevailed."

Continuing Mosheim, Sec. 7—

"This mode of philosophising received some modification when Ammonius Saccas laid the foundation of that sect which is called the New Platonic.

Section 8—

The grand objects of Ammonius, to bring all sects and religions into harmony, required him to do much violence to the sentiments and opinions of all parties—philosophers, priests and Christians — and particularly by

allegorical interpretations. He assumed . . . that the public religions of all nations should be corrected by this ancient (Platonic) philosophy.

Section 9—

"With these Egyptian notions, he united the philosophy of Plato . . . Finally, the dogmas of other sects he construed, as far as was possible, by means of art, ingenuity and the aid of allegories into apparent coincidence with Egyptian and Platonic principles."

Section 12—

"This new species of philosophy, imprudently adopted by Origen and other Christians, did immense harm to Christianity. For it led the teachers of it to involve in philosophic obscurity many parts of our religion which were in themselves plain and easy to be understood; and to add to the precepts of the Saviour no few things, of which not a word can be found in the holy Scriptures . . .

"And finally it alienated the minds of many, in the following centuries, from Christianity itself, and produced a heterogeneous species of religion, consisting of Christian and Platonic principles combined. And who is able to enumerate all the evils and injurious changes which arose from this new philosophy—from this attempt to reconcile true and false religious with each other?"

Editor's footnote at this place in Mosheim—

"That philosophy has injured enormously genuine Christianity will be readily conceded by all who rest faith solely upon the rock of Scripture.

"When such persons are asked to account for the existence of religious principles and usages which are incapable of proof from the sacred volume, and even seem at variance with it, they have only to cite the semi-Christian school of philosophy which arose at Alexandria before the second century closed."

(It will be noted from the quotation on p. 303 that the most distinguished "Christian" teachers of the 4th century looked to Origen and the Platonic philosophy as their model. Any doctrines therefore—such as the Trinity—formulated at this time are bound to be more pagan than Christian.)

Returning to Mosheim's history of the 4th century, he records concerning the conduct and character of the church leaders (Cen. 4, Part 2, Chap. 2, Sec. 5)—

"The bishop of Rome took precedence over all others of the episcopal order. He exceeded all other bishops in the splendour of the church over which he presided, in the magnitude of his revenues and possessions, and in the sumptuousness and magnificence of his style of living.

"These marks of power and worldly greatness were so fascinating to the minds of Christians even in this age that often the most obstinate and bloody contests took place at Rome when a new pontiff was to be created.

"A shocking example of this is afforded by the disturbance at Rome in the year 366. The contention caused a cruel war, great loss of life, conflagrations and battles."

Section 8—

"The vices of the clergy, especially of those who officiated in large and opulent cities, were augmented in proportion to the increase of their wealth, honours and advantages. The bishops had shameful quarrels among themselves respecting the extent of their jurisdiction and boundaries; and while they trampled on the rights of the people and of the inferior clergy, they vied with the civil governors of provinces in luxury, arrogance and voluptuousness."

Cent. 4, Part 2, Chap. 3, Sec. 17:

"When there was nothing any longer to be feared from enemies without; when the character of most bishops was tarnished with arrogance, luxury, effeminacy, animosity, resentments, and other defects; when the lower clergy neglected their proper duties and were more attentive to idle controversies than to the promotion of piety and the instruction of the people; when vast numbers were induced, not by a rational conviction but by the

fear of punishment and the hope of worldly advantage to enrol themselves as Christians—how can it surprise us that on all sides the vicious appeared a host, and the pious a little band almost overpowered by them? . .

"The more honourable and powerful could sin with impunity, and only the poor and the unfortunate felt the severity of the laws."

Such is a trinitarian historian's testimony concerning the times in which the doctrine of the Trinity was developed on the admitted basis of human speculation and Platonic philosophy. Of the methods of argument and persuasion used by the church leaders of this period, Mosheim says (Cen. 4, Part 2, Chap. 3, Sec. 7)—

"From the disputes with those who were regarded as opposed to divine truth, the ancient simplicity had nearly taken its flight; and in place of it, dialectical subtleties and quibbles, invectives and other disingenuous artifices had succeeded."

Section 8—

"With the ancient form of discussion, new sources of argument were in this age combined. For the truth of doctrines was proved by the number of martyrs who had believed so, by prodigies and by the confessions of devils, that is, of persons in whose bodies some demon was supposed to reside.

"The discerning cannot but see that all proofs drawn from such sources are very fallacious, and very convenient for dishonest men who would practice imposition.

"And I greatly fear that most of those who at this time resorted to such proofs, though they might be grave and eminent men, may be justly charged with a dangerous propensity to use deception.

"Ambrose, in controversy with the Arians, brings forward persons possessed with devils, who are constrained, when the relics of Gervasius and Protasius are produced, to cry out that the doctrine of the Nicene council concerning three persons in the Godhead is true and divine, and the doctrine of the Arians false and pernicious.

"This testimony of the prince of darkness Ambrose regards as proof altogether unexceptionable."

Section 16—

"To these defects in the moral system of the age must be added two principal errors now almost publicly adopted, and from which afterwards immense evils resulted. The first was that to deceive and lie is a virtue, when religion can be promoted by it.

"This principle had been embraced in the preceding centuries, and it is almost incredible what a mass of the most insipid fables and what a host of pious falsehoods have through all the centuries grown out of it, to the great detriment of true religion.

"If some inquisitive person were to examine the conduct and the writings of the greatest and most pious teachers of this century, I fear that he would find about all of them infected with this leprosy. I cannot except Ambrose, nor Hilary, nor Augustine, nor Gregory Nazianzen, nor Jerome."

Such were the principles of the men who formulated the doctrine of the Trinity, and with the aid of the civil power imposed it upon the whole body of believers on pain of severe punishment, as we shall see in later quotations.

