

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Deceitful Above All Things

"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness."

THE entire scope of human immorality and wickedness is comprehended in these words. Jesus Christ knew the human heart better than any man who ever lived, for (John 2:25)—

"He knew what was in man."

He swept away the hypocrisy and the sham, and revealed man for what he is naturally—a sinner. In scriptural usage the heart is taken to represent the natural affections, passions, emotions and feelings.

The Saviour's words teach a lesson that is common in the Scriptures, but foreign to human thinking and absent from nearly all human literature. It is that man's nature is innately evil and, if left to "the thoughts of his heart," his tendencies invariably turn to lawlessness, immorality and any or every kind of wickedness; the final result, savagery and anarchy.

The first place where the word "heart" is used in the Scriptures is Gen. 6:5, where—

"God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Here we have wickedness described in full and universal development, where evil was not only prevalent, but their every purpose and desire was to do evil.

Thus by following their natural thoughts and desires, **having abandoned all divine guidance**, they had become utterly corrupt before God, fitted only for destruction.

The human heart does not have the capacity, in its natural state, to develop a godly character. Unless, either directly or indirectly, affected by scriptural principles, the universal tendency is to walk—

"According to the **course of this world**, fulfilling the **desires of the flesh** and of the mind . . . without God in the world" (Eph. 2:1-12).

However, although the human heart in its natural state tends only to lawlessness, under the influence of divine instruction it has the capacity to undergo a change, be purified and reversed in its tendencies, no longer the source of evil thoughts and desires. Having thus been "purified BY FAITH" (Acts 15:9), the child of God's continual prayer is—

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Psa. 51:10).

For a "change of heart" to take place in the true scriptural sense, there must be created in the mind of the believer an entirely new and different disposition, an entirely new and different mode of thinking and feeling — "a NEW MAN, created in righteousness and true holiness"—his life no longer controlled and motivated by the natural, fleshly, evil thoughts proceeding from the natural heart.

—O.B.

WE BELIEVE that anything flavouring in any degree of the worldly spirit of "copyright," restriction or proprietorship in relation to written matter in exposition of the Word of God is contrary to Scripture and the spirit of Christ.

EDITORIAL

The Fear of the Lord

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the holy is understanding"
— Prov. 9:10

HOW refreshing it is to be reading once again from the Book of Proverbs—a book in which divine ideas, principles and affections abound; a book through which wisdom flows like the cool waters of the brook in springtime. If we are mentally exercised each time we read from the Word of God, then we will be strengthened and encouraged as we proceed along the narrow path that leads to the Kingdom of God.

The purpose of the Proverbs, presented to us through the spirit-inspired labor of Solomon, is expressed in the opening chapter (vs. 2-4)—

*"To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;
"To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;
"To give subtlety to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion."*

If a person permits the Proverbs to have their desired effect, then, says Solomon—

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels."

But here is where we must exercise sound judgment, for Paul reminds us that "knowledge puffeth up" (1 Cor. 8:1). That is, it has the tendency to make one proud and haughty. Paul warns against this more than once, especially in Rom. 12:16, where he says—

"Be not wise in your own conceits."

In Prov. 26:12, we are sharply reminded that—

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him."

This may seem like a contradiction, when in one place we are urged to "cry after knowledge," "to search for it as for hidden treasure," and in another place we are told that "knowledge puffeth up."

There must be a solution. There is, and it is found in the words of Jesus in Mark 10:15—

"Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

An earnest desire and search for truth is essential, but it must be based upon humility, meekness, and gentleness as exhibited in the life of Jesus. The door will be closed to us if we are arrogant, haughty, self-asserting and contentious like the Scribes and Pharisees were towards Jesus.

It is possible for one to have an exaggerated opinion of his knowledge and understanding of the Word of God, and feel that he is the only one who has the right answers to all questions; but we believe the danger is not so great as it is when one becomes filled with the wisdom of this world.

Then he begins to question the wisdom of God, and many things that are written in the Word. Looking at divine things from his own puny viewpoint, he cannot understand how God did certain things, so he begins to look for a solution based upon man's wisdom.

