

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.

CONTENTS

ECCLESIAL NEWS: Houston, Hye, Newport, Paint Rock, Richard, Wellington	Inside Front Cover
EDITORIAL: Faithful in All His House	1
PLATONIC "CHRISTIANITY" (Bro. Thomas)	3
SERVING BRETHREN, NOT RULERS	5
A CITY SET ON A HILL (Bro. Roberts)	6
THE TRINITY DOCTRINE (Part 4—Passages Used to "prove")	12
"THEY MARVELLED AT HIS ANSWER"	20
THAT BLESSED HOPE	26
THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD (A Summary of Proofs)	28
SIGNS OF THE TIMES	29

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

News received by the following dates can appear in current issue (if later, will be delayed a month): Feb. 13, March 12, April 9, May 7, June 4, July 2, August 13, Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 5, Dec. 3.

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

SINCE our last report we have had as visitors around the table of the Lord: sis. Carolyn Thompson, of Tyler, and sis. Edith Scott, of Corpus Christi, Texas.

* * *

HYE, Texas—Quarterly Gathering

THE regular quarterly meeting was held on the first Sunday of November. There were 30 brethren and sisters, and 14 visitors, including children.

At the Bible Class, Philippians 4 was discussed. At the memorial meeting bro. Bill Edwards gave the exhortation, basing his thoughts on Daniel 12.

God willing, the next quarterly meeting will be held on the camp grounds on the first Sunday of February. Colossians 1 will be the Bible Class subject.

* * *

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

GREETINGS to the Household of faith.

In the mercy of our Heavenly Father, we were able to visit the members of the ecclesia at Birmingham on Sunday, Oct. 13. The journey meant an early morning start, but the pleasure of meeting together with those of like faith, helped to renew our spiritual strength, thus making our journey worthwhile. Our Bro. Hodge ministered to our spiritual needs on this occasion, whereby our hearts and minds were uplifted, and our faith strengthened; indeed a most profitable time. We thank the brother and sisters for their warm welcome extended to us.

We would also like to express once again, our thanks to those, who in the mercy of our Heavenly Father, make it possible for us to hear, by way of the Tape Library, the voices of those brethren who were at one time only names. As we are only four here in Newport, it is a great help to us in our continual seeking for, and looking after those things which concern our eternal well-being.

We are also pleased to read in the pages of the Berean, of the decision of a number of brethren and sisters to strengthen our ranks and support the Berean stand. It does gladden our hearts to know that there are others of like mind and conviction, though so many miles away we are bound together in covenant relationship, in the race for Life Eternal in the Kingdom of God.

With much love in Christ to all of like precious faith,

—bro. Ken Williams

* * *

PAINT ROCK, Texas

OUR hearts were filled with joy to have with us on Sunday, Dec. 1, bro. & sis. Fred Higham, bro. Fred Higham Jr. and sis. Beth Higham, of Detroit.

Bro. Higham gave us a very good exhortation—one that was so encouraging and upbuilding

Other visitors that met with us that day around the table of the Lord were: bro. & sis. Wayne Wolfe Sr., bro. & sis. Richard Wolfe, bro. Bob Wolfe, sis. Lula Wolfe and sis. Lois Hurst, of Lampasas; sis. Ruth Booker and sis. Jessie Hatcher of San Saba; and sis. Taylor of Eden. There were 18 brethren and sisters, and 5 visitors.

The meeting was in the home of bro. & sis. Melvin Edwards. We cannot express how much we enjoyed this occasion. It was truly a day of rejoicing together in the One Hope.

It is strengthening to us to have visiting brethren meet with us and expound the glorious words of the Truth. We hope that they and others can be with us more often.

We should not falter or linger on the way, but be workers in the vineyard of the Lord. We must let our lights shine before men, and proclaim God's Word that others may learn the Truth of the Gospel and enter the race for Eternal Life. Then, if they hold out faithful to the end and do as God commands, they will be prepared to have an entrance into that glorious Kingdom that will be set up here on earth, when the earth shall blossom as the rose and be as the garden of Eden.

Let us not be discouraged when we are in isolation or few in numbers, but press onward with joy in the assurance that those who hold out faithfully until the end shall be rewarded with a crown of life that fadeth not away. —bro. Melvin Edwards

* * *

RICHARD, Saskatchewan

GREETINGS to the Household

Bro. John Randell has again been with us, and this time he spoke to us on the history of the Truth in the latter days, showing how the Truth is gradually being lost by the majority of the Christadelphians, and how it has been preserved by the Berean fellowship.

We make a special appeal to all who read the Berean to take notice of this fact, and especially those who have at one time supported the right way. When we realize that we are responsible for errors we support, and that our future life is dependent on the Truth being believed in doctrine, and obeyed in practice, we should take a good look at our position and ask ourselves, "Are we holding fast as we are commanded?"

We regret to say, that sis. Reta Tyson has not shown her willingness to support the Truth or to agree with our belief on fellowship, so is not in fellowship. Your brother, —Fred G. Jones

* * *

WALLINGTON, Surrey, England

WITH sorrow, we have to report the death of brother Arthur A. Jeacock, who fell asleep during the month of November, and was laid to rest in the hope of resurrection.

He leaves his sister wife, Clara, who has been his faithful partner for 60 years. She is now alone, and would enjoy hearing from the brethren and sisters. Address:

Mrs. A. A. Jeacock
10 Garden Close
Wallington
Surrey, England

Brother Jeacock was born in 1881, married in 1903, and immersed in 1921. During all the troublous times in which he lived, brother Jeacock remained loyal to the Berean position.

The following letter from bro. Jeacock, received a few years ago, concerning his experiences in relation to the Truth, will be, we believe, interesting, helpful and encouraging to all his brethren and sisters—

* * *

Dear brother Gibson: Greetings in the Name of our Master!

I myself have been forced to consider very closely the errors and divisions of the past 40 years, and perhaps if I briefly outline my relationship to the Truth it will help you to understand how I look at the matter.

Well over 50 years ago, an aunt of mine came into the Truth, but of which at the time I knew nothing about.

My elder brother also, after much searching among most religious bodies, came to the conclusion they were all wrong. He found a flaw in them all. Upon speaking to my aunt she asked him if he had ever heard of the Christadelphians.

He then got in touch with the Forest Hill meeting. (At that time the meeting was at the Masonic Hall, Camberwell, London, and some years afterwards transferred to Forest Hill). My brother became a member of that meeting at Camberwell, and afterwards my mother and my two sisters joined him, and later my brother's two sons also.

My brother spoke to us about the Truth and we attended one or two lectures at Camberwell as well as some open-air addresses which were given by the Camberwell brethren on a public open space called Peckham Rye.

The Resurrectional Responsibility error, promulgated by J. J. Andrews, was prominently taught at that meeting at Camberwell, which led us, and also my brother's wife, to refrain from making ourselves responsible by refusing baptism.

My two sisters remained in that fellowship until their deaths (one in 1917 and one in 1937), but my brother and his two sons, about the year 1919, saw the error and transferred to the Temperance Hall fellowship.

As far as I was concerned, the matter might have rested there, but we were living at Littlehampton in Sussex (1915-1919) and I was travelling up to London daily to business. A travelling acquaintance asked me if I could find a situation for his young brother-in-law, and as we wanted a junior in the office I got the firm to engage him.

A short time afterwards we wanted another junior and I asked the one I had engaged if he knew anybody about his own age who would be suitable. He said he did and brought along one whom we engaged.

A year or so later one of my senior colleagues invited the whole office to a dinner, and when I asked him if all were coming he said these last two juniors had refused as they were Christadelphians.

I at once spoke to them and asked why they had said nothing to me although they had spoken to others, to which they replied that as I was in charge of the office I was the last one they would have spoken to. I of course told them they were wrong, as I knew quite a lot about Christadelphians.

Moreover, I found that my nephew was at the same meeting as they were, that they knew him well, but it had never occurred to them that there might be a relationship between two bearing the unusual name of Jeacock.

However, it re-awakened interest and I asked them if they could get one of their senior members to make an appointment to discuss the matter with me. The late bro. E. W. Evans, a Clapham presiding brother, came up to the office and I had some long chats with him as a result of which I decided to obey the Truth.

I tried to persuade my wife to accept and be immersed with me, but after much discussion she said, "Why don't you go first?" I immediately replied, "I will," and was examined and baptized.

We were then living at Worthing in Sussex and in less than a year after obeying the Truth I arranged for a public lecture to be held in the largest hall in Worthing. Bro. E. W. Evans came down with about a dozen brethren and sisters to support him.

My dear sister-wife, although not then in the Truth, assisted me in distributing lecture leaflets (we billed the whole town) and entertained the brethren and sisters. We had an attendance of over 100 strangers, which so inspired bro. Evans that he lectured for 1½ hours and held the audience, only one leaving before the finish.

This was in March, 1922, and we decided to have a further lecture in the same hall in May. The attendance of strangers was only 45, but about 25 brethren and sisters came down by coach from London to assist. Again my dear sister-wife gave every assistance and entertained the whole party in our house. It was a complete surprise to the visiting brethren and sisters that she was not in the Truth, and the parting shot of one sister was, "You will soon be." The following October (1922) she obeyed, and has been a real help-meet to me in the Truth.

We had another lecture in the large hall in the Autumn of 1922 and as there was still some interest shown I announced that further lectures would be given each Sunday in a small hall at the western end of town. I arranged for visiting brethren to come down to lecture for 3 Sundays and I took one myself.

This arrangement continued for about 4 years, 1922-1926, when we found that the daily journey from the coast to London (60 miles) was rather too much for my two sons who by then were working in London. We therefore in September, 1926, removed from Worthing to Coulsdon, about 12 miles south of London, and about 2 years afterwards to our present address.

The divisions among Christadelphians have caused much difficulty and have militated against the spread of the Truth. The attempt of the Central fellowship and some (former) "Bereans" to mend matters, and now the re-union of a large part of Central with Suffolk Street, only makes matters worse, as now all the errors which caused division, having never been repudiated, are amalgamated in one corrupt body.

"When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" There will be some, but we believe it will not be a very large body. We hope and pray we shall be found worthy when our Master returns.

With love in the One Faith to you and those with you, in which my dear sister-wife joins,

Sincerely your brother in the Hope of Israel,

Arthur A. Jeacock

EDITORIAL

Faithful in All His House

"Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful"—1 Cor. 4:2

OUR dictionary defines "loyal" as being faithful to one's allegiance, engagements or obligations; or faithful to any party, or cause. It is usually associated with the feeling of devotion which one holds for one's country. Therefore if a person is not loyal to the country of which he is a citizen, he is looked upon as being a traitor, because he has violated his allegiance.