Of the general conditions of worship in this century, Mosheim says (Cent. 4, Part 2, Chap. 4, Sec. D—

"The Christian bishops introduced, with but slight alterations, into the Christian worship, those rites and institutions by which formerly the Greeks and Romans and others had manifested their piety and reverence toward their imaginary deities; supposing that the people would more readily embrace Christianity if they perceived the rites handed down to them from their fathers still existing unchanged among the Christians, and saw that Christ and the martyrs were worshipped in the same manner as formerly their gods were.

"There was, accordingly, little difference in these times between the public worship of the Christians and that of the Greeks and Romans. In both there were splendid robes, mitres, tiaras, wax-tapers, crosiers, processions, lustrations, images, golden and silver vases, and innumerable other things.

"No sooner had Constantine renounced the religion of his ancestors than magnificent temples were everywhere erected, adorned with pictures and images, and both in external and internal form very similar to the temples of the gods. True religion copied after superstition."

Section 4—

"The prayers fell off greatly from the ancient simplicity and majesty, a considerable degree of vain inflation being admitted into them. The public discourses, among the Greeks especially, were formed according to the rules for civil eloquence, and were better adapted to call forth the admiration of the rude multitude who love display, than to amend the heart.

"And that no folly or senseless custom might be omitted in their public assemblies, the people were allowed to applaud their orators, as had been practised in forums and theatres; nay, were bidden to clap besides.

"Who would suppose that men who were appointed to show to others the emptiness of all human things would become so senseless?"

Is it reasonable to expect any sound fruit from such a rotten tree?

The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 9th edition, vol. 16, page 774, article "Montanism," says—

"From the middle of the second century a change began to take place in the outward circumstances of Christianity. Should the church take the decisive step into the world? Or ought she, on the other hand, to remain as she had been at first, a society of religious devotees, separated and shut out from the world by a rigorous discipline?"

"It was natural that warning voices should then be raised in the church against secular tendencies, that the well-known counsels about the imitations of Christ should be held up in their literal strictness before worldly Christians, that demands should be made for a restoration of the old discipline and severity, and for a return to apostolic simplicity and purity.

"The church as a whole, however, decided otherwise. She marched through the open door into the Roman state. With the aid of its philosophy she created her new Christian theology."

The cornerstone of this "new Christian theology," based on pagan philosophy, is the doctrine of three Gods, three Persons in the "Godhead."

How this doctrine of the Trinity was developed during this period is frankly explained by a trinitarian writer in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 9th edition, volume 23, page 240, article "Theism"—

"The propositions constitutive of the dogma of the Trinity—the propositions in the symbols of Nice, Constantinople and Toledo relative to the immanent distinctions and relations in the Godhead—were not drawn directly from the New Testament, and could not be expressed in New Testament terms. They were the products of reason speculating on a revelation to faith.

"They were only formed through centuries of effort, only elaborated by the aid of the conceptions and formulated in the terms of Greek and Roman metaphysics.

"The evolution of the doctrine of the Trinity was far the most important fact in the doctrinal history of the church during the first five centuries of its post-apostolic existence."

Surely the ignorance and audacity of this, from a scriptural point of view, takes our breath away! How terribly true and fitting are the words of Jude—

"It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

And Paul said—

"I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

And to the Corinthians—

"Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world, for after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:20).

Poor Jude! Poor Paul! What back numbers they were! Of course they could not understand that there were three Gods. They only had the inspiration of God—they completely lacked that essential aid—Greek and Roman metaphysics, without which the doctrine of three Gods could not be formulated.

The "Greek and Roman metaphysics" from which the doctrine of the Trinity was adopted, are referred to by Gibbon in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Chapter 21, paragraph 6—

"The genius of Plato, informed by his own meditation or by the traditional knowledge of the priests of Egypt, had ventured to explore the mysterious nature of the Deity.

"When he had elevated his mind to the sublime contemplation of the first self-existent, necessary cause of the universe, the Athenian sage was incapable of conceiving how the simple unity of his essence could admit the infinite variety of distinct and successive ideas which compose the model of the intellectual world; how a Being purely incorporeal could execute that perfect model, and mould with a plastic hand the rude and independent chaos.

"The vain hope of extricating himself from these difficulties, which must ever oppress the feeble powers of the human mind, might induce Plato to consider the divine nature under the threefold modification—of the first cause, the reason or Logos, and the soul or spirit of the universe. His poetic imagination sometimes fixed and animated these metaphysical abstractions; the three archial or original principles were represented in the Platonic system as three Gods, united with each other by a mysterious and ineffable generation."

It is clear from this, as the trinitarian writer said in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, that Christianity had to go to Greek metaphysics (and this term always means Plato, the center of the system) to formulate its doctrine of the Trinity. Surely we are compelled to wonder what Christianity could possibly have done without the help of the indispensable heathen philosopher Plato!

Mosheim (an esteemed, orthodox Lutheran trinitarian) describes the long civil war that attended the development of the doctrine, and its enforcement by civil power, finally ending in trinitarian triumph through the stern and energetic measures of the Emperor Theodosius (Cent. 4, Chap. 5, sec. 14)—

"After the death of Constantine the Great (337 AD) one of his sons, Constantius, the emperor of the East was very partial to the Arian cause; but Constantine and Constans (two other sons) supported, in the western parts where they governed, the decisions of the Nicene council.

"Constantius, being devoted to the Arians, involved the friends of the Nicene council in numerous evils and calamities. The Nicene (trinitarian) party made no hesitation to return the same treatment.

"Julian (the next emperor) had no partialities for either. Jovian espoused the orthodox sentiments. Valentinian adhered to the decisions at Nice, and therefore in the West the Arian sect—a few churches excepted—was wholly extirpated.

"Valens, on the contrary, took sides with the Arians, and hence in the East many calamities befell the orthodox. Gratian restored peace to the orthodox.