The wisdom of this world has reached a high standard in many things.

Many of us are thoroughly fascinated by what man has accomplished. However, the place for the world's wisdom is in the world, and that is where it should be kept.

When man, because of his worldly wisdom, attempts to explain the early chapters of Genesis, or any other part of the Bible from the "scientific" viewpoint, he is **completely out of his element**. This is incontestably clear from what Paul has to say in 1 Cor. 1:25-29—

"The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men . . . God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty . . . that NO FLESH SHOULD GLORY in His presence."

Brother Roberts, writing on the subject of wisdom, has well said;

"A man might understand all the mysteries of the universe without being a whit nearer salvation than the ignorant lout. His knowledge would merely be a knowledge of what exists, and a knowledge of this may be of service as regards present convenience and health; but it cannot be turned to any account in changing a man's own constitution and averting the law of death, which overshadows all life, as at present manifested in the world."

After explaining the purpose of the Proverbs, Solomon says—

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."

Summing up the whole duty of man, he says in Eccl. 12:13—

"Fear (reverence) God, and keep His commandments."

Therefore, the reverence, or veneration, of God is the beginning of the knowledge of divine wisdom. Without the reverence of God, His commandments have no place in our lives. In order to keep the commandments, there must be a MOTIVE power, and that which supplies the impelling force is "The fear — reverence — worship — of God."

The wisdom of God, as revealed in the Bible, does not come to us in a natural way. It must be sought after as one searches for hidden treasure. Solomon brings this forcibly to our attention in the opening verses of chap. 2, and then adds (vs. 10-11)—

"When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee."

We all have an imperfect conception of what we think is right, and how we ought to walk and talk. But divine wisdom has far better ideas than we have.

Our thoughts are the expressions of the natural mind, but wisdom's thoughts are the expressions of the Spirit.

If we follow wisdom, we will find the knowledge of God; we will understand righteousness, judgment, equity and every good path.

If we allow ourselves to be guided by the Word of the Spirit, we will think and act in harmony with what is written for our instruction, and, because of that, we will speak forth words that have been seasoned with salt, or as we read in Prov. 16:24—

"Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones."

Let us, therefore, exercise the power we possess to understand all we can about the Word of God, and comprehend its meaning. What we accomplish in understanding the Word, will depend upon the amount of energy and prayerful effort we expend in reading.

Much has been done for us by bro. John Thomas in his books Elpis Israel and Eureka. We can find no better teacher, for he comes to us with a full assurance of hope, and directs our minds to the Word of God in a manner unequalled by any other man since the apostles fell asleep.

—Editor

Further Indication of Reunion Unsoundness

IN the former Advocate-Suffolk (now Central) magazine, "Glad Tidings," 3 January, 1964 issue, pg. 8, the following occurs in an article by one of the regular editors:

"Here, then, is a clear directive that it is only those IN CHRIST who awake from the sleep of death. It is only those who have believed the TRUTH of the Gospel and who have become associated with Christ in the divinely appointed way—by immersion—who will be resurrected."

This is a clear and uncompromising expression of the unfortunate Advocate heresy of the non-resurrectional-responsibility of unbaptized wilful rejectors that caused faithful brethren to stand aside over 60 years ago, in order to preserve the Truth.

This article not only boldly and uncompromisingly advocates basic error, but it greatly weakens the power and appeal and reasonableness of the Truth to thoughtful people by claiming that 2 passages (1 Cor. 15:22 & 1 Thess. 4:13-16) give a "clear directive" for the error which to any unprejudiced observer do no such thing. This is how crotchets weaken the Truth and turn away Truth-seekers.

This magazine carries the imprint of, and is distributed widely to the alien by, several former Berean ecclesias.

We believe the amalgamations of 1953 and 1957-58 were arranged with all sincerity and good intentions. We further believed then, and far more than ever believe today, that they were a terrible mistake, and in violation of sound scriptural principles of truth and fellowship.

We believe the Endeavour magazine has clearly manifested this over and over, and we believe the above item from another Central magazine confirms the fact that truth and unity have been sacrificed to numbers and union.