The word "loyal" does not appear in the Bible, but the word "faithful," which is its basic meaning, appears many times. The first time it comes to our attention is when God rebuked the sedition of Aaron and Miriam when they spoke against Moses. In Num. 12:6-7, He said—

"Hear now My Words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

"My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all Mine house."

If we would enquire as to how Moses was faithful, we would find the answer in the record of his life-work, and the many references Jesus made to him, and also the apostles in their writings. The

extent of his faithfulness is revealed in many ways. He was honoured by his appearance at the transfiguration of Jesus, and he will be further honoured when—

—and they will—
"The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion . . .

"Sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb."

* * *

BUT there is something else in this testimony of Moses' faithfulness that comes sharply to our attention in the words—

"If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so."

Then in v. 8, He adds—

"With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and **not in dark speeches.**"

This declaration that God did not reveal Himself to Moses by "dark speeches," or visions, but that He spoke to him "mouth to mouth," rules out entirely the theory that the six days of Genesis were not six days of creation, but were six days in which the details of God's creation were revealed to man in vision. Therefore, if we would be loyal to God's Word—the Word which He has magnified above all His Name—we will believe with all our heart His declaration in Exo. 20:11—

"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."

There is infinite divine wisdom in this simple record of the six days' creation. It completely cuts the foundation out from under all the foolish speculations of the wise of the world. Brethren Thomas and Roberts saw this clearly. Yield that simple, basic point and we will find—too late—that we have yielded all, and are on a downward path that has no end, and henceforth we would be helplessly exposed to the gradual and irresistible attrition of the whole case against evolution.

That Moses was loyal to Him Who called him, and served Him faithfully as long as he lived, is a statement that cannot be disputed. To the Hebrews (11:24-26) Paul wrote—

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."

Looking at the matter from the same viewpoint as Moses, we must come to the conclusion that the Truth demands our unwavering loyalty. But what is the Truth? It is our firm conviction that brother John Thomas, in *Elpis Israel* and *Eureka*, has directed our minds to it, and if we study these two works along with our Bible, we will come to the same conclusion that brother Roberts did when he said—

"I have said with sincerity, and will say, perhaps, many times over again, because they are the words of sober truth—that God has revived the Truth in our age by Dr. Thomas, and that the best work a man can put his hand to, in this age, is to defend that work against all assaults, whether the open antagonism of those who call the Truth "blasphemy," or the insidious attacks involved in theories that make the Word of God of none effect."

We are not much concerned about those who call the Truth "blasphemy," but we are concerned about the insidious attacks involved in theories that make the Word of God of none effect. And we are alarmed by the action of those who have eliminated portions from the works of both brethren Thomas and Roberts, without making any footnotes in the books. If brother Thomas did not discover the Truth, and make it known when he wrote *Elpis Israel*, at what period during the time that has since elapsed can we point and say there it is?

Let us not become alarmed. We have the Truth in the works of brother Thomas. This labor of love has no equal in the world today. It has drawn aside the veil of superstition by which Christendom is shrouded, and made the Bible a living book from which the sunlight of God's Truth has shined into our hearts, and opened the eyes of our understanding. If we would be loyal to him, we must be loyal to the Truth, for he taught it. —Editor

All religious systems, of whatever name or peculiarity, based upon the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity, the Devil, the immortality of the soul, heaven and hell, etc., are ecclesiastical daughters of the Roman Harlot, and **to be defiled by them, by associating with them, or in any way identifying ourselves with them, is to forfeit all hope of salvation.**

Those destined to be "the Lamb's" associates are "not defiled with (these ecclesiastical) women," but stand apart in the virgin purity of spiritual isolation (Rev. 14:4.)—Bro. Roberts, 1866.

Platonic 'Christianity'

By BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

"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. 1:21

PLATO was the pupil of Socrates, and "flourished," as they say, 348 years before Christ. It is chiefly from his writings that the opinions of Socrates are learned. He is thought by his admirers to have improved upon the principles of his master; and his fame is considered by all Laodicean authorities, as transcending that of all other philosophers in the department of theology and morals. He taught—

1. That the universe was governed by a Being of glorious power and wisdom, possessed of perfect liberty, and independence.

2. That there were a certain invincible malignity and corruption in matter, inseparable by the power of God.

3. That the human soul is an emanation from God, and therefore necessarily immortal: that evil must necessarily exist from the union of matter and mind in the human person;

4. That Demons were an order of beings inferior to the Deity, but superior to men, and that they governed the world; consequently, that they should be worshipped because of their agency in human affairs. Some of them he viewed as mediators, 'carrying men's prayers to God, and his answers to men.'

* * *

IN his Timoeus he declares, that "it is neither easy to find the Parent of the Universe, nor safe to discover him to the vulgar when found."

He therefore taught that in matters of worship, his disciples ought to govern themselves by the law of their country. This was the maxim of Socrates, and to it Plato agreed. In his "Republic" he orders—

"Worship and rites to be performed to the gods, and to demons, and to Esculapius, lest he should too much shock the prejudices of the vulgar."

Dr. Taylor Lewis of the University in New York city says—

"We believe that in this age there is a peculiar call for a deeper knowledge of Plato. Some acquaintance with his doctrine of ideas seems needed as a corrective to the tendency, so widely prevalent, to resolve all knowledge into an experimental induction of facts, not only in physical, but also in ethical and political science. . .

"Plato should be studied, if for no other purpose, as a matter of curiosity, to see if there may not possibly be some other philosophy than this noisy Baconianism about which there is kept up such an

everlasting din; or that still more noisy, because more empty, transcendentalism, which some would present as its only antidote.

"In place of all this, we want the clear, simple, common sense philosophy of Plato, commending itself when rightly understood, to all the "koinai ennoiai" or universal ideas of the race, in distinction from that mis-called common sense which is only the manufactured public opinion of the moment: a philosophy most religious, most speculative, and yet most practical; most childlike in its primeval simplicity, and yet most profound.

"We speak with confidence upon this point (says Dr. Lewis). The young man who is an enthusiastic student of Plato can never be a sciolist in regard to education, a quack in literature, a demagogue in politics, or an infidel in religion.

"Our main object, then, in publishing this translation of Plato's Tenth Book of the Laws is to recommend this noble philosopher to the present generation of educated young men, especially to our theologians."

This "noble philosopher" is also styled by "Christians" of Dr. Lewis' type, "the **divine** Plato." He was a great authority with those who Laodiceanized the Ecclesia of Christ into the Synagogue of the Satan, and made it what it is at this day.

Plato is likewise now a great authority with our contemporary representatives of original Laodiceanism, as evinced in the case of Dr. Lewis himself, and the clergy at large.

The Platonic Theology was the current and most respectable "wisdom" in the days of Jesus and the apostles. It was as popular with the old heathens as with the heathen of modern times; and all that would be necessary to constitute its author and illustrator, Socrates and Plato, "reverend" divines, would be to say they "believed in Jesus."

Being already divines and pious, to say this would convert them into as good Christians as the university professor of Greek. They were sound ecclesiastically and would only require a little modernizing to qualify them for the "sacred desk," and "the administration of ordinances."

* * *

BUT Paul had not the same admiration for the philosophy of the "noble" divine. He treated it very unceremoniously; and warned his brethren to beware lest they be spoiled by it.

It was that wisdom of the wise that he heartily despised, and incessantly preached and wrote against. He despised it because God despised it, and denounced it as foolishness.

"I will destroy," says God, "the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

"Hath not God," says Paul, "made foolish the wisdom of the world?"

This is equivalent to saying, "Hath not God made foolish the philosophy of Socrates and Plato?" Hath He not by the revelation of the mystery as exhibited in our preaching, proved the folly of the heathen philosophy concerning God, concerning "the invincible malignity and corruption in matter," the immortality of the soul, and so forth?

In condemning the wisdom of the wise to destruction because it is folly, God condemned these things also which are elements thereof.

Here, then, is a direct issue between God and the world. The world hath its wisdom and its wise ones. The system they glorify is the thinking of the flesh. This was its alpha and omega, its beginning and ending; and therefore in its conceptions could never range beyond the imagination of the evil heart of man. Paul condemned it, and predicted that a time would come when it would be abolished.

That time has not quite arrived yet, for "the folly" is still cherished as wisdom by an insensate and besotted world that calls darkness light, and evil good. But we wait for it; and in praying "Thy Kingdom come," petition the Lord to come quickly, and destroy the folly, and establish that—

"Wisdom which is first pure and then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

"Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen."

—Herald, 1861

* * *

Brother Thomas' words are confirmed by the following:

From Encyclopaedia Britannica Article: Plato

Under sub-heading: "Influence on Christian Thought"

IN the third century Clement of Alexandria, and after him, Origen, made Platonism the metaphysical foundation of what was intended to be a definitely Christian philosophy.

The Church could not, in the end, conciliate Platonist eschatology with the dogmas of the resurrection of the flesh and the final judgment, but in a less extreme form the Platonizing tendency was continued in the next century by the Cappadocians, notably St. Gregory Nyssen, and passed from them to St. Ambrose of Milan.

The main source of **the Platonism which dominated the philosophy of western Christian divines** through the earlier Middle Ages, were, however, Augustine, the greatest thinker among the Western Fathers, who had been **profoundly influenced by Plotinus, read in Latin version, before his conversion to Christianity**, and Boethius, whose wholly Platonist vindication of the ways of Providence in his *Consolatione Philosophiae* was the favourite "serious" book of the Middle Ages.

* * *

A FURTHER powerful influence was exerted by the writings of the so-called Dionysius the Areopagite, which laid down the main lines of mediaeval mystical theology and angelology.

These works are, in fact, an imperfectly Christianized version of the speculations of Proclus, and cannot date before the very end of the fifth century A.D. at the earliest, but **they enjoyed an immense authority** based on their attribution to an immediate convert of St. Paul.

After their translation into Latin in the ninth century by Johannes Scotus Erigena, their vogue in the West was as great as in the East.

* * *

THE thirteenth century saw a change. Aristotle* came to displace Plato as "the philosopher," partly in consequence of the immediately perceived value of his strictly scientific works as a storehouse of well-digested natural facts, partly from the brilliant success of the enterprise carried through by St. Thomas Aquinas, the reconstruction of **philosophical theology** on an Aristotelian basis . . .