"After him, Theodosius the Great, by depriving the Arians of all their churches, caused the decisions of the Nicene council to triumph everywhere, and none could any longer publicly profess Arian doctrines."

This finally settled the question, for all time, as to whether there are three Gods, or one God. The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 9th edition, vol. 23, page 259, article "Theodosius," records—

"It was not, however, till his illness at Thessalonica that the emperor received baptism at the hands of Bishop Ascholius, whereupon, says the historian Sozomen, he issued a decree (February, 380) in favor of the faith of St. Peter and Pope Damasus of Rome.

"This was to be the true catholic faith; the adherents of other creeds were to be reckoned as heretics and punished.

"Other edicts forbade the unorthodox to hold assemblies in the towns and enjoined the surrender of all churches to the catholic bishops."

Gibbon records, chap. 27—

"Theodosius was the first of the emperors baptised into the true faith of the Trinity. As the emperor ascended from the holy font, he dictated a solemn edict:

"Let us believe the sole deity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, under an equal majesty and a pious Trinity.

"We authorize the followers of this doctrine to assume the title of Catholic Christians; and as we judge that all others are extravagant madmen, we brand them with the infamous name of Heretics, and declare that their conventicles shall no longer usurp the respectable appellation of churches.

"Besides the condemnation of Divine justice, they must expect to suffer the severe penalties, which our authority, guided by heavenly wisdom, shall think proper to inflict upon them!

"The emperor convened a synod of 150 bishops who proceeded to complete the theological system which had been established in the council of Nice.

"A final and unanimous sentence was pronounced to ratify the equal Deity of the Holy Ghost.

"Their knowledge of religious truth may have been preserved by tradition, or it may have been communicated by inspiration, but the sober evidence of history will not allow much weight to the personal authority of the Fathers of Constantinople (this synod).

"Many of the same prelates who now applauded the orthodox piety of Theodosius had repeatedly changed, with prudent flexibility, their creeds and opinions, and in the various revolutions of the church and state, the religion of their sovereign was the rule of their obsequious faith.

"In the space of 15 years Theodosius promulgated at least 15 severe edicts against the heretics, more especially against those who rejected the doctrine of the Trinity.

"The rigorous prohibition of conventicles was carefully extended to every possible circumstances in which the heretics could assemble with the intention of worshipping God and Christ according to the dictates of their conscience.

"The sectaries were gradually disqualified for the possession of honourable or lucrative employments."

Gibbon may be considered unsympathetic in his presentation, but it will be noted that his facts are confirmed by trinitarian writers.

So much, then, for the sordid history of the development of this doctrine of three co-equal, co-eternal gods, admittedly a product of speculation and philosophy, with the necessary aid of heathen metaphysics, and enforced by persecution and the sword.

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

Waiting . . . Watching . . . Working

"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him"—Isaiah 64.4

IN all human history there have been times of waiting for God—waiting for fulfilment of God's promise—as in the case of Abraham, whose promised seed did not as yet appear, as Sarah, his wife, was barren. Hence God reassured him, saying (Gen. 17:19)—

"Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac;
"And I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."

Abraham's faith in God, and his long and patient waiting for the promised seed, is accounted for by a strong, and unwavering trust in God, and full persuasion that He would fulfil that which he had promised (Rom. 4:20-21)—

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

We, like Abraham, must possess strong faith in God, and thus patiently continue waiting, knowing He will surely perform what He has promised us in His Holy word —

"Blessed are all they that wait for Him" (Isa. 30:18).

"If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:25).

We are to wait for Christ to return from heaven —

"Ye are turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and **wait for His Son from heaven**" (1 Th. 1: 9).

Another admonition to wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, is found in I Cor. 1:7. These passages of Scripture reveal to us that Christ is the One for whom we are waiting, and that our life time is the period of waiting for Christ our Lord to return from Heaven.

* * *

LET us now consider some of the commands Jesus has given us in regards to watching. In Luke 21:36, he warns us —

"As a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

"Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Matt. 24:42).

These testimonies indicate that the watching and waiting are both for the same event, namely, Christ's advent —

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh"
(Matt. 25:13).

That this watching included watching OURSELVES is shown from Christ's command to Peter. (Mark 14:37-38) —

"And he cometh and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst not thou watch one hour?"

"Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."

And the admonition to watch AND pray indicates that the watching was of a prayerful and reverential nature, one avoiding all vain and frivolous conversation and conduct —

"Continue in prayer, and **watch** in the same with thanksgiving" (Col. 4:2).

"Blessed is he that watcheth AND keepeth his garments lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

* * *

THIS "keeping of our garments" introduces us to the last portion of our subject: WORK.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).

"That they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"

(Matt. 5:16).

Calling our works "good" shows that they must be works of positive righteousness which glorify the Father—not merely permissible activities within certain limitations.

"Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58).

"Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:10).

Being "fruitful in every good work" is possible, and it is commanded. There is no excuse for failing to be so, for in 2 Cor. 9:8 we read—

"God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."

"Jesus Christ . . . gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit. 2:14).

By this we understand the work of Christ was necessary in order to purify our minds and create in us that zeal for good works.

Let us, then, watch, work, and wait for our Lord, who will reward every man according to his works—

"Who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality—ETERNAL LIFE." —H.A.S.

"My Word Shall Not Fail"

"So shall My Word be . . . it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it"—Isaiah 55:11

THE Word of God was delivered to sinful man for a specific purpose, and that purpose cannot fail. The individual can—and many will—fail to conform to that purpose, but the purpose itself is not affected by the failure of one or more individuals who failed to appreciate the grand privilege of having an opportunity of becoming a part of that purpose.

The God of heaven has spoken. God sent forth His Word, His law, His holy precepts, that a body of people might be called out from Jew and Gentile to compose —

"A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

The average "Christian" looks upon the commands of God as so many restrictions placed upon him which he should observe as a matter of duty, but which he is privileged to evade whenever possible.