We fervently pray that this evidence of the unsoundness of the Berean-Advocate-Suffolk-Central amalgamation in particular, and all broad, majority-vote amalgamations in general, will cause some former Bereans (and some thoughtful Centrals) to re-examine their course in the light of eternal realities.

We all err repeatedly, and we pray for enlightenment and forgiveness. It is no dishonour to recognize that we have erred and to be large-minded enough to put matters right. But to recognize our error, and to hesitate through pride or association or convenience to correct it, is dishonour indeed.

We plead with all former Bereans to prayerfully reconsider their course. These are matters involving our eternal salvation. We dare not let pride stand in our way. Were the old standards of fellowship, clearly recognized and honoured since the days of bro. Roberts, right? Or is the "New Thought" right, which is so far from the old position, and so much closer to the apostate churches of the world?

Those pushing this "New Thought" may not be responsible, for they may never have known or understood the Truth, but what of those who do know better, and still allow themselves to be swept with the tide? How will they stand at the judgment seat?—

"To him that KNOWETH to do good, and doeth not, to HIM it is sin."

We would heartily and eagerly welcome back all who are of one mind with us on the vital issues that have been assailed by the "New Thought" (see Berean, July, 1960, pgs. 208-222), and we would joyfully "run to meet them."

The Pre-Adventual Return of the Jews

By BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

QUESTION: *As we understand prophecy, the land of promise cannot be purchased, nor possessed by a Jew or Jews, before the Lord shall come, for it is to be "trodden down by Gentiles UNTIL their times shall be fulfilled," and then Christ, whose right it is, will come and possess it by right of inheritance. The Jews can never possess that land on any other principle than by right of inheritance. If they can, where in the sacred volume is that right guaranteed?*

If the twelve tribes shall be "redeemed without money," as the word of prophecy predicts, is it reasonable to infer that their city and land must be purchased of their oppressors? These are usurpers, and have held and trodden down the land by mere sufferance; hence no Jew is under any obligation to purchase it of them at any time, and more especially when the time has come when they are suffered to hold it no longer.

We cannot believe that there will be a restoration, "a lifting up of an ensign," or a "re-settlement of the land by the Jews to a limited extent before the battle of Armageddon," or "before Messiah returns."

Isa. 30:17, does not speak of "a lifting up," nor of a "re-settlement" of a "limited" number of the Jews to constitute "an ensign," but it predicts that after they should be wasted or cut off by wars and other judgments for their often-repeated and unrepented sins, as "a tree bereft of branches or boughs" (margin) so they would be "left as an ensign on a hill." Not "an ensign," but AS an ensign that had been deserted by the power that had sustained it.

Precisely in this manner has a small remnant of Judah been "left" in the land of Palestine ever since the nation was cut off and scattered. Isa. 30 and Eze. 39 say nothing about Judah or Israel becoming or being "an ensign," or there being a "re-settlement" of them "to a limited extent" "before Messiah returns," but they do speak of the battle of Armageddon that does not take place until AFTER the Lord comes—and instead of Israel having been gathered to "a limited extent" at that time, v. 28 of the same chapter clearly shows that they will ALL be gathered THEN, for it says —

"I have gathered them to their own land, and have left none of them any more there."

That the great events predicted in Eze. 38 & 39 will take place SUBSEQUENTLY to the coming of Christ, we think we have incontrovertibly proved.

If "no one need expect that appearing to be manifested until a Jewish colony be lifted up as an ensign on a hill," the Bible must plainly reveal the fact. But we say that no such revelation has been made in that book.

Furthermore its infallible testimony is against such a conclusion, for the Jews were to be captives among all the world until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled (Luke 21:21). Then their next, second, or final gathering is not to be a "limited" one to be succeeded by a third, for a third gathering is nowhere promised in the Scriptures.

But a second is (Isa. 11:11), which is to take place AFTER Christ stands as an ensign (Isa. 11:10) and is to embrace the entire remnant of Judah and of Israel "from the four corners of the earth" (Isa. 11:12).

We heartily concur with bro. Thomas, that the recent discoveries of gold in vast amounts in different quarters of the earth indicate that God is making preparation to carry out His purpose as predicted in Isa. 60:17, and other parallel prophecies.