Directly or through Augustine, the influence of Plato, not only on strictly philosophic thought but on popular ethics and religion, has repeatedly come to the front in ages of general spiritual requickening, and shows no signs of being on the wane.

* Aristotle was another pagan "Doctor of Philosophy"!

ARTICLES FOR THE BEREAN

WE would like to have a much greater range of representation in the articles in the Berean. We therefore request all Berean 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.

SERVING BRETHERN, NOT RULERS

ALL OFFICIAL brethren are serving brethren; but there are necessarily different sorts of serving brethren, such as managing brethren, presiding brethren, doorkeeping brethren, etc., but ALL are brethren. It is important to keep this feature constantly in the front. Christ places it there: "One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." This feature, with many other beautiful features

originally appertaining to the house of Christ, has disappeared from the religious systems around us, bearing the name of Christ. Having returned to it, let us hold on to it. There must be no authority, only service.

The spirit of the appointments involves this. The ecclesia does not appoint masters, but servants. In principle, the ecclesia is the doer of everything; but, as it is impossible for it, in its collective capacity, to do the things that are to be done, it delegates to individual members the duty of doing them in its behalf.—**The Ecclesial Guide.**

A City Set on a Hill

“Ye are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father Which is in heaven”—Matt. 5:14-16

By **BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS**

THE brethren have left Ann-street School Room, and entered on the occupation of the Athenaeum Hall, a building offering the combined advantage of increased comfort and increased publicity to the proceedings undertaken in the cause of Truth.

The hall has a good architectural interior, and is lighted from the roof. It is known by everybody in Birmingham, and stands in such a position, at the intersection of two thoroughfares, that whatever is done in it has a facility of quickly acquiring housetop notoriety.

This is a great advantage. The true position for an ecclesia of saints to occupy in an unbelieving community is that of a candlestick—a lightstand—a tabernacle of witness—a city set on a hill that cannot be hid—the pillar and ground of the Truth, "holding forth the Word of life," and "striving together for the faith of the Gospel," saying to all, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, "Come."

This kind of faithful activity will not turn to worldly advantage, but more the contrariwise, as those will experience who do their duty in the matter; but, on the other hand, to be idle, to be craven, to be ashamed of the Truth, is to come under inevitable condemnation.

Better have nothing to do with the Truth than profess to be the servants of Christ, and live as the servants of selfishness, that is, the servants of the flesh.

Better oppose the Truth, tooth and nail, than profess subjection to it, while all the while you are killing it by your indifference, or betraying it by your treacherous devotion to other things. The Truth's demand upon a man is—ALL OR NONE—

"Be mine or the devil's."

"You cannot serve God and Mammon."

"If any man love father or mother, relatives, houses or lands more than me" (says He who is the Truth) "he is not worthy of me."

The effectiveness of an ecclesia's exhibition of the Truth, so far as its proclamation is concerned, depends upon circumstances; and one of those circumstances is—place of meeting. If you hold your meetings five miles out of town, it is not likely the town will be much the better for your testimony. If you come into the town, but convene in a cellar or a hayloft, the influence of the Truth will not be greatly increased. If you put your candle under a bushel, the light will not be seen. This is true in all the degrees of its application.

Since faith cometh by hearing, it is obvious that the increase of faith among the ignorant will be in the ratio of the facilities offered them for hearing. In this aspect of the case, the choice of a place of meeting is not so insignificant a matter as might at first sight appear. It is part and parcel of an

ecclesia's machinery of duty; and the neglect of it indicates an insensibility to the bearing of facts as affecting the discharge of that duty.

Of course, there is such a thing as "Hobson's choice." Where pecuniary obstacles bar the way, or there is a lack of the right sort of place, even when there is money to meet the burden, there is nothing for it but to make the best of a bad job.

Our remarks only apply when the course to be adopted depends on judgment and disposition. Neither a brother nor an ecclesia will ever be held responsible for the non-performance of impossibilities; but, at the same time, they will not be guiltless in reference to the neglect of things they were able and called upon to accomplish.

In this spirit, the Birmingham ecclesia have transferred their place of assembly from what has been in more senses than one, an "infant school room," to a place more suited to their own growing necessities, and the necessities of the great town in which they find themselves placed.

In doing this, they have endeavoured to turn their advantage to the best account. They have availed themselves of the excellent position of the hall, (standing at the corner of two public streets in the center of the town) to suspend large painted notice boards outside—one in each street—exhibited all day on Sunday—setting forth the hour and nature of the meetings held. The wording of the notice is as follows:—

CHRISTADELPHIAN SYNAGOGUE
Athenaeum Hall

Those in Birmingham who have become Christadelphians, by believing "the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ," (Acts 8:12,) and by being thereafter immersed in water in obedience to Apostolic commandment (Acts 2:38)

MEET WITHIN EVERY SUNDAY

In the morning, at half-past ten, for the breaking of bread and worship, and in the evening, at half-past six, for the proclamation of the truth.

N.B.—"Christadelphian" means brother of Christ, and is adopted by those acknowledging it to distinguish them from ordinary "Christians," who, in the estimation of the former, are departed from the faith of Christ, and turned aside unto fables.

"LOOKING FOR HIS APPEARING."

Something is to be said in defence of the designation herein employed to define the brethren in their collective organization. It was necessary in a public notification to adopt a name. The public could not be made aware of our existence, or of our distinctive peculiarities without a name; and to all and sundry, we say, if a name be scriptural and expressive of the truth, there can be no objections to a name as such, but great advantage for convenient identification.

The brethren in ancient times had a name. They were called "Christians" at Antioch, and, afterwards, everywhere else. This was the name by which they were known—the nickname which their enemies originated, and which, at that time, was an epithet of disgrace, though from the disciples' point of view, a name of honor.

Why not adopt that name? it may be asked. For a good reason. The purpose which the name served in ancient times is no longer practicable. It no longer distinguishes the brethren of Christ from those who reject the faith of Christ, for the simple reason that everybody European is called "Christian."

The word defines nothing beyond an adhesion to the historical tradition of Jesus Christ. It imports nothing doctrinal. You can believe anything almost and be a Christian. To say that you are a

"Christian," now-a-days, is not to say that you disbelieve in the fables to which men have everywhere turned, in the name of Christianity; but rather to say that you **believe in them**.

To say that you are a "Christian" is not to intimate that you are prepared to contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the saints, as against the apostate faith of Christendom, but it is to profess that you don't care what a man believes, provided he is docile and just in disposition, and correct and benevolent in his actions.

To call yourself "Christian" is, therefore, so far as the understood meaning of the word goes, to TELL A LIE of yourself, if you believe the Truth.

But it may be argued that the abuse of a right word—a New Testament word—a divine designation—will not justify its repudiation on the part of those seeing it in its true light.

The answer to this is: the word is not necessarily a right word, because it was invented by the enemies of the Truth. The word is not a New Testament word, except that the New Testament records that it was used first in Antioch, in reference to Christ's brethren, and afterwards employs it only once as a current designation (1 Pet. 4:16), and then only in accommodation to popular usage, in the same way as Agrippa is recorded to have used it in reference to himself in Acts 26:28.

No claim can be made for the name on the ground of its divine authority. We must deal with it on other grounds. It was a name employed for purposes of distinction. It could be employed with no other object. To call a man a "Christian" did not make him a saint; it only identified him in the popular eye with a sect which, at that time, was everywhere spoken against.

This use of it is sanctioned by Peter, from which it follows that it is Scriptural to acknowledge a distinctive designation if it accord with the Truth. "Christian" accorded with the Truth in the days of Peter; it does not do so now, and, therefore, "the case being altered, alters the case."

What is to be substituted for "Christian"? Something expressive of the Truth—something scriptural—nothing of human derivation—nothing expressive of human affinities. Everything savouring of the Corinthian schisms must be reprobated. Let no man say "I am of Paul," as against another, saying, "I am Cephas;" let us all say "I am of Christ."

But how shall we do this in a name which shall be scriptural, and yet distinguish us from the putrid masses of "Christendom," who call themselves "Christian"?

The answer is before the reader—"Christadelphian." This answers all the requirements of the case. It is the Anglicised Greek form of the phrase, "brethren of Christ," (Christou adelphoi), and has never before been employed in the English tongue to designate those who are Christ's.

It has an advantage over "Christian" in being more scriptural and definite in its significance. "Christian" merely expresses the world's dim and unintelligent apprehension of the position of Christ's brethren. The world understood not the nature of the relation subsisting between them and Christ. It merely saw the former had something to do with the latter, and called them Christ-ones.

But "Christadelphians" goes closer, and reveals the fact that the disciples of Christ are not merely his servants, but his friends (John 15: 14-15)—his brethren"—(Heb. 2:17; Matt. 28:10; Rom. 8:29; John 20:17)—joint heirs with him of "the promises made to Abraham" (Gal. 3:29; Rom. 8:17).

But, it may be asked, why not express that fact in plain English, and call them "brethren of Christ"?

For the simple reason that in plain English, these words would be indistinctive, since there are thousands who, as of old, "say they are Jews and are not, but do lie." All classes of professors would own to "brethren of Christ," and, therefore, it would fail to define or distinguish anybody.

But no one will acknowledge "Christadelphian" but those who, from a knowledge of the Truth, realize the necessity of being distinguished from the great apostasy in all its sects and denominations.

If these considerations are not satisfactory to those who object to the Greek form of the phrase, and stickle for "Christian," let them remember that "Christian" is as much a Greek word as "Christadelphian," and that the choice really lies between a Greek appellative devised by the enemies of the Truth in the first century, and one expressive of the truth affirmed by the Spirit in the same age of the world.

* * *

AS to "Synagogue," the same general considerations that justify the use of "Christadelphian" suggest the employment of this word in preference to meeting house, assembly room, chapel, church, etc., as a designation for the assembly of Christadelphians.

The names of the buildings used by the apostasy in all its ramifications have come conventionally to represent the doctrines of the apostasy. It is impossible to prevent this association of ideas; and as it is well to "abstain from all appearance of evil," and to wash our hands of all complicity with the Great Harlot Mother, and her state and dissenting daughters in every way, it is well to employ a name for our place of assembly which will run us clear of the whole system. This is what the word "Synagogue" does.

But, says an objector, people will think you are Jews! Very good; there is no objection to that. They will think rightly if they think so. All true Christadelphians are Jews in everything except blood; and it is one of the advantages of the word "Synagogue" that it tells the world of their Jewish connection.*

* ("Synagogue" was used in the magazine at the head of the monthly exhortation until May, 1875. Beginning June, 1875, the term "Ecclesia" replaces it. As bro. Roberts says, a name is for identification and clarity. Probably experience indicated that "Synagogue" was more misleading than enlightening.)