Such an attitude is as foolish as for one who has employed the services of a physician to evade taking the doctor's medicine for various reasons. All divine instructions, all commands governing our duty to God, are for the specific purpose of shaping those who have been called out to fit the divine pattern which God has designed as that peculiar people who are being created to show forth His praise and glory, both now and in the ages to come.

That purpose will be accomplished; that people will be created; the spiritual Temple of living stones will be erected according to the purpose of the Divine Architect, Who is even now selecting, shaping and polishing the stones out of which that Temple is to be erected.

Whether or not we, as individuals, have a place in that building depends on whether or not we now compose that "peculiar people, zealous of good works."
—O.B.

WE would like to have a much greater range of representation in the articles in the Berean. We therefore urgently request all speaking brethren to send in articles. They can be of any nature—exhortations, lectures or addresses on particular subjects. Those who are not speaking brethren could help by forwarding copies of addresses by others in their ecclesia which particularly strike them as desirable for publication. Double-spaced typing is preferred, but not essential.

Be Ye Doers

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"— 1 Corinthians 10:12

IT IS one thing, and it might also be added, a very dangerous thing, to think of ourselves as standing in perfection, walking in complete uprightness, living a good life without fault, blemish, imperfection or sin. He who holds such thoughts as these within this frail, weak mortal body and mind, is not standing within the sight of our Heavenly Father, the Great and Beloved Deity, but has already fallen.

It is again another thing, yea, a far more important thing, in that there is a God in heaven, and not only in heaven, but whose Spirit is everywhere filling or dwelling in both heaven and earth. This same God as we are informed in Heb. 4:12, is a—

"Discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

A "discerner" is "one who discerns, a clear sighted observer, one who knows and judges, one who has the power of distinguishing."

These things and more are all applicable to the beloved Deity, with Whom we have to do, the great Creator of this vast universe and all things that dwell therein, whether it be in the heavens above, the earth or the waters that cover the deep. In the next verse it is recorded—

"Neither is there any creature (or living thing, wherein is the breath of life, or lives) that is not manifest (or clearly visible) in His sight.

"But all things—ALL things—are naked (uncovered) and opened unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13).

There are things we do, which appear to be right in our own sight and within ourselves, which can be wrong and very much so in the eyes of God. Nothing can be done in a dark corner, nothing can be hid from Him.

The lesson contained herein is to not overestimate ourselves, saying that we stand, are firm, solid and secure. We strive to attain unto these things, but let us not be proud, boasters; otherwise the

words of the Apostle Paul take effect in that "we fall." We fall from grace in our heavenly calling through Christ Jesus, in that we reap the reward of condemnation, punishment and death and corruption, rather than the joy and blessedness of life-eternal—a life that knows no ending, to be bestowed by our beloved Lord and Saviour, when he shall appear, upon those who "stand" now in faithfulness, humbleness and meekness and not in boastfulness and pride.

This is one of the outstanding characteristics of this evil, wicked and sinful generation in which we live, that men are proud, boastful, blasphemous, self-conceited, lovers of their own selves, covetous. It is continually a case of "I will do this" or "I did that."

Man in his self-glorification is the ruling factor in this present day and age. It brings to our mind at this time the words of Nebuchadnezzar as recorded in Dan. 4:30. The king said—

"Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?"

What great words of blasphemy! We are all very familiar with the method God brought about to punish this evil, wicked man. The kingdom was taken from him and he was brought low to eat grass and dwell among the beasts of the field.

In like manner the kingdoms and rulers of this world shall be brought low and shall fall, and the fall of them shall be great.

Brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus who are well rooted and grounded in the "One Faith" will refrain from worldly activities and political affairs.

* * *

There is another aspect very worthy of mention, concerning the Revelation of Jesus Anointed from God unto John in Patmos in relation to the message unto the seven ecclesias. It is in the words of the Spirit to Laodicea (Rev. 3:17)—

"Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable and poor and blind and naked."

This was the Laodicean element—what a sad state of affairs! But let us always remember, brethren and sisters, that we too, each of us, or perhaps our ecclesia, can quite easily fall into the same category. If such be the case, we lack that spiritual food which is so essential, so necessary for our eternal salvation. God said to them—

"Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth"
(v. 16).

The taste was not satisfactory, the offering was not acceptable.

On the other hand we read in Gen. 13:2 that Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. But this great richness did not sway him or turn him from his faith in God, for he was "rich in faith" (Heb. 11:10)—

"For he looked for a city which hath foundations whose Builder and Maker is God."

His was only a temporary dwelling place, as ours is likewise. In faithfulness to God, he forsook the luxuries and comforts of the world and lived the long, waiting years of his pilgrimage in a tent. We do well to think upon these things.

* * *

WE return our minds to the title: Are we just hearers of the Word, or DOERS also? We are told (Rev. 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."

There is much food for thought, good sound advice, great instruction, knowledge and understanding in this one verse of the Scriptures in itself. There are three distinct things mentioned, namely: Read, hear, keep. All three can be linked together and one is just as important or essential as the other. Let us consider each in their respective order.

When we are an infant of five or six years of age, we begin to attend school to learn to read, to learn the letters of the alphabet. As we grow older we continue reading, getting a full understanding, knowledge and education, thus reaching the stature of a young man, being fitted to accept a position to earn our daily bread. Keep this thought in mind—we would be unable to obtain this position, had we not continually read, from boyhood to man.

Now we turn unto that greater wisdom. When we first come to a light and knowledge of the Scriptures, we commence as babes, we are only able to partake of milk. As we grow older, by continual reading and study, we are able to partake of meat. We have obtained a greater knowledge and understanding of God's most holy written Word, a spiritual knowledge.