But we are far from supposing that these predictions will have their fulfilments until the Lord shall come, for the heaven is to retain him until the times of restitution, which God hath spoken of by the mouths of all His holy prophets since the world began (Acts 3:20).

Here is an invulnerable point from which we shall do well not to depart: There can be no restitution of either the people, land, or city, in full, or to a "limited extent," until the great Restorer shall come. This he will soon do, for the Gentile times are nearly run out.

ANSWER: My friend's idea is, that there will be no return of Jews at all (save as they have journeyed thither as pilgrims for ages) before the Lord appears.

We both agree that the Twelve Tribes will be restored to the land promised to their fathers; but he considers it entirely post-adventual, and immediately subsequent to the battle of Armageddon.

I differ from him in believing that **there will be a preadventual limited colonization of the country by the Jews, under the protectorate of Britain**; and that the prosperity of this colony, together with a desire to cripple or subvert the British power in the east, will be the cause of the country's invasion by the Russian "Clay," styled Gog, etc., by Ezekiel.

I consider that this colonization is going on while Russia is engaged in the conquest of the West—while it is mixing with a fragile union the iron leg and toes there with the "miry clay."

The invasion of Israel's land, and conquest of Jerusalem, is the end of the formative process; for then the eastern and western legs and the ten toes are fashioned into feet, being combined together by Russo-Assyrian Clay.

This is the crisis to which things are now working out, and by which a necessity is created for the appearing of the Lord.

The Anglo-Jewish colony is just "an element in the situation." It is planted in Palestine in the interests of Britain, providentially as an ingredient in the bait to tempt the Gog nation to come up to battle against Jerusalem, that the Lord may—

"Plead with them there for His heritage Israel."

The invasion will be a time of great trouble to the colony—

"Two parts in the land will be cut off and die; but the third part shall be left therein"

(Zech. 13:8).

It is this third part that calls upon Jehovah's Name for help. The Lord says, "I will hear them," and in consequence of so doing, descends, and smites the assembled host; and, by Michael, their great Prince, delivers them (Dan 12:1). Then comes the resurrection (Dan. 12:2).

They who cry for help are **in the land**; to be there they must have previously returned; they cry because of the oppressor; they cry of necessity before they are heard; and the oppressor is broken in pieces in answer to their cry.

In the battle of Armageddon, which breaks the feet of the Image, the Jews fight "because the Lord is with them" (Zech. 10:5; 14:14).

These combatant Jews must therefore have returned to Judea before the battle; and consequently before the coming of the Lord, as our friend admits that his advent and the battle are contemporary.

The post-adventual restoration of the Twelve Tribes is a work of time. It will not be consummated till the end of 40 years after the battle of Armageddon. This 40 years occupies the space

between the advent and the commencement of the 1000 years, and affords scope for Elijah to "restore all things," and for Jesus and his brethren to torment "the devil and his angels."

* * *

HOWEVER the colonization be brought about, it will be THE sign of the time indicative of the speedy coming. There are signs that the practised eye can already see; but **that will be a sign, which, if men were not stone blind, no one could fail to discern aright.**

It is just because the colony I speak of will NOT possess the land by faith (which is what, I suppose, my friend means by "right of inheritance") that they are so terribly disturbed in their possession by Gog.

There can be no continued peace and prosperity there for Jew or Gentile, till the land is inherited by right of the covenant dedicated by the blood of its future king.

I do not see the details of the affair in prophecy; but **the colonization itself I perceive without obscurity.** This is the great thing; the measures leading thereto are merely matters of interesting speculations as they arise.

I do not adduce the text in Isa. 30 to prove the settlement of a colony is to be the being "as an ensign on a hill," referred to there; but to show that a small number of Israel, as compared with the whole nation, is in Scripture language likened to "an ensign on a hill" or "a beacon on the top of a mountain."

To be "LEFT as an ensign," and to be "LIFTED UP as an ensign," are different ideas. I speak of the colony being as a pre-adventual ensign. This will be composed of the remnant left (which our friend admits is as a deserted ensign, abandoned by the power that had sustained it), and of the new colonists, whose aggregation to the old remnant does not at all affect its ensign, or beacon, resemblance.