Salvation is of the Jews; Jesus, our head and elder brother—"the captain of our salvation"—is a Jew, and King of the Jews, and his Household are "no longer Gentiles in the flesh" — "no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens in the commonwealth of Israel" (Eph. 2:11-19).

They look for redemption in Jerusalem (Luke 2:38), even the redemption promised in Isa. 46:10-16; 24:23; 25:6-9. Their hope is the hope of Israel, for which Paul was bound with a chain (Acts 28:20); therefore, they have a right to proclaim themselves denationalized Gentiles and adopted Jews, who have here no continual city, but seek for one to come, when Jesus shall return to build again the tabernacle of David that is fallen down (Acts 15:16; Amos 9:11).

* * *

In addition to the notice boards already mentioned, the brethren have adopted another measure, smacking a little of novelty it may be, but calculated to promote the general object of awakening curiosity and enquiry in relation to the faith of the sect which is everywhere spoken against.

On the painted tablets, fitting into the panels of the outer entrance door, they have inscribed the positive and negative features of the one Faith, for the inspection of all who may care to stop and read. The first tablet is worded as follows:

CHRISTADELPHIANS BELIEVE

In the One God revealed to Israel,
In Jesus of Nazareth as a man,
 Born of the Holy Spirit by Mary,
 Put to Death as a Sin-offering,
 Raised from the Dead,
 Exalted to the Heavens, and declared to be Son of God;
In the divine origin of the words spoken by Jesus, the Prophets and the Apostles.

In the absolute necessity of understanding the Old Testament, in order to a correct New Testament faith.

In the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,

In the Covenant made with David, and therefore

In the Second (personal) Coming of Jesus to earth to—

Restore the Jews from dispersion,

Re-establish the Kingdom of David,

Possess the Holy Land,

Subdue all kingdoms on earth, and

Reign universally for 1,000 years, at the end of which, having put down all enemies, including death itself,

He will give up the Kingdom to the Father, that God may be ALL IN ALL

They further believe:

That mankind in Adam is under a just condemnation of death,

That the Christ, as a second Adam, brought immortality to light by death and resurrection.

That in order to obtain a title to this immortality, men must:

1. Believe in the foregoing "things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ."
2. Be immersed in water for a union with his Name.
3. And continue in the steadfast service of him till the end.

That Christ at his appearing will judge his servants, living and dead, and:

1. Give eternal life to those who are worthy, and appoint them rulers in his Kingdom on earth; and
2. Condemn to second death those who are unworthy.

The second tablet reads as follows:—

CHRISTADELPHIANS DO NOT BELIEVE

In the Trinity,

In the Co-equality and Co-eternity of Jesus with the Deity,

In the Existence of Jesus before his Conception at Nazareth,

In the Personality of the Holy Spirit,

In the Personality of the Devil,

In the Immortality of the Soul,

In the post-mortem Transportation of Saints to Heaven and Sinners to Hell,

In Eternal Torments,

In Baby Sprinkling and Infant Salvation,

In Sabbatarianism,

In Salvation by Good Works apart from the Gospel,

In Salvation without Baptism,

In the validity of Baptism where the Gospel was not understood and believed at the time of its administration,

In "Conversion" apart from the intelligent apprehension of the Word,

In the "conversion of the world" by the preaching of the gospel.

They do not believe that the Old Testament has been set aside by the New, but on the contrary, they base their faith on the writings of Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles, comprehensively viewed, and reject everything contrary to their teaching.

They recognize the duty of obeying the following Apostolic injunctions:

"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints"—Jude 3.
"Refuse profane and old wives' fables"—1 Tim. 4:7.
"Hold fast the form of sound words"—2 Tim. 1:13.
"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit"—Col. 2:8.
"Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity"—2 Tim. 2:19.
"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not"—2 John 10.

At first sight, it might appear superfluous, and even unwarrantable, to set forth points of **non-belief** as a Basis of Faith, but a moment's reflection will dissipate this impression, and **reveal the negative side of this Faith to be of equal value with the positive.**

Every affirmative proposition has a converse. Every "yes" has a "no"; and **if a man is not prepared to boldly accept that "no," it shows his "yes" is not worth much.**

For instance, if a man profess to believe in the God of Israel, he is bound to be able to say that he does not believe in the gods of the heathen. If he were to be timorous about affirming the latter, would it not show that his belief in the God of Israel was no belief in the real sense, but merely a fragment of ancient polytheism, which recognized different gods for different nations?

Is it not part of a true profession of faith in Jehovah to be able to say boldly that we do not believe in any of the deities of heathen imagination? Would even any "Christian" community recognize the faith of a man who hesitated to commit himself to **this** negative?

Does not the acceptance of **any** truth involve the repudiation of everything opposite to it: and would not hesitancy to repudiate the opposites, show uncertainty and indecision with regard to the positives?

There is but one rational answer to these questions, and that answer falls in with Paul's exhortation, that in maintaining the truth, we **must**—

"REFUSE profane and old wives' **fables.**"

Now, in the present day, there are many profane and old wives' fables abroad in the earth in the name of the Gospel. Paul predicted that such would be the case—that the time would come when men, professing the name of Christ, would turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned aside unto **fables** (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

Now, **is it not of the first importance that these fables should be repudiated?** Can anyone hold the Truth without rejecting them? Is it not a part of a true profession of faith in our time to reject the traditions that make the Word of God of none effect?

Common sense will supply the answer. There is a negative as well as a positive side to the Faith in our day, for the simple reason that there is a spurious faith to be destroyed before the true Faith can enter the mind.

In the apostles' days, the work was more simple. There was no counterfeit Christianity to obstruct the operations of the Truth. The apostles had only to propound their doctrines constructively.

There was no necessity to go out of the way and deal with the dogmas of Paganism. Paganism was Paganism, and the gospel was the gospel. They did not stand on the same ground. There was no competition between them. If Christ was received Paganism was rejected, as a matter of course. But it is a different thing now.

We have to deal with Paganism in the garb of Christianity. We have to deal with another gospel preached in the Name of Christ and his apostles; and it therefore forms one of the first duties of intelligent and faithful testimony to protest against and expose the imposture.

One of the first acts of a valid profession of the Truth is to repudiate "the profane and old wives' fables" which abound in the guise of truth.

In fact, in times like these, the repudiation of false doctrine is almost a criterion of the reception of the Truth. If a man shrink from the rejection of the fictions of so-called Christendom, it is a sure sign that his apprehension of the verities of the Gospel is very weak, if it is not altogether non-existent.

Positive belief—(that is, full assurance of faith)—on one side, necessitates and produces **positive non-belief** on the other. A man heartily believing the Truth will heartily reject error; and if he does not heartily do the latter, it is an infallible proof that he is incapable of heartily doing the former.

Hence the propriety and necessity of exacting the non-belief of truth-nullifying fables as a corollary to the reception of the Truth in its positive form.

On this foundation, the Birmingham ecclesia take their stand, and will have fellowship with none who are not prepared with themselves to maintain the purity of the Truth.

—Aug. 21, 1866, bro. Roberts

The History of the 'Trinity' Doctrine

"According as He (God) hath chosen us in him (Jesus) before the foundation of the world"

—Ephesians 1:4

PART FOUR

PASSAGES QUOTED TO "PROVE" (Contd.)

"God Who created all things by Jesus Christ" (Eph. 3:9).

In this particular case, the RV omits "by Jesus Christ," so this form of words can be considered under other passages.

* * *

"He (Christ—quoting your insertion) was in the world and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not" (John 1:10).

In the first place, the parenthetical insertion of (Christ) is not a true or sound interpretation. It is assuming the point that it is desired to prove, or at least assuming a point from which to reason. The antecedent of "he" is not Christ, but "the Word"—the Logos, the Purpose, the Fiat. Peter says—

"By the word (**logos**—same as above) of God the heavens were of old" (2 Pet. 3:5).

No one appears to have any difficulty with this passage because the translators here have used a small "w" and have not followed it by a string of interpretive "he's." Peter is quoting from Psa. 33:6—

"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath (Heb.: **ruach** — spirit) of His mouth."

Here "word" clearly means decree, determination, purpose; and is paralleled with "ruach"—breath, spirit, power. Job records (26:13)—

"By His Spirit (**ruach**) He hath garnished the heavens."

And in beginning of the record of creation itself—

"The Spirit (**ruach**) of God moved upon the face of the waters . . . And God **said**, Let there be, etc. . ."

Here again is the associated conception of power and purpose, Spirit and Word.

Creation was effected, then, by the Word and Spirit—the decree or purpose and the power or effluence—the Spirit-Wisdom. The 8th chapter of Proverbs is helpful in understanding chapter 1 of John—

Prov. 8:22—"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old . . .

"When He prepared the heavens, I was there: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth (v. 27).

"Then I was by Him, as a master-workman (RV): and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him" (30).

Who is this speaking? Who was with God at creation? V. 1:

"Doth not Wisdom cry? **SHE** standeth in the top of high places . . . Unto you, O men, I call."

A reading of this chapter will greatly clarify the meaning of John 1. This eternal Spirit-Wisdom of God is the Word (**logos**) of John 1. It was with God and it was God, for God is the eternal embodiment of power and wisdom, and power and wisdom are His essential characteristics.

See also Prov. 3:19—

"The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath He established the heavens."

Another point that is a source of considerable obscurity is the fact that Greek personal pronouns (he, she, it) do not necessarily denote personality. Like modern French and other languages, all nouns have gender, and although Greek has neuter gender, still many impersonal nouns are either masculine or feminine, and take corresponding masculine or feminine pronouns.

"**Logos**" (word) is masculine. It therefore always takes "he" in Greek. Normally this should be translated "it" in English, because "word" is neuter, but if in the translator's theology it denotes a person, then he naturally renders it "he."

Another point to be noticed is the "by," as in v. 3—

"All things were made by him . . . (v. 10) The world was made by him."

The Greek word here is "**dia**," which the RV in both of these verses renders "through," showing that the thing or person referred to is not the primary operator, but the reason or instrumentality.

This preposition "dia" has a wide range of use and meaning. It is used with two declensions (that is, cases) of the noun or pronoun. With the Accusative it means "because of," "for the sake of." With the Genitive the idea of instrumentality is predominant, but still the meaning can be so wide that "dia" with the Genitive is rendered in the AV "for.....'s sake" in Rom. 15:30. (The pronoun following "dia" in John 1, vs. 3 and 10 is in the Genitive).