But this can only be attained by a continual, not casual, reading; thus fitting us for a position in His glorious Kingdom, through His beloved Son, when he shall appear to judge each one according to their works.

Thus we see it is a case of reading and more reading, in order that we might obtain a greater scriptural knowledge and understanding, thereby growing from a "babe" to manhood and womanhood, that we be able to present ourselves as "vessels fit for the Master's use" insomuch as a "leaky vessel" is of no value or no use to anyone.

* * *

AND now in second place we arrive at the word "hear." Jesus constantly reminds us—

"He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

James, tells us (1:19)—

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift (or quick and ready, eager) to hear."

Here again we have the same situation of a young child attending school, from childhood to manhood he must be ever attentive to his teacher, to hear, to pay strict attention to those things of which he has been taught, that the mind may absorb, and that he might derive a good education.

And as to that "spiritual knowledge" as contained in the Bible, the most important learning and wisdom of all, it is absolutely necessary that we give both "attendance and attention" at ALL meetings.

In this way we "hear" the speaking brother, whether it be exhortation, address or lectures, and again the mind absorbs that essential food so much unlike the meat that perisheth. The apostle Paul instructs us—

"Give attendance to reading, to exhortation to doctrine . . .

"Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them" (1 Timothy 4:13).

—not just casually or now and again, but whole-heartedly and with a great desire and eagerness. "Exhort one another daily"—not just monthly, or weekly, but daily. By so doing we "read," "hear" and "keep" the Word, the most precious Word. In Mal. 3:16 it is recorded—

"Then they that feared the Lord—those who love Him, and seek Him and call upon His Name—spoke often one to another.

"And the Lord hearkened, and heard it . . ."

Thus it is, if we hear Him, He will hear us.

"And a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His Name."

Are we thinking upon His Name? —or are our thoughts being directed into other channels which will lead to our condemnation? There is a book of remembrance being written, but here is the most important and vital point, let us endeavour to see that our names are written in the "Lamb's book of Life." This we can only do by "Hearing," paying strict attention along with "reading." The two go hand in hand together, along with "keeping" which we shall now dwell upon.

This word "keep" or "keeping" is third and last in consideration but certainly not the least, by any means. The school-boy will continually keep those things he has learned fresh in his mind by DOING them, day after day.

The same applies to brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, who work in the Lord's vineyard. They must continually, without ceasing, keep these things, these precepts fresh in their minds. Jesus said (John 14:21)—

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.

"And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him."

This is the ONLY way we can come unto the Father—by **keeping his commandments**. Any other approach is man-made and vain.

Therefore by this means we become "doers" of the Word and not just "hearers" only.

Some may ask the question, HOW do we become "doers"? The answer is quite simple. Does not the Bible teach us to do good unto all men, especially unto those of the "Household of Faith." Furthermore—

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccl. 9:10).

There are many, many ways in which we should be "doers" of the Word. Perhaps there are brethren and sisters of like precious Faith who are in dire circumstances, in need, in sickness and distress, afflicted, may it be financially or otherwise. Are we arising and coming to their assistance?

What about the brethren and sisters in isolation? Do we comfort them with correspondence, to the full extent of our time and opportunity, concerning the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus?

Do we speak of the Truth at every opportunity? Do we strive to manifest God to the world in our lives and characters? Do we avoid everything that could reflect on the Truth or grieve our brethren and sisters?

What about those things affecting the working of the ecclesia? Are we taking an active part or just "sitting back" letting others do it? Exhorting and lecturing brethren have a great work to perform, but there are also many other duties, as we are all members of that "One Body" whether it be brother or sister in Christ Jesus.

As previously mentioned, our Heavenly Father knows all these things, all our ways, our doings, our actions are open unto Him. Let us endeavour to keep our record a clean one, that we appear before our Great Redeemer with joy and not with shame. For as it is recorded in the verse which we have been considering (Rev. 1:3)—

"Blessed is he that reads, hears and keeps those things which are written therein."

The **blessing** shall rest upon him, but "Cursed is he that doeth not My will," saith the Almighty God. "For the time is at hand."

Surely, brethren and sisters, we cannot deny the truth these words contain. Truly, the time is at hand, never has the world been in such a state of unrest, uneasiness, wickedness, evil and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, for the whole world lieth in wickedness. True indeed the world is

ripe for destruction. The universal cry is "Peace and Safety" but when they cry thus, sudden destruction cometh upon them as the Deity hath declared—

"There is no peace for the wicked" (Isa. 48:22)

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Let us turn to the words of godly instruction of David to his son—

"And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.

"If thou seek Him He will be found of thee: but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever" (1 Chr. 28:9).

These were good sound words of advice, spiritual advice, from father to son, instructing him as to how he should serve the "Great Eternal Father in Heaven," even as a father would instruct his son in like manner.

But what was the result? Solomon failed God and forsook Him. How do we stand in relation to these things? We take instruction from Mark 13:37—

"And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

—F.P.

The King

"Hear the Word of the Lord, O King of Judah that sitteth on the throne of David. If ye will not hear, I swear by Myself, Surely I will make thee a wilderness"—Jer. 22:2-5

FOR over 400 years the prophets had been bearing this message. A few had heeded it, but the many had not. Now the end was very near, but the many warnings and repetitions had dulled their perception, and they mistook God's patience for indulgence (Eccl. 8:11)—

"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

The root of the evil, as Jeremiah reveals, was covetousness and pride—the desire for possession and position. As these are indulged, they gradually stifle every other consideration. And they bring no satisfaction. It always seems that just a little more is necessary—just one step higher.

But saddest of all is the one who reachest the highest pinnacle and finds it is but ashes in his mouth, and yet there remains no higher goal before him to lure him on and maintain the elusive deception of happiness just around the corner.

Jesus said, through Paul—

"Having food and raiment, therewith be content."