Now before the Lord appears, the fair ensign, so gaily wafting in the breeze under the shadowing wings of Britain, is torn down, and trampled under foot by the Prince of Ros. The silver and gold, cattle and goods, unwallled villages and peaceful dwellings, become a prey to the spoiler.

The "Merchants of Tarshish and the young lions thereof" (Eze. 38:13), that is, the British power, as I have proved in Elpis Israel, threaten and oppose the destroyer in vain.

There is none can save, or lift it up, but the Lord God of Israel. He comes to do this; and when He comes—

"All the men that are upon the face of the land shall shake at His presence" (Eze. 38:20).

The result is the destruction of the army of the Gog-nations, and the setting up of the ensign erect again, no more to be trampled under feet of the Gentiles. Thus—

"The Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of His people; for they shall be as the stones of a crown, LIFTED UP as an ensign upon His land.

"For how great is His goodness and how great is His beauty! Corn shall make the young men glad, and new wine their maids" (Zech. 9:16).

The colonization I termed, "A lifting up of an ensign" (a phrase of common comparison, of course—"as" being understood), to distinguish it from THE lifting up of the Lord, and by the Lord—the former an ensign lifted up by the British power (itself, however, unconscious that the colonization was a sign).

The passage quoted from Ezekiel by our friend proves a settlement of the land to some extent before the advent by implication. The **battle** of Armageddon, which breaks the image, is at the Lord's coming; the **war** which reduces its fragments to chaff, is after his return.

Ezekiel speaks of the battle in particular; and in the conclusion of his prophecy announces the result of the general war, which is not only the comminution of the whole image, but the full accomplishment of the work of restoration, as expressed in the words—

"I have gathered them, unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there . . ." —in the enemy's country.

"They that dwell in the cities of Israel . . ." —who go forth to burn the weapons and bury the slain, are precisely the survivors of that colony residing in the land at the time of the battle, to save whom the Lord strikes the blow. The salvation of this third part by the advent victory is the beginning of deliverance to the whole nation.

It MUST have been pre-adventually settled in the land, or it could not be there to witness the fight. It would be very incongruous for there to be so great a carnage and all the survivors fled, and no Israelites at hand to put Gog's multitude under ground. The circumstances of the case evidently necessitate a pre-adventual settlement to some extent.

True, the Jews were to be "led away captive into all nations," but it does not say that they were all to continue captives in exile, without remission, till the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled.

It is Jerusalem that is to be trodden down of the Gentiles until the fulfilment of their times.

Jerusalem, in the days of the Saracens and Crusaders, became the throne of a kingdom which continued many years. "King of Jerusalem" is one of his Austrian Apostolic Majesty's titles derived from his ancestral relation to that kingdom.

Hence, as in the days of Pontius Pilate, the Jews acknowledged "no other king but Caesar," so now, Caesar, the imperial chief of "the Holy Roman Empire," claims the same sovereignty.

His "rights" will in due time be assumed by the Russo-Assyrian Gog, whence comes his present sensitiveness in regard to the eastern question; so that none, be he Jew, Turk, or infidel, can become Emir, Bey, or King of Judea without having the Autocrat for his inveterate foe. But Britain will see to this in due time.

But a colony, with Jerusalem for its provincial capital, is **still a Gentile dependency**. A Jewish colony, surrounded by the Ottoman, the Russian, the Persian, the Arab, and the Egyptian, could not sustain itself unless protected by a strong maritime power.

It must, therefore, be like Judea under the Persians of old, a province of a Gentile dominion until the Lord shall come.* But its prosperity under the power shadowing with wings (Isa. 18:1) will soon pass away. The Assyrian river will overflow it even to the neck, and breach the very walls of the Holy City, which Sennacherib could not do, for (Zech. 14:2)—

"The city shall be taken."

* This was so under the Mandate, and is still so in effect. Israel's borders are guaranteed by the U.S.