In Rom. 5:21 appears—

"Even so might grace reign through (dia, with Genitive) righteousness."

Not that righteousness is the direct agent by which grace reigns, but the obvious meaning is that grace reigns **because of** righteousness.

"Dia" with the Genitive also occurs in 1 Thess. 4:2—

"Ye know what commandments we gave you by (dia) the Lord Jesus."

This shows the broad and indefinite use of "dia," for it certainly does not mean that Jesus was the instrument through whom Paul conveyed his commands to the believers. The meaning here is clearly "on behalf of" or "by the authority of." Similarly in v. 14—

"Them also which sleep in (dia) Jesus."

We cannot interpret this to mean that Jesus is the agent by which they do their sleeping.

Rom 14:14—"There is nothing unclean of (dia, with Genitive) itself."

That is, by reason of, on account of, itself.

These instances of "dia" with the Genitive are given to show that **it is of such broad and varied meaning: that its use in John 1:3 and 10 and the other passages quoted is no proof that Jesus was actually present and operative at creation.**

The fact that Jesus is the center and keystone of God's whole purpose fully satisfies the requirements of these verses. They do not prove his pre-existence.

All things were made by the Spirit-Word, or Spirit-Wisdom, of God. This first chapter of John tells us that this Spirit-Word was made flesh in the person of Jesus Christ (v. 14). Jesus Christ was the embodiment and manifestation of the Word of God. The whole Word or Purpose converges upon him and is expressed in and manifested in him. He is the center, cornerstone and basis of the whole creation. Through him God has made, and is making, all things.

But it is a misapplication of this truth, and a confusing of the plain scriptural record, to infer from this that he existed before he was born.

"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18).

The man Christ Jesus was born in Bethlehem as plainly and clearly recorded in Scripture. The Spirit-Word manifested in and through him was eternally with, and of, God. God, not the three-in-one God, but the one true God of the Bible, by the Spirit, manifested Himself in, and spoke and worked through, His Son, the man Christ Jesus.

Jesus is the "beginning of the creation of God"—Rev. 3:14. (Note particularly that he is **part of** the "creation of God"—clearly therefore not part of the eternal, **uncreated** ONE GOD).

Does this mean that he was the first thing actually created, or does it mean that he is the foundation stone of the final, perfected result? The former alternative is out of harmony with the plain record of his birth — the latter is the very heart of the revelation and purpose. Consider Col. 1:15—

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature."

Does this mean that he was the very first creature ever born? The answer is in v. 18—

"He is the Head of the Body, the Ecclesia: who is the beginning, the firstborn **from the dead.**"

Paul tells the Romans (8:29)—

"Whom He did foreknow, He (God) also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he (Jesus) might be the firstborn among many brethren."

He says Jesus is—

"The firstfruits of **them that slept**" (1 Cor. 15:20).

This is clearly the creation of which he is the beginning. If Jesus is a co-eternal, coequal, **immortal, undying**, part of the One Supreme God, how can he be the "first-born from the DEAD," "the first-fruits of them that SLEPT"?

What havoc this Platonic idea of the Trinity plays with the revealed truth of the Bible!

* * *

"God hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1-2).

Here again, in passing, note these **very passages** (quoted to 'prove' the Trinity) cannot be harmonized with the Greek metaphysical co-eternal, co-equal, none afore, none greater idea. We are here again plainly told that God—the Scriptural ONE TRUE GOD—has **appointed** Jesus heir of all things.

Can you not see the absurdity of saying that one co-equal part of the eternal possessor of heaven and earth appoints another co-equal part of the same eternal possessor, to be **heir** of all things?

Can you not see that the Trinity is one conception, and the God of the Bible is something entirely different, and endless absurdity and conflict is created by trying to combine the two ideas—one the heathen idea of men, the idea the divine revelation of God?

And this (Hebrews) is the epistle in which we are told (5:7) Jesus prayed to Him that was able to save him from death, and (5:8) he **learned** obedience and (5:9), he was **made** perfect.

It is significant that the two "by's" in this passage quoted (Heb. 1:1-2) are different words in the original. The first ("by His Son") is "**en**," the second ("by whom He made the worlds") is "**dia**," to which the remarks made previously apply. Jesus Christ was certainly the foreordained cause, reason or motive for the creation.

It is to be noted that "worlds" here is "**aions**"—ages, as in Eph. 2:7, "the ages (**aions**) to come." The Emphatic Diaglott renders this—

“On account of whom also He constituted the ages.”

Young's Literal Trans. has—

"Through whom also He did make the ages."

Rotherham has—

"Through whom also He hath made the ages."

Here is another significant side-issue: The word here translated "made" is rendered "appointed" in Heb 3:2—

"Jesus, who was faithful to Him that appointed (**poieo**) him."

This word occurs many times and really means "made." This is the only place it is translated "appointed." It would be difficult enough for the translators (with their co-equal trinitarian theology) to have to say that God appointed Jesus, but it would have been much more difficult to translate this word in the normal way and say that God **made** Jesus Christ.

Using the same word "appointed" in 1:2 that the translators used in Heb. 3:2 (the original is the same), we have—

"By (or through) whom He appointed the ages."

This point should be borne in mind—our standard translations of the Bible are by trinitarians. Therefore in the very nature of things (with no reference to their sincerity) they are bound to always choose words that favor that view and give that colour wherever possible.

* * *

"For by (en—RV: in) him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by (dia—RV: through) him, and for (eis—RV: unto—note the fluidity of translation of these prepositions) him: and he is before all things, and by (en—RV: in) him all things consist" (Col. 1:16-17).

The same remarks concerning "dia," and the central foreordained place of Jesus Christ in the whole scheme of salvation, apply here.

However, it is clear in this case—from the context—that the "all things" in question are "thrones, dominions, principalities and powers." **This explanation here teaches us to bear this in mind in connection with the other similar passages.**

The literal creation of the heaven and earth and their contents was just the first preliminary step in the **real** "creation" that God is working to and building on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, after his resurrection (Matt. 28:18)—

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

And 1 Peter 3:22—

"Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."

Compare Eph 1:20-21 (note the very similar wording to the passage quoted from Col.)—

"He (God) **raised** him (Jesus) from the dead and set him . . . far above all principality and power and might and dominion . . . and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church."

Compare this with Dan. 4:17—

"The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men."

Combining these passages, we can easily see how all visible and invisible thrones, dominions, principalities and powers in heaven and earth are created by and for him.

In the AV, there are 3 "by's" in this quotation. The middle one is "dia," already fully examined. The other 2 are "en" in the original. The RV renders both "in." This word "en" is translated "because of" in Matt. 26:31—

"All ye shall be offended because of (en) me this night."

All things were created **because of** Christ.

* * *

"And he is before all things."

The supposed force of this in connection with the doctrine of Christ's pre-existence apparently rests on the idea that the word "before" (pro) has exclusive reference to time. This is not correct. Like the English word "before," it has other meanings, including rank and precedence.

Grimm-Thayer Greek Lexicon (a recognized standard) gives one of the meanings as "superiority" and "pre-eminence," quoting James 5:12:

"But above (**pro**) all things, my brethren, swear not."

And 1 Peter 4:8—

"Above (**pro**) all things, have fervent charity."

The passage in question (Col. 1:17) will be seen to correspond better with the context if it is rendered, "And he is above all things." It is superiority, pre-eminence, and supreme authority and position that the whole passage is emphasizing.

* * *

"And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John 17:5).

The Scriptures reveal Jesus to us as a man who was divinely begotten of the seed of David by the Holy Spirit overshadowing Mary and causing her to conceive. This child grew in wisdom, grew to manhood, rendered perfect obedience and submission to God in the face of trial and temptation, and on account of that obedience was raised from the dead and exalted by God to glory and honor at His right hand.

To introduce an immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, untemptable, co-equal God into the picture, which the Scriptures never do, is to go immediately to the fantasies of Greek mythology.

How then are we to understand this verse as a harmonious part of the whole scriptural picture? It will be quite clear if we consider similar expressions in other parts of the Scripture. The best interpreter of the Bible is the Bible itself.

"According to His own purpose and grace, which was **given** US in Christ Jesus **before the world began**" (2 Tim. 1:9).

GIVEN US BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN. Does this prove that we were in existence before the world began?

"According as He (God) hath chosen US in him (Jesus) **before the foundation of the world**" (Eph 1:4).

Did the "us" who were "chosen before the foundation" of the world actually exist at that time, or is this speaking of God's purpose and foreknowledge?

"Whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev 13:8).

Was Jesus "slain from the foundation of the world"? YES: **in the same sense in which he had glory before the foundation of the world.** The RV puts the above translation in the margin and uses—

"Written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain."

Either rendering illustrates the point. To have one's name written in the book of life from the foundation of the world is obviously similar to having glory from the foundation of the world.

This does not prove pre-existence, but predestination, and is applied to all God's sons, but of course in all cases primarily and pre-eminently to Christ.

God said to Jeremiah (1:5)—

"Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee."

Is this speaking of foreknowledge and predestination, or does it mean that Jeremiah pre-existed before he was born? Could God know a man that did not exist? YES, **in His purpose.**

"Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden.

"I have even called thee by name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me"
(Isa. 45: 1, 4).

This was written well over 100 years before Cyrus was born. Could God hold the hand of a man whose birth was a century in the future? Yes, in His purpose.

"The children **being not yet born**, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.

"As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Rom. 9:13).

God said to Rebekah—

"Two nations are in Thy womb" (Gen. 25:23).

Did these two nations then exist, or is God speaking from the point of view of His foreknowledge and purpose?

Paul says (Heb. 7:9)—

"Levi paid tithes in Abraham, for he (Levi) was yet in the loins of his father (New Amer. Rev: ancestor) when Melchizedek met him (Abraham)."

Actually Levi was Abraham's great grandson, and he was not born until more than 150 years after the time Paul said he was "in Abraham's loins" and "paid tithes."

Are we to infer from this form of language that Levi pre-existed? Jesus existed **in God** just as Levi existed **in Abraham**, except that Jesus existed in a much more vivid and positive sense because he was the very center of the purpose, and everything was framed with him in mind, whereas Levi was, so to speak, just an ordinary and unforeshadowed development from Abraham.

Paul speaks (Tit. 1:2) of—

"Eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."