As we study the teachings of Jesus, we come to realize that they are not a set of restrictive rules for self-discipline, but the instructions of wisdom for a fuller life, the only way of happiness.

"I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly."

It is not necessary to wait until we die. The "living more abundantly" can start immediately if we will only let it.

Jesus was an efficiency expert, and his specialty was life—

"Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

He was not only meek, but also lowly. Meekness was his character, lowly was his position in life. The two go together. Lowliness is very galling to those who are not meek. Meekness is well nigh impossible to those who are not lowly. Jesus was both, and recommends them highly as the recipe for peace and rest.

There is another peculiar advantage in these attributes—

"It is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."

He was very sorry for the rich young ruler. He loved him and pitied him because he was rich and unhappy.

But the point is this. Most sins (and sin is the root of discontent—"There is no peace to the wicked")—most sins are very difficult and unattractive to the truly meek and lowly. These qualities are an automatic insulation against most of the soul-disturbing vices, for they are the antithesis of pride and covetousness, and these are the root of evil.

Pride and covetousness—they fortify themselves stealthily and secretly within us until they grow strong, like an incipient revolution; then they open and insolently challenge our most vigorous efforts to dislodge them.

Pride and covetousness destroyed the house of David and the kingdom of Israel. It is hard for a ruler to maintain meekness. Forty years in the wilderness brought forth Moses as—

"Very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth."

Forty years ruling Israel only broke this down once—a remarkable and unique record showing the greatness of Moses and the thoroughness of his preparation.

But the common run of the kings of Israel and Judah were not equal to the task—not big enough to be and remain meek. See how well Saul began . . . but how miserably he failed! And therefore the kingdom was swept away until a king should come who would show them what a king should truly be. A king who, like Moses, must FIRST learn to rule himself, for that is the basic requirement of rulership.

* * *

PAUL'S letter to the Romans carries us forward another 600 years. The scene has again changed, and Israel has suffered many things, but the age-old problem is still the same—

"I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart for my kinsmen according to the flesh."

The king had finally come to them, meek, and riding upon an ass. God's conception of a king, adorned with the personal majesty of godly self-control, and invested with the indisputable authority of a perfect example. A king in his own right who could be stripped of all the common, meaningless, external trappings of royalty and still remain a noble, awe-inspiring figure of majesty—

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy king cometh unto thee. He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass."

But he was not **their** idea of a king. They wanted a king like the nations around them, a proud, despotic figure of outward show and pride. It never occurred to them that a king's duty was to enter into their lives and show them how to live—not to cater to their pride and desire, but to teach them how to overcome it.

Their long-expected, hoped-for, prayed-for, God-given King and Deliverer came, and dwelt intimately among them, doing wondrous, heavenly things that no man had ever done before—a man utterly unique in all the world's history—and they knew him not! (Zech. 9:9-10, 17)—

"He shall speak peace unto the Gentiles: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea ...
"How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!"

What a strange, almost unbelievable, thing! How easy it is proven to be to have eyes, and yet be stone-blind! Briefly, the brilliant light of the gracious invitation shone forth upon them—and then the long, dark night closed over Israel.

They had heard, but missed, the royal call—and must wait 2000 long, bitter, wandering, persecuted years to hear it again.

The High Calling of God in Christ

"Every man that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as He is pure"—1 John 3:3

"BE ye holy," we are commanded (1 Peter 1:16); "for He is holy."

Cleanliness, holiness, purity— these are attributes of entirety. A man is not clean if he is partly dirty. Half pure means impure. Perfection is demanded. Jesus said (Matt. 5:48)—

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

Be ye perfect. How CAN we be PERFECT?—

"If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8).

But it is not a perfect obedience that is expected. Our perfection is a gift, not a personal accomplishment. John goes on (v. 9)—

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

And again (v. 7)—

"If we walk in the light . . . the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."

THIS is the secret of perfection. We cannot approach Him acceptably unless we are clean and pure in His sight. The Law of Moses teaches us this. Therefore we must at all times maintain our purity from worldly thought and contact by the merciful cleansing of humble repentance and forgiveness.

And so we meet together clean and pure and perfect and acceptable before Him. Not sinless, but repeatedly washed from sin. How merciful a provision—but let us never abuse it! Should we regard sin with less fear because God cleanses us so freely?

"God forbid!" says the Apostle Paul (Rom. 6:2). Rather should His mercy be an incentive to greater effort.

It is a grave and solemn calling—the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Tremendous privileges—tremendous responsibilities. Of that man who treats it lightly, it will at the last be said—

"Better were it for that man had he never been born."

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Correspondence

WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?

Dear brother:

You ask, "**Do you think Genesis 1 describes the work of six days of 24 hours of time as we measure it?**"

I believe the Word of God simply and plainly as it is revealed for us to believe, in contradiction to the ever-changing theories of the wisdom of the world which God says is foolishness—

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exo. 20:11).

I am aware that the word rendered "made" in this verse is of very wide application, and is elsewhere translated furnish, appoint, prepare, etc. But the point is that we are plainly and simply informed that what is recorded in Gen. 1 was done in six days and God rested (ceased) on the seventh.

The fact that these days mentioned in Gen. 1 were ordinary "evening-morning" days and were meant to be so understood by the simple believer is so clear and undeniable that all your "controlled evolution" writers feel compelled to adopt the strange and quite unsupported speculation that Gen. 1 is not a record of fact at all, but just a "vision" that Moses had.

This dread of having the wise of this world call us "obscurantists"—this compulsion to interpret the Bible to fit the passing theories of men—is the most dangerous and disquieting trend that has ever struck the Christadelphian body.

It has its unforgettable parallel in the early centuries when the "doctors of philosophy" took over the struggling little Church, and with their great show of worldly wisdom laughed the simple believers to silence.