The worst of the Gentiles then trample it in the dust. Its brief colonial well-being will have vanished like a dream; and have given place to a barbaric degradation evincing that the "wickedness" of her captors is indeed "great" (Joel 3:13); for the—

"Houses shall be rifled and the women ravished."

—and half of its inhabitants sent off as prisoners by the enemy. This semi-deportation of the people by the chief of the "all nations" assembled at the siege, characterises the future capture of the city.

Zechariah prophesied after its Chaldean overthrow, and during its restoration under the Persians. He must, therefore, refer to the **future** overthrow. His prediction could not have been fulfilled under Titus, because **all** the people who remained were led away captive; and the city was **wholly** destroyed: whereas the prophet intimates that the city will not be destroyed, in saying that—

"The residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city."

The city therefore remains, and half the Jews with it, earnestly desiring their Messiah to appear and deliver them.

Since the Roman armies (who were the Lord's hosts for the destruction, Dan. 9:26, explained by Matt. 22.7) destroyed it, there has been no siege in which the Jews withstood a Gentile assault. It can therefore only be a future event and contemporary with the going forth of the Lord to "fight against those nations."

He did not fight against the Romans; but on the contrary fought against Judah and Jerusalem until they were destroyed utterly. But in the future siege he will fight against the Gog-armies of the nations—

"As when He fought in the day of battle" (Josh. 10:11).
—in victorious defence of Jerusalem and the Jews of the "third part."

It is "then"—after the coming capture of the city, garrisoned by the Jews and their protectors—that the Lord goes forth with his mighty ones (Joel 3:11, 2 Thess. 1.7), and stands with his feet on the Mount of Olives, the place from which he ascended to "the right hand of power."

His electric tread evokes an earthquake that divides the mount, as a mountain was divided on the west of the city by the earthquake in Uzziah's reign.

All these things characterize the siege and capture as one unexampled in the history of the world. The deliverance of Jerusalem and the fall of Rome are the glorious incidents that mark the fulfilment of the Gentile times.

* * *

IT IS readily agreed that there are but two gatherings of Judah from captivity, and one of the Ten Tribes, which is subsequent to Judah's second, for;

"I will save the tents of Judah first."

But the colonization I speak of will not be a gathering of the tribe of Judah. **The great bulk of the tribe will be shut up in the nations subject to Gog—the north and the south which "keep back" and refuse to "give up."*** But there will be sufficient for British policy forthcoming from other parts.

*Remarkably fulfilled today with Iron Curtain detention of the Jews.

The Lord saves the tribe of Judah, while Elijah is fulfilling his mission with the Ten; which will be perfected by the reunion of the Twelve into one stick in Messiah's hand, by the Lord himself (Eze. 37: 16-28).

The colonization of Judea by Jews under the protection of the Gentile governments, is neither "restitution," "restoration" nor "regeneration." Nothing short of a nation establishment in the land, under Messiah and his brethren, constitutes either of them in the scriptural sense.

Restoration is not simply a return of a race, but the setting up again of institutions that once existed there—the restitution or restoration of the kingdom again to the Twelve Tribes. This is the re-institution or restitution spoken of by all the prophets from Moses to the revealer of the Apocalypse to John.

No Gentile powers can accomplish this, though aided by all the Jews on earth; for the restored kingdom exists under an amended Mosaic code, whose emendation can only be defined, administered, and adapted to the exigencies of the world by the King of Israel himself, and his associate priests and kings.

We must take care not to allow our wishes or desires to lead us to conclusions not in harmony with the testimony and sound reason.

I would have no delay; but I am compelled to confess that there will yet be some.

I see a war among the powers resulting from an antagonism to French ambition, which must precede the battle of Armageddon; the Great City has also to be divided into three parts; and the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's image have to be fashioned into shape out of the materials that exist.

This requires time; and during this time the colony is forming and prospering to tempt the spoiler to his destruction by the Stone power on the mountains of Israel.