Does this indicate the pre-existence of those to whom eternal life was promised? Trinitarians dare not suggest that it was Jesus Christ to whom it was promised because (apart from the context indicating otherwise), this would be admitting that he did not have eternal life **then**, and was therefore not co-equal and coeternal. No, the Scriptures here again clearly speak on the basis of **eternal purpose and predestination**.

The foregoing passages surely illustrate, then, the way in which Jesus had glory with God before the world was—the glory which he now prayed to be ACTUALLY GIVEN—

"I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do—NOW glorify me."

This would be quite meaningless if he were an immortal God, and had eternally possessed, and therefore still possessed, this glory. Was he praying to another co-equal part of himself, asking to be glorified with glory which he himself had eternally possessed in exact equality and right and power with the One to Whom he prayed? O, Trinity, what a mockery of beautiful, eternal Truth you are!

The following passages will complete the picture, and show that in this matter of pre-cosmic glory with God, all the faithful sons of God shared with Christ, as the Body with the Head—he, of course, always primarily and pre-eminently. ALL were glorified in the "eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ" (Eph. 3:11):

"Whom He (God) did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he (Jesus) might be the firstborn among many brethren.

"Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified" (Rom. 8:29-30).

A standard trinitarian commentary (JFB, Eerdmans Pub. Co.) says on this passage:

"All this is viewed as past; because, starting from the past decree of predestination to be conformed to the image of God's Son, of which the other steps are but the successive unfoldings, **all is beheld as one entire, eternally-completed salvation.**"

There, in a trinitarian's own words, is a beautiful explanation of the pre-cosmic glory of Christ mentioned in John 17:5. In this passage in Romans, trinitarians are compelled to understand the glory in the predestined **future**, thought spoken of in completed and **past** terms. Otherwise they must believe in the pre-existence of everyone.

He says it is "viewed as past because the decree of predestination is past, and all other steps are successive unfoldings." In other words (1 Cor. 2:7)—

"The hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory."

* * *

Let us not destroy the glorious Scriptural picture of salvation by making our Elder Brother, Jesus Christ, an eternal, pre-existent, omnipotent, untemptable, co-equal God.

He was a "**man** made strong" (Psa 80:17); a **man** specially and divinely begotten by the eternal Spirit-Power of God; a **man** in whom God dwelt, and through whom God spoke and worked and manifested Himself; a **man** who recognized that of himself he could do nothing—that all power, wisdom and goodness was of God; a **man** who rendered perfect submission and obedience to God — "Not my will, but Thine, be done."

* * *

THE doctrine of the Trinity is not scriptural. The idea of 3 co-equal, co-eternal Gods is never to be found anywhere in the Bible. Like the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, it is **provedly derived from the philosophy of the pagan Greeks**, particularly Plato—the foolish "wisdom of the world" which the Apostles and early believers repudiated and combated, but which the apostate and worldly church later succumbed to.

The very emphatic distinction that Paul makes (in the first 2 chapters of 2nd Cor.) between the "wisdom of the world" and the wisdom of God ("unto the Greeks foolishness") positively **proves** that any theology derived from Platonic Greek philosophy (which the Trinity admittedly is) **must** be false and anti-scriptural.

Be sure your beliefs are derived from and founded upon God's Word, not man's speculations. Anyone who learned their "theology" direct from the Bible would never believe in the Trinity, because there is no such thing taught anywhere therein.

* * *

"Jesus increased in wisdom" (Luke 2:52).

"This is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only True God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3)

—in the very immediate context of the "glory" quotation!

"There is One God, and one mediator between God and men, the MAN Christ Jesus"

(1 Tim 2:5).

"Jesus of Nazareth, a MAN approved of God among you by miracles which God did by him"

(Acts 2:22).

"I can of mine own self do nothing: I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father Which hath sent me" (John 14:28).

"My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28).

"And the angel said unto her (Mary), The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: Therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

It was the baby born of Mary that was the Son of God because he was begotten in her by the Spirit of God.

These passages deserve long meditation. They are a beautiful, refreshing, spiritual antidote to the confused, contradictory human philosophising of the Platonic doctrine of the Trinity. —G.V.G.

‘They marvelled at His Answer’

"Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?"—Matthew 13:54

THOUGHTS ON MATTHEW 22

THE enemies of Jesus often sought to trap him even, if possible, unto death. It was the flesh—human nature, prone to sin—which ruled in the enemies of Jesus. They desired his ruin that they, in their lust and pride and selfishness, may be justified and vindicated against Jesus and his inspired Words and Teachings.

We have on record a number of incidents where the pride of the flesh comes to the fore, attempting to justify its thinking and its actions, but only revealing its ignorance or disobedience concerning the revealed Will of God. Even those who were familiar with God's Word were ignorant concerning its teaching.

We see the beginning of a defence and vindication of self in Matt. 22, starting at v. 15—

"Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk."

To entangle or ensnare means to trap for certain—there being no possible escape. The Pharisees did this by design, deliberately and carefully thought out. And when their certain trap was contrived in their minds, rather than personally facing Jesus they dispatched others (v. 16)—

"And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying,
"Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men."

We notice them carefully setting up their certain trap, by thinking they could "force" Jesus to answer their up-coming question in favor of God or man. In either case, no matter what his answer, they would have entangled him—

"Tell us therefore, what thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?"

Thus they set what they thought was a double-trap. For if Jesus answered "No, it is not lawful to give tribute to Caesar," this could amount to rebellion against the Romans and the infliction of the death penalty. Even with an answer of "Yes" there was danger from the Jews, or at least there would be an extreme revulsion on the part of the Jews against Jesus.

But what the Pharisees and Herodians really wanted to hear was "No." Their preliminary remarks prove this—

"Thou art true . . . and teachest the way of God in truth . . . neither carest thou for any man . . . thou regardest not the person of men."

They wanted Jesus to answer "No" and bring on himself the death penalty.

"But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?" (v. 18).

It is said that the Pharisees themselves sided with the zealots, founded by Judas of Galilee, a group advocating rebellion against the Roman rulers. While being wicked in their intentions in

approaching Jesus that he may be "tricked" into the charge of rebellion, they themselves were in truth guilty of such an offence.

They were wicked hypocrites!—pretending to be what they were not; both as to their political relationship with the Romans, and their false front and words in addressing Jesus as "Master" and saying they knew he was true and taught the way of God in truth—for had they believed this they would not be seeking his death.

Their question—Caesar or God—was among those subjects much debated among the Jews, there being no easy answer, or answer which would be acceptable by all factions of Jews.

The Zealots claimed to believe in Israel as a Theocracy with God only as their King; therefore it was considered by them unlawful to give tribute to another king. In this connection the rabbis taught, "Wheresoever the money of any king is current, there the inhabitants acknowledge that king for their lord." Also, the rabbis objected to the use of these coins, the census money, because of the images on them—this smacked of condoning idolatry.

When Jesus asked for a penny, he asked them—

"Whose is this image and superscription? They said unto him, Caesar's.

"Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (vs. 19-21).

This answer was not a self-contradiction. The Jews in general, and especially the Pharisees with their disciples and the Herodians, thought Jesus would have to make a definite choice between Caesar and God (and he would of course have to choose God).

But the question did not require that kind of an answer. It being "the times of the Gentiles," he tells them it is right to pay Caesar his tribute, the census or poll-tax money. But they should also render unto God the things that are God's. Thus, what was considered by the Jews a political dilemma—a difficult choice to make—was simply solved in the Master's reply.

Other Scripture testimony plainly teaches that when there is a conflict between the things of Caesar and the things of God, obedience to God has precedence.

Jesus' answer not being anticipated, we are told (v. 22)—

"When they heard these words they marvelled, and left him and went their way."

How wonderful that they marvelled at his wisdom. But how fearful it is that after they marvelled at Jesus' words they left him, for rather than follow the way of his marvellous teaching, they went their own way.

"The same day came to him the Sadducees" (v. 23).

They could not wait. They were so eager to succeed where their religious rivals, the Pharisees, had failed. Their eager and anxious bearing and attitude was to show that "this Jesus—Master, Rabbi, Teacher—escaped your trap, but he will not be able to escape ours, for we will put him to silence!"—

"The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, saying,

"Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother."

It sounds paradoxical to set Scripture against Scripture, but it seems the Sadducees did just that, in accepting Moses as the highest authority, particularly the Law. It is said that "The Sadducees

would allow no appeal to the highly poetic language of the prophets, to whom, at any rate, they attached less authority, but demanded proof from that clear and precise letter of the Law."

The Sadducees proceeded to state their hypothetical case—

"Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother . . ."

And they continued to place before Jesus what they considered a theological dilemma, seven brethren all successively having the same childless wife and last of all the woman dying also. They concluded their case saying—

"Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven—for they all had her"
(vs. 25-28).

This question, like the one about the tribute money, was much discussed and argued among the various factions of Jews and Doctors of the Law. There would be sundry shades of opinion which fell into the principal categories, referred to as "a resurrection to natural things" and "a resurrection to spiritual things." We are told of Rabbi Saadia, who was in favor of the natural interpretation, who reasoned as follows: "As the son of the widow of Serepton and the son of the Shunamite, ate and drank, and doubtless married wives, so shall it be in the resurrection."

These two sons were certainly raised from the dead, one by Elijah and the other by Elisha. And they were truly raised to a natural life. This was true, however, because these two were to resume their natural, mortal life. We do not read of them being raised to eternal life.

As for the Sadducees who said there is no resurrection, the argument they advanced showed that they did not understand the Scripture teaching on this vital subject and that they did, in fact, thereby doubt God's power to raise the dead. We find Jesus answering them—

"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."

This teaching concerning marriage in the resurrection was little known and understood. This was so because even those who believed in the resurrection mistakenly thought marriage would be continued. Along this line of reasoning, concerning the successive marriages of a woman, the question of her status in the resurrection was often argued by those who claimed that the married state would be resumed after the resurrection. Some rabbis taught that "a woman who married two husbands in this world is restored to the first (husband) in the next (world)."

The premise from which such an argument is advanced is false in two main respects, both of which were used by the Sadducees to prove there is no resurrection: first, they thought the natural life would be continued in the resurrection, and secondly, they thought that the Law would still be in force.

Jesus' answer was, in effect, to say that in the resurrection a woman is a free and independent agent, just as a man; the marriage institution discontinued.