Paul, in 1 Cor. 1 & 2, gives us—once for all—God's view of the "wisdom of this world." We must make up our minds whether we will believe God's revelation or man's everchanging theories. We must be prepared to be called "obscurantists" and all the other terms of opprobrium that the "wisdom-of-the-world" have invented to keep the simple in line.

* * *

You ask further, "**If so, what do you think existed prior to 6000 years ago?**"

That is a strange question. How should I know what existed at a time that God has not revealed and man has not seen? Surely it would be presumption for me to say what existed prior to 6000, or 6,000,000 or 6,000,000,000 years ago. I do not profess to know that.

I do not see how it could have any bearing on my salvation to speculate about what existed prior to 6000 years ago. I cannot conceive of any beginning. I recognize man's mental limitations. I believe the later chapters of the book of Job would be good reading for those brethren who feel called upon to say what happened prior to 6000 years ago.

God has given man sufficient mental equipment to work out his salvation in faith and humility, but vain man tries to compass eternity with his poor little one-candlepower brain.

* * *

You say, "**You have probably heard of the huge saurians. Do they belong to a pre-Adamic state, or where do you place them?**"

Whether they are pre-Adamic or post Adamic I do not know. I do not think you or anyone else knows, either. And I do not think it matters.

If I were inclined to speculate, I know which view I would lean to, in the light of the general picture, but why speculate? I think it is dangerous. If your wise of the world had never seen or heard of a whale, and one of them happened to dig up the fossilized skeleton of one of them, what a rash of evolutionary speculation there would be!

I would like to know just what your difficulty is with the "huge saurians" in relation to the six days of creation. As far as I am able to see, the difficulty begins when we start to limit God's power or lay down laws for Him to follow.

Time means nothing to God. If He tells us He did something in six days, who are we to deny it? We look over the result (six thousand years later), and we say in the limitless presumption of our ignorance, "That certainly took You longer than six days—I can tell by the way it is made."

Doubtless the "huge saurians" are a fact (though even here it is practically impossible to pick the few facts out of the welter of foolish speculation and invention and twisting and improvisation and plain trickery that makes up that noble division of the wisdom of the world that is described as the "Science" of Palaeontology).

A philosophical brother says, "God could have done it this way, but it is hard to believe He would —He could have done it this way, but that is 'at least improbable'— the only other way I can see is this way, so that must have been the way it was. This proves we cannot take the 'almost artificial form' of Gen 1 literally."

To this brother, "That the Almighty should have 24 hours rest is a difficult thought." Here is another example of self-created difficulty. A difficulty artificially created in order to justify a new interpretation that "solves" the difficulty. This method of torturing Gen 1:1 to 2:3, and getting something entirely different from it than the plain record, would soon leave us no literal record at all.

Where is the "difficulty" in God—having completed the work of creation in six days—"ceasing from His work" on the seventh, and hallowing it? If the difficulty is in the conception of God "resting" for "24 hours" or "even worse—a longer period," how is it removed by advancing the "rest" into the future?

These brethren should overcome their university-nurtured prejudices against things which appear foolish to the "wisdom of the world," for it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, (but, in the providential wisdom of God for the sake of the Truth and the Body, "not many wise men after the flesh, not many noble, not many mighty.")

These speculations are based on two fallacies which are common to the intellectual world: (1) That the conceptions and intellect of man are the supreme and most comprehensive possible. "It can't be this, and it can't be this, so it must be this"—assuming that man can conceive all the alternatives. And (2) That God must do everything in the way that seems most reasonable to the poor puny little created intellect of man.

Dear brother, stick to the simple Truth — the saving Gospel Truth designed for and presented to the "poor of the world."

"I thank Thee, Father, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

Do not be afraid of being called an "obscurantist." They called Paul a babbler—those super-wise Athenians who dominated the intellectual world, but it did not trouble him. He knew how—by the teaching of the Spirit—to evaluate their theories and opinions.

Do not worry about having to mollify the prejudices of the doctors of philosophy. They are not the type that are good soil for the Truth, nor are they any asset to the Truth when they condescend to patronize it, and undertake to bring it up to date, and clear up some of its more glaring and embarrassing "obscurantisms"—the same service that the wise and kindly old doctors of philosophy of the 2nd and 3rd centuries performed for the Truth in their day.

God's Word has outlived an endless stream of "scientific" theories, and the current crop about where the "huge saurians" came from will in due time share the dusty shelf for the amusement (but, alas, never it would seem the instruction and awakening) of future wise and modern generations of theorizers.

Signs of the Times

IF diplomatic relations in the rest of the world were as amicable as relations now appear to exist in Soviet-Western negotiations, there might be good reason, in the minds of wishful thinkers, to believe that universal peace was near at hand and a "peace and safety" cry fully justified.

The test-ban treaty has been accepted, Russia proposes summit talks on total disarmament early in 1964, and President Kennedy addressed the UN General Assembly in a speech conciliatory in character, punctuated with strong expressions of hope for peace and a united world, which he said could only be achieved through full cooperation in the nuclear and space age, and he offers to share with Russia investigation and experimentation in the nuclear and space ventures. However, the President added a note of warning, when he said:

"We have the power to make this the best generation of mankind in the history of the world—or to make it the last."

ONE THING LACKING

ONE thing lacking in all suggestions made by national leaders, even "Christians," when they talk of bringing peace to the world and better conditions for humanity through human efforts, is a failure to recognize that—

1. Man is altogether incapable of planning and executing any system which he might choose (Jer. 10:23);
2. "The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men," and frustrates any human device contrary to His purpose (Dan. 4:17); and
3. A world steeped in iniquity **cannot** have peace, for "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked" (Isa. 48:22).

So long as there is hate, vengeance, greed and lust for wealth and power, there will be war. Smooth words cannot erase these human passions. God has decreed that universal peace **will** come to the world, but sinful man will have nothing to do with it, except as blind instruments in the divine plan.