—Bro. Thomas, Herald, 1852

1964 Fraternal Gatherings

(If the Lord Will)

HYE, Texas: July 27 to August 2

Write: Bro. C. Banta, 815 Boston Ave., Deer Park, Tex., 77536

TORONTO: October 10 & 11

Write: Bro. G. Gibson, 294 Glebeholme Blvd., Toronto 6, Ont., Can.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA: November 27, 28 & 29

Bro. E. Higham, Ap 2, 1729 Raymond Hill Rd., S. Pasadena, Cal. 91030

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The Divine Sonship of Christ

"The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" — Luke 1:35

By **BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS**

OUR title is a phrase which, notwithstanding its unscripturalness as a matter of words, represents a scriptural idea, namely, that Christ was the Son of God. Some say that he was the son of God by his anointing and resurrection from the dead, but the son of Joseph by natural procreation.

The terrible error of this view is apparent in a variety of ways. There is first the fact that the sonship of Christ was proclaimed **while he was yet in the flesh** (Matt. 3:17; Luke 9:35; John 1:49; 3:16; 5:19-23; 6:69; 10:36). He was the Son of God BEFORE he suffered (Heb. 5:8).

Therefore in determining the sense in which he sustained this character, we must exclude his resurrection from consideration.

His sonship was a fact before he died and rose again. This being so, we must confine our attention to "the days of his flesh" (Heb. 3) in seeking to know what constituted his sonship. Hedged, in this inquiry, within the four walls, as it were, of Christ's mortal life, in what does the Josephite view allege Christ's sonship to have consisted?

It replies: "His anointing."

It does not indicate the authority upon which the anointing of the Spirit is to be considered synonymous with sonship. Saul was the "Lord's anointed" (1 Sam. 24:1); but not a son. David also had been anointed both with oil and Spirit; but he is nowhere styled the son of God.

Jesus was anointed; but he was the Son of God **in addition to this**. That Jesus is the Christ (Anointed), and that Christ is the Son of God, are two separate propositions (1 John 2:22; 5:5).

The prophets were moved by the same Spirit that dwelt superabundantly in Jesus; but he was a Son, while they were not. Witness the distinction observed in Heb. 1:1, that—

"God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, hath spoken unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by A SON."

God spoke in both cases, and by the same Spirit, but the channel of utterance was different. In the one case it was the mouth of the selected sons of Adam, in the other it was a begotten Son of God.

What made him Son of God?

Josephites say: "The possession of the Spirit."

But this cannot be; for the prophets had the spirit as well as he—

"The Spirit of Christ was in them" (1 Pet. 1:11).

According to the Josephite theory, all the prophets were all sons of God, for all had the same spirit. If so, where was the distinction indicated in the words of Paul, and emphasized in Christ's parable of the vineyard?—

"And when the time of the fruit drew near he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruit of the vineyard . . .

"Last of all he sent unto them HIS SON, saying, They will reverence MY SON"

(Matt. 21:34-37).

Let this be read in view of the fact that the prophets were men selected, and inspired by the Spirit, while Jesus was preternaturally begotten of a virgin, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and the distinction is highly intelligible and immensely interesting.

Introduce the Josephite theory, and it is without meaning.

* * *

THAT the Jews regarded Jesus as the natural son of Joseph is rather against the Josephite theory than for it, for Jesus repudiated the views entertained of him by the Jews, and stigmatized them as fleshly. His words are,

"I know whence I came and whither I go, but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

"YE JUDGE AFTER THE FLESH . . . Ye are from beneath. I am from above. Ye are of this world. I am not of this world" (John 8:14, 15, 23).

If Christ was the natural son of Joseph, no signification can be attached to these words that would not also apply to all the prophets and apostles; and then Jesus sinks to a level with them instead of occupying that prominence indicated in the words—

"To him give all the prophets witness" (Acts 10:43).

"Christ the end of the law for righteousness" (Rom. 10:4).

Not only so, but the language addressed to the Pharisees would be strained, unnatural, unsuitable, and extravagant in the last degree, if it merely meant that his teaching (by the Spirit upon him) was superior to theirs. He says—

"I **proceeded forth and came from God**, neither came I of myself, but He sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech?" (John 8:43).

This appeal to the meaning of his words plainly intimates that they had reference to his **individual** origin. They could by no law of language have any other significance.