We find Jesus taking this opportunity to rebuke the Sadducees' ignorance of the Scriptures on this matter. He says:

"But as touching the resurrection of the dead" (forgetting for a moment the question of marriage involved), "have ye nor read" (in Moses' writings which you mainly quote to support your position) "that which was spoken unto YOU by God" (Who was speaking through Moses, so these are not Moses' words any more than the prophets' words are their own), saying,

"I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? (These are the fathers who will be in the Kingdom but are now in the dust of the earth).

"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (So the fathers' resurrection from the dead to eternal life is sure in the promise and power of God.

"And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine" (v. 33).

The Sadducees thought that Jesus, at best, could merely give his opinion on the matter (but he spoke with authority), which the people could accept or reject according to their position already taken on this subject. Jesus (they reasoned) could not possibly give an answer that would be quite satisfactory to all, no matter what his teaching on this much debated theological question was.

But, like the Pharisees before them, the Sadducees were wrong. On the question of the tribute money, put by the Pharisees, "they marvelled." On this question on the resurrection, put by the Sadducees, "they were astonished." He swept away all their petty quibbles with a higher level of spiritual truth.

"But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they gathered together" (v. 34).

Verse 23 has been interpreted to mean the Sadducees were quick and eager to face Jesus with their question. They could not wait. So also now, if they had any rebuttal to Jesus' answer to their question, they certainly would lose no time in giving it. But none of their pat answers to this question, which they without doubt knew by heart through much experience of debating the issue with the Pharisees—none of their pat answers were voiced in rebuttal. The Sadducees were silenced, a sign of defeat.

But now a lawyer would approach Jesus to try him with a question that was supposed to pose a moral dilemma. The incident here in Matt. 22 is found also in Mark 12, a favourable account of the lawyer or scribe being given. The account in Luke, however, is different, giving an unfavourable picture of the "certain lawyer."

This question, like the previous two already reviewed, was frequently debated among the Jews. There is no difficulty, therefore in it being asked of Jesus more than once in the course of his ministry. In Luke 10:25, we read—

"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

A lawyer was "a teacher or expounder of the Mosaic Law," and his question, with which he was quite experienced, posed a moral dilemma by which Jesus' teaching was to be tested or proven.

Knowing this, Jesus turned the question back to this "expert in the Law," saying unto him, "What is written in the Law? how readest thou?" As much as to ask him, "First state what is written in the Law of Moses on this subject, then give your interpretation of what is written." To which this certain lawyer answered—

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself" (v. 27).

In this answer the man was right, as Jesus says in the next verse. But it has truly been said of this lawyer, that to "theoretical correctness he appears to have been uniting practical disobedience." Therefore, after telling the lawyer, "Thou hast answered right," Jesus adds in this 28th verse—

"This do, and thou shalt live."

That he wanted to be disobedient in the practical application of these two basic commandments appears to be further borne out by what follows. He was "willing," or desired, "to

justify himself," to vindicate his own narrow conception of "neighbor." At least he wished to justify his question on the ground, it was an indefinite issue, on which he believed there was no clear answer in God's Word. Perhaps he tried to justify both himself and his question, when he asked Jesus—

"And who **IS** my neighbor?"

Jesus answered in what is commonly called The Parable of the Good Samaritan, peculiar to Luke. The Jews would not think of receiving good from the hands of a Samaritan because, as it has been pointed out, "The Samaritans appear to have reciprocated the national hostility of the Jews", between whom there were no dealings or social intercourse (See John 4:9).

The man who fell among thieves was, indeed, travelling **DOWN** from Jerusalem (the City of God) to Jericho (the City of Sin). This downward road of some twenty-one miles was the ideal environment for robbers in which to take advantage of travellers and came to be known as "The Bloody Way".

Having been robbed and beaten and left to die, a Priest (representing the Law) passing by, did not help the stricken man nor the Levite (representing sacrifice under the Law).

But one who was despised and rejected of the Jews supplied all his needs at this crucial time: healing care for his present suffering; a sure refuge from further infliction of lasting harm; a message of hope and life; and finally, **the certain promise to return** (Luke 10:35).

When Jesus, at the end of the parable, asked the lawyer—

"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?" —the lawyer does not say, "The Samaritan," but answers in a way by which he avoids the use of that name. In doing so he inadvertently uses a stronger word, giving a more pointed answer, an answer that can be applied in general to God's teaching—

"He that shewed **MERCY** on him."

"Go," said Jesus to him, "and do thou likewise." The lawyer had resolved his moral dilemma by Jesus leading him to the right answer.

But this question was not a dilemma to all Israelites. Those who knew the true spirit of the Law knew the answer. We see an example of the correct answer given by the scribe in Mark 12. For he said to Jesus that to love the One God with all the heart, understanding, soul and strength, and to love one's neighbor as himself "is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices".

To shew mercy was more than the doing of all the works of the Law. The test rested, though, in the **APPLICATION** of love towards one's neighbor which Jesus drives home to the heart, and not merely in giving the correct answer.

"Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God" therefore means, "You know what is required, which is indeed important, but now go and **LIVE** this requirement."

* * *

RETURNING to Matt. 22, Jesus himself poses a dilemma by the question he puts to the Pharisees—

"What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?"

He would now test **their** teaching from Scripture on this point, not because The Christ would not be the Son of David, but because the Scribes spoke of him only as the Son of David and **nothing more**.

That is, was The Christ to be only the descendant of David, making him a mere man? Jesus' reference is to Psalm 110, where David in spirit calls his Son "Lord". But on this question—

"No man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions."

This stopped the "hard questions," the dilemmas, the controversial issues over which factions were formed. If there be any kind of dilemma on any BASIC principle of truth, God's people must turn to His Word to learn the plain statement of facts while, at the same time, they must beware of being deceived by the flesh in giving a private (their own, not a Scriptural) interpretation.

The answer to all such dilemmas—political, theological or moral—must not be an answer to please self or conform to society, but to please God according to His Revealed Word. This is the great lesson we must learn, and guard against ever "unlearning." We must remember the Word of God that we may prove all things and hold fast that which is good. Let us apply this test always. "What is written . . . How readest thou?"
—N.M.

That Blessed Hope

"Live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

THAT is our hope, and the apostle says it is a hope "both sure and steadfast." So much so, it can "be an anchor of the soul." And Paul exhorts—

"Be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which is Christ in you, the hope of glory"
(Col. 1:23).

Surely such a hope should be a source of rejoicing. It has been given to us by the God of hope; and it is centered in the Lord Jesus who is our hope of salvation and everlasting life.

The hope propounded by the theological philosophers of the world is based on principles which they teach will be acceptable at the judgment seat.

But the true Gospel of Christ alone can produce the results such as Jesus and the apostles claimed. A philosophical gospel, developed by fleshly thinking, may satisfy the natural mind, but it carries the certain condemnation as given by Paul—

"But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

The Gospel of Christ can satisfy the heart; and the intellect will be enlightened if the Gospel be received in faith. It will tranquilize and comfort while the world groans in perplexity and fear. The Gospel hope is related to the return of Christ, and we are exhorted by Paul:—

"To STUDY to make thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, being thoroughly furnished unto all good works and meet for the Master's use" (2 Tim. 2:15).

No one can receive that which God has never promised. Men and women may long for certain things, but that will not change God's purpose. Neither Jesus or the apostles taught that death was the entrance to heaven and glory. To them, death was the gateway to corruption; their hope was the return of their Lord and Master.

No one can attain the crown of righteousness until Jesus returns from the far country bringing the rewards with him. Meantime, let our inmost feeling be hope, and the constant desire for salvation; ever giving heed to the words of James—

"Be patient therefore brethren until the coming of the Lord . . . stablish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (5:7).

And having that hope within us, and sharing it together, may it bind us together in love and unity; ever giving thanks to God for the Lord Jesus, through whom our hope has been made possible.

This hope is at present laid up for us in heaven; and if worthiness be realized for each one of us at the return of Christ, we will share in his nature and in his kingdom.

* * *

ABRAHAM manifested that faith which is pleasing to God, "hoping against hope" when all appearance was against it. Truly nothing is too hard for the Lord, yet the idea of Christ's return to many seems fantastic. As they say, what could be less likely to happen than an immortal being should descend from heaven, and with his word raise thousands who have been in the dust of the earth for centuries? But the Scriptures declare (Dan. 12:2):

"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

"And the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms, and it shall stand forever" (Dan. 2:44).

And the hope of all true believers is, that it may come to pass in the near future. This "hope of the Gospel" is not a conglomeration of cunningly devised fables such as the world considers it to be; it is the Truth revealed by God through His servants the prophets and apostles.

On his perilous voyage to Rome Paul tells of his experiences; and he says that hope can be an anchor of the soul. An anchor is a device which when cast into the sea can prevent a ship from drifting. So likewise can hope be an anchor, for **it can keep a believer from drifting to his destruction.**

When seamen cast anchor they know they will be safe if the anchor strikes and holds fast on rock bottom; they have no fear of the ship drifting no matter how the tempest may blow. And so can the men and women who with faith and hope in their hearts, have their anchor sunk deep in the rock foundation of God's Truth. Then can they hold fast and ride out the winds of error and false doctrine. Paul exhorts us to—

"Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free."

And surely the exhortation is much needed today; for there is an adverse tide running strong in Christadelphian waters; and some have been swept off the rock on to the sands of philosophy and "science falsely so-called."

Today, there are many subtle philosophers casting doubts upon the true faith brought to light by our pioneer brethren. Let us heed Jude's words—

"That ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

The apostle warned against some who had crept in, that their word would "eat as doth a canker" (2 Tim. 2:17). Several parables including that of the tares, explains why error and false religions have been divinely permitted to continue in the world and not be rooted out until the day of harvest.

So, we have a lively and a living hope, to which by the mercy of God we have been begotten by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead. The Lord has given us a wonderful and blessed hope; he has promised spirit-power, everlasting life, and a share in his throne, and to rule as kings and priests in his kingdom.

It is a divine promise; and just as surely as he died and rose again, he will fulfil his promise and take us unto himself—IF we are faithful unto the end. It is ignorance and presumption that has prompted men to build up a doctrine contrary to the teachings of the—

"Holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."
Jesus said—

"Salvation is of the Jews."

And our hope is that we be found worthy to become related to the new Commonwealth of Israel. For after the storms of judgment have passed—

"The Sun of Righteousness shall rise with healing in his beams."

Then will all be hushed in the calm of universal peace—

"And the earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord."

Let us wait in patience, looking for that "blessed hope" and the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we all be found worthy to be with the chosen in the day "He maketh up His Jewels!"
—C.H.T.