For peace will come only when the Prince of Peace is in the earth; when he commands the nations to scrap all their implements of destruction; when all those who corrupt the earth will be destroyed and the nations learn war no more (Rev. 11:18; Isa. 2:4).

VIETNAM TROUBLES MULTIPLY

AS Red guerrillas step up their attacks in South Vietnam, President Diem's government is torn with political and religious strife, and anti-U.S. sentiment grows.

Two separate situations exist in S. Vietnam. On the one hand the Diem government is waging a war against Communist guerrillas, in which they seek all the help and co-operation they can get from the U. S. On the other hand, the Diem regime in Saigon is going all out to strengthen their own political power, even at the cost of losing the support of anti-Communist groups, religious factions and U. S. friendship.

It is one of those situations in which weak and faltering nations are anxious for monetary and military assistance, but resent any interference in their political affairs or way of life, when as a matter of fact, most of their troubles stem from political corruption, economic inefficiency and a desire for power. Actual relief for the sorry plight of their people is of secondary importance.

These are the chief reasons why the billions spent on foreign aid has accomplished so little, and why many are beginning to doubt the wisdom of prodigious expenditures in an effort to stop Communism and buy friendship.

Although India is in constant fear of another Chinese invasion, and the U. S. and Britain have poured large sums of money into the Indian war effort, the latter has made it clear that they are not willing to allow their benefactors any hand in the control of the military situation, which is the thing most needed, for inefficiency is one of the outstanding causes of India's military weakness.

BIRTH OF A NEW NATION

THE new nation of Malaysia officially came into being on Sept. 16, but its ship of state was launched on a sea of trouble. The Federation of Malaysia is composed of Malaya and the British protectorates of Singapore, Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo. To all intents and purposes, it will be a British commonwealth.

Before it was 24 hours old, the new nation found itself in deep trouble with its two biggest neighbours. Both Indonesia and the Philippines refused to recognize the new Federation, and Indonesia has formally severed all diplomatic and trade relations with the new nation. Both nations lay claim to the north Borneo section of Malaysia.

In retaliation for a demonstration against the Indonesian Embassy in the Malaysian capital, a howling mob in Jakarta, Indonesia, sacked and burned the British Embassy there, burned automobiles and homes belonging to Embassy employees and injured several persons. Indonesian authorities made no effort to put out the fires.

President Sukarno of Indonesia accuses Britain of "seeking to prolong colonialism" by sponsoring the new Federation, but Mr. Sukarno has some colonial designs of his own.

For the most serious aspect of the whole situation is that Indonesia not only lays claim to North Borneo, but it is more than obvious that Sukarno plans an island empire to include all the Indonesian Archipelago, extending from the Asiatic mainland to the Philippines and Australia with a population of upwards of 100 million. Not only does Indonesia have Communist leanings, with a heavy Communist population, but it is strongly supported by Communist China and Soviet Russia.

The Malaysian Federation comprises the richest and most prosperous area in Southeast Asia, a coveted prize for overpopulated and poverty-stricken neighbours.

SOVIET-CHINESE FEUD

THE so-called Russian-Chinese "split" has reached the stage where talk must be coupled with actions or else the world will conclude that talk is all there is to it. In the key capitals of the world various opinions are expressed as to the meaning of the feud, but all agree that it could be dangerous. There is a belief that an all-Communist cold war has begun, based on differing ideas as to how Communist ideals can be achieved, a conflict which might last for years but not necessarily causing any actual rupture of Soviet-Chinese relations. It is a test of power; to decide if "world Communism is to be controlled from Moscow by white Europeans or from Peiping by non-white Asians."

Recent Soviet charges against China include the claim that Chinese servicemen and civilians have violated Russian borders many times, and in some instances have tried to seize Soviet territory. The Russians claim that Chinese tactics appear bent on wrecking the movement for better East-West relations.

But anti-Communist Asia fears the Chinese-Russian feud may result in an all-out move by Red China to shake off all Russian restraint and seek to conquer all Southeast Asia, thereby finding space and sustenance for her over-crowded and hungry millions.

THE MIDEAST AND ISRAEL

CENSURE of Syria by the UN Security Council, by an overwhelming majority, only Soviet Russia and Morocco voting against the resolution, was the first time since Israel's rebirth that an Arab nation had been censured by the UN for armed attacks upon Israel.

Although not a unanimous decision, as was to be expected, Israel considers the U. S.-backed resolution constitutes a "moral rebuke" to Syria which they cannot ignore.

Relations between Israel and the 3 major North African new states—Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria—have worsened, in the opinion of French news sources. Newspapers and public speakers in the 3 nations have become more vocal in their anti-Israel utterances and stronger appeals for all-Arab unity are noted.

In Morocco, the extremist newspaper Al Alam recently published a front-page article appealing to all Arab states to unite in undertaking immediate warfare against Israel.

Meanwhile, though surrounded by hostile enemies, who "have despised My (God's) people, that they should be no more a nation before them" (Jer. 33:24), Israel is forging ahead and prospering in spite of her many enemies and tremendous difficulties.

A recent report shows that Israel's shipping for 1962 increased 40 per cent over the figure for the previous year.

Israel bond sales in America show an increase of 18 per cent this year over the same period last year.

The southern part of Israel will rapidly begin to approach the economic development of the northern part of the country upon the completion in 1964 of the irrigation system which will bring water from the Sea of Galilee to the Negev. The Israeli cabinet has approved a \$50 million irrigation project which will provide 31,000,000 cubic meters of water for hill settlements, including Arab-populated centres.

Thus waters from the Sea of Galilee, so prominent in the record of the preaching of Jesus Christ and his apostles, will make the desert "blossom as the rose," a foretaste of that glad time when natural rainfall will be restored and the land promised to Abraham will be the garden spot of the world.

—O.B.

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