The Resurrection of the Dead

A FIRST PRINCIPLE OF BIBLE TRUTH

Proving "Heaven-at-Death" Theory Unscriptural

"At that time (the 'time of the end'—11:40) . . . many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to everlasting contempt"—Dan. 12:1-2

- 1. The ACTUALITY and CERTAINTY of a resurrection of the dead.**
(Acts 24:14-15; 1 Cor. 15; Luke 20:37; Matt. 22:23).
- 2. An AWAKENING from SLEEP of DEATH in the dust of the earth.**
(Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; 1 Thess. 4:13; Isa. 26:19).
- 3. The resurrection a FIRST PRINCIPLE of Gospel Truth.**
(Heb. 6:1; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; 2 Tim. 2:18).
- 4. The importance of TRUE UNDERSTANDING for a sound Faith.**
(2 Tim. 2:15-19; 1 Cor. 15:12-17, 34; Rom. 2:16).
- 5. Its VITAL POSITION in the complete divine plan.**
(1 Cor. 15:21-22, 53-56; Luke 14:14; Heb. 6:1-2).
- 6. The ONLY HOPE or way of attaining to eternal life.**
(1 Cor. 15:16-19, 32; Luke 20:37; 1 Th. 4:13; John 6:39; Phil. 3:11; John 5:28-29; Hosea 13:14).
- 7. Resurrection a COMPLETE PROCESS—not just coming out of grave.**
(Heb. 11:35; 1 Cor. 15:52; Phil. 3:11; John 5:28-29).
- 8. The BODY a vital element in the scriptural picture.**
(1 Cor. 6:13-20; 2 Cor. 4:10; Rom. 8:11, 17, 23).
- 9. Eternal life only through GLORIFICATION OF THE BODY.**
(2 Cor. 5:4-10; 1 Cor. 15:44, 53; Phil. 3:21).
- 10. Christ's resurrection the example, proof and guarantee.**
(1 Cor. 15:12, 23; Acts 17:31; 1 Cor. 6:14, 2 Cor. 4:14).
- 11. Clearly taught and believed throughout the OLD TESTAMENT.**
(Acts 2:31, Luke 20:37; Dan. 12:2; Acts 24:14-15; Hos. 13:14 with 1 Cor. 15:55; Isa. 28:5 with 1 Cr. 15:54; Isa. 26:19; Job 14:10-15; Job 19:25-27; 1 Sam. 2:6; Psa. 16:10; 17-15; 21:4; 37:29; 49:15; 61:6-7; 110:4; 133:3; Prov. 12:28; Isa. 53:8-12; Zech. 9:11).
- 12. Resurrection a FUTURE EVENT, at "last day," at Christ's return.**
(Dan. 12:2; Luke 14:14; 1 Thess. 4:13; 1 Cor. 15:23; 2 Tim. 2:18; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8; John 6:39, 44, 40, 54).
- 13. The just and unjust rise TOGETHER: Only the RESPONSIBLE rise.**
(Psa. 49:12-20; Isa. 26:13, 14, 19; Rom. 2:12; Acts 24:15; Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; Matt. 25:31-34, 41).
- 14. Resurrection, THEN judgment, THEN reward; Reward not at death.**
(Luke 14:14; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8.)

Signs of the Times

UPON the death of President Kennedy, a new appraisal of international affairs is in order. Not until the nations involved in U.S. diplomacy can get a better idea of President Johnson's policies can they correctly appraise the course of U. S. policies in relation to international affairs.

True Mr. Johnson has announced that he will follow closely the plans and purposes already outlined by the late President Kennedy, but this is by no means certain. The future course of the U.S. must depend to a large extent on the policies and practices of other nations, particularly Russia. However, the new President has definitely announced that U.S. military forces in Europe will not be reduced; that he will favor a strong NATO force, and uphold present Allied policies relating to Berlin.

WHAT WILL KHRUSHCHEV DO?

THE world is also asking, What will Khrushchev do now? Will he seize on the change of presidents to increase tension and risk war in an effort to obtain favourable concessions? Or will he create an "incident" to test the nerve of the new President?

Both the enemies and the allies of the U.S. are waiting to see how Pres. Johnson will handle the crucial situations which are bound to arise as a result of the change in leadership in the U.S.

Regardless of the speculation, certain things stand out as the most likely course of world affairs. Principles and conditions have not changed, neither can they change. The Most High, Who ruleth in the kingdom of men, is directing the course of world events to a pre-determined end, the gathering of all nations to Armageddon. (Rev. 16:13-16 Joel 3: 9-16).

The nations will continue to "prepare war," and the conditions and the tensions which create war will continue, while the exact time of the great holocaust plunging the nations into a death struggle for world leadership remains a divine secret, and nothing can avert it.

IMMEDIATE PROSPECTS

ALTHOUGH the consensus among world leaders is that tensions have lessened and prospects for world peace have improved, they still recognize that localized "brush wars" will certainly continue indefinitely, and that neither Soviet Russia nor Red China will give up their cherished dreams of eventually communizing the world and thereby attain world domination, which in itself shatters all hopes of permanent world peace. It is also recognized that at least 3 trouble spots remain as cancerous sores on the world body politic which could easily flare into world war:—

Berlin. So long as there is a divided Germany, and Allied armed forces occupy West Berlin, it will be a source of trouble, a "broken tooth" in the mouth of Khrushchev and a state of dangerous tension.

Cuba remains an arsenal for Russian weapons, the training ground and source of arms supply for Communist groups stirring up trouble in Latin-America.

South Vietnam. The core of Red Chinese efforts to take over all S.E. Asia. There is no end in sight for this undeclared war, as the U.S. is determined to pursue the war against the Communist guerrillas to the bitter end, and China shows no intention of calling off her obvious purpose of not only conquering S. Vietnam, but all the surrounding territory.

The general opinion of most military and political experts conversant with the situation is that the effort to save the area from the Communists is falling apart. There is every indication that the war

will be intensified as time goes on. Britain and France advise making a "deal" with North Vietnam, considered the source of guerrilla operations, but the U. S. counters with the argument that any agreement with the Communists is meaningless, as was demonstrated in the Laos affair; that the war would be resumed whenever it suited their purpose.

There are other reasons for disquiet over the future of S.E. Asia. CAMBODIA has ordered 200 American advisers out of the country and cancelled the \$30 million a year U.S. aid program, and has adopted a policy of "neutrality" acceptable to Red China.

In LAOS pro-Communist forces control two-thirds of the country, and 5 assassinations of government officials took place during the year.

NEW AFRICAN NATIONS

When KENYA and ZANZIBAR, British possessions in East Africa, were given independence, Britain relinquished their last colonial possession in East Africa. Both countries will remain in the British Commonwealth. But, as the new nations celebrated their freedom, they were faced with monumental problems, common to all new African nations. They must subdue frontier warfare, check tribal rivalries and resolve economic difficulties.

The CONGO in Central Africa, after 3 years of "independence," shows no sign of improvement, but is rather slipping backward. This is the report from reliable newsmen who have recently visited the area.

In the cities lawlessness reigns, filth accumulates in the streets and a general state of desolation exists, while in the outlying districts tribal warfare rages. One thing that seems common to all the country is a state of fear and helplessness. The improvements made through the hundreds of millions pumped into the country are falling apart.

The situation is described as "quaking chaos." Just another evidence of man's inability to solve the earth's teeming problems and miseries, and the great need for the all-powerful divine Kingdom of peace and righteousness to come.

The Republic of SOMALIA, located at the southern tip of the Red Sea, composed of former British and Italian Somalilands, has suddenly switched from U.S. to Soviet aid in military equipment. Reason for the switch is that the U.S. is limiting shipments of arms to this troubled area while Russia offers to give them all the arms they want.

In addition to the Soviet aid, Somalia has secured a loan of \$20 million from Red China and a gift of \$3 million. Almost overnight Somalia, because of its strategic position, becomes the focus of Communist influence in Africa. In enemy hands it could throttle Britain's ancient "lifeline" through the Red Sea. It is adjacent to Aden, Britain's last great base in the Mideast.

TERROR IN LATIN-AMERICA

WHAT is claimed to be Castro-inspired violence is spreading terror in parts of Latin-America. VENEZUELA is bearing the brunt of this terror. Some of this violence is directed against U.S. representatives and foreign oil and industrial installations. A dispatch from Caracas, capital of Venezuela, states that—

"Scarcely a week passes here without new bloodshed, new sabotage and new threats of trouble."

In spite of the violence, Venezuela is prospering, and the terrorists have suffered a resounding defeat at the polls in the recent election. Although Havana Radio had urged Venezuelans to boycott the election, and Castro-inspired terrorists threatened to shoot anyone appearing on the streets election

day, a heavy vote was cast and the government-favoured candidates were all elected by large majorities.

Now that Castro has shown his hand and has taken a terrific defeat at the polls in Venezuela, many urge that the OAS "crack down" on the Cuban dictator. But there is no talk of using force against him. The movement is limited to a resolution to "investigate" charges that Castro has been sending arms into Venezuela. Even this move was not unanimous, as Mexico abstained from voting. The reason for this reluctance to take drastic action against Castro is fear of bringing on a major war and fear of revolution in their own countries by Castro sympathizers.

And, as one commentator puts it—

"Castro knows that OAS is long on resolutions, but short on action."

And so he is left—

"Free to continue training terrorists for export, moving in on soft spots in Latin- America, kidnapping American officials."

Apparently the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC is the next target, as Havana claims that pro-Castro guerrillas are already firmly based there.

BOLIVIA still totters on the brink of civil war as Communist-led tin miners continue to harass the government by committing sabotage and stirring up trouble generally. The recent kidnapping of 15 Bolivians and 4 Americans in protest against the arrest of two Communist leaders brought the country close to a state of war and revealed the strength of the tin miners' union, as the government had to make concessions to the miners to secure release of the prisoners.

ISRAEL NOTES

A majority of the U.S. Senate demands an end of U.S. aid to Nasser of Egypt, based principally upon the fact that Nasser is using this aid to increase his war effort against Israel and other Mideast nations which are not in agreement with his plan to create an Arab empire for himself.

"The Jewish News," giving an account of the assassination of Pres. Kennedy and the elevation of Lyndon B. Johnson to the Presidency, express great satisfaction over the fact that the new President is and has during his entire political career been a staunch friend of Israel, as his voting record and legislative actions will show. They expect his future course to follow the same line. — O.B.

We are anxious to send the Berean FREE to any desiring it. Do not hesitate to request it. If you know of any who would like it, please send their names.

PRINTED IN U.S.A.