Of course the Pharisees could not understand them; because judging after the flesh, they believed Jesus to be a mere man—a natural son of Joseph; but in view of the fact that his paternity was direct from heaven, without the intervention of man, we are enabled to see great point in them.

They mean—that is, he **meant** them to mean—that he was the Son of God as distinct from men whose paternity was of the flesh. They accused him of blasphemy in this—

"For a good work we stone thee not: but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (John 10:33).

Compare John 5:18—

"The Jews sought the more to kill him because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but SAID ALSO THAT GOD WAS HIS FATHER, making himself equal with God."

He answered them (Jn. 10:36)—

"Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am THE SON OF GOD."

What a weak and scarcely detectable element of meaning there would be in these statements on the Josephite theory. In fact, it may well be asked if they could have any meaning whatever.

And to this question there could be but one answer, namely, **if the Josephite theory is to be received, John's gospel must be rejected**. The two are utterly irreconcilable.

* * *

THE divine sonship view involves no violence of this kind. Take the New Testament account as it stands, and John's statements fall into the category of intelligible utterances. We have then a rational explanation of the reason why Jesus, in the days of his flesh, assumed the title of the Son of God, which on the other theory is entirely wanting.

According to Luke, the angel Gabriel said to Mary, the mother of Jesus, before his conception (in answer to her question, "How shall this be seeing I know not a man?")—

"The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; THEREFORE also the holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

This is a very satisfactory explanation of the whole matter.

The fact that the gospel occasionally speaks of Jesus as the son of Joseph is no countenance to the idea that he was in reality the son of Joseph. Such descriptions where they occur merely reflect in an historical way the impression that prevailed among the unbelieving Jews.

It is true the evangelists did not correct it; but then it must be remembered that it was not their province, as narrators of Christ's life, to do so. They never step aside from the narrative to discuss the errors of the people. They simply record facts, and in doing this they were bound to make known that in the surprise created by the wisdom and the works of Christ, the people who rejected him, exclaimed,

"Is not this the carpenter's son?"

If we are to say that because they did this without contradicting the view therein expressed, they endorsed it, we must conclude they believed Jesus to be a demonologist, operating under the auspices of Beelzebub; for they record that the Jews said—

"He hath a devil and is mad . . .

"He casteth out demons by Beelzebub the prince of the demons."

And they added nothing to confute the declaration!

But in truth, it was their duty to put these things on record without comment. We have to judge from other sources whether the popular impressions (always loose and inaccurate) were the truth. Against these impressions we have to put Christ's declaration that the Jews judged after the flesh, and did not believe; and the fact that the confession of **enlightened believers** was—

"Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (John 1:49).

Josephism draws its conclusions from the impressions of the mob: it is wiser to seek light at the mouth of Christ himself and at the hands of Christ's actual adherents and companions.

* * *

THOSE who marvel that the evangelists should have suffered the popular imputation to pass without contradiction must remember that the evangelists were not writers of controversial works, standing on a level with the opponents of their doctrines.

Ordinary writers extract truth by argument; and argument **for** admits of argument **against**; and procures for an adverse conclusion the same recognition and attention which we bestow upon that we believe to be the truth. There is no umpire but that of reason. Hence all are on a level and take each other's views into account.

But it was different with the New Testament writers. They had AUTHORITY on their side. Theirs was not a system elucidated by reason as against rival systems standing on the same foundation.

It was TRUTH INFALLIBLE divinely revealed.

Hence they did not stoop to the discussion of popular errors, as we do, who have no authority but the testimony of the written Word to fall back upon.

They stood in dignity and strength upon certain, unquestionable truth. They recorded the impressions of the people on certain points without saying anything about the truth or untruth of them, for the simple reason that the truth of the matter they elsewhere, in the words of Christ and the narrative of his birth, laid down in clear and positive form.

* * *

AS to Christ being styled "The Son of Man," we see in that title an intimation of the fact that he was not of the nature of angels (Heb. 2:16) but of real human stock—Son of Man, though Son of God. This is explained by the fact that though the inception of his being was due to divine impulse, his nature was elaborated from the substance of Mary, as much so as any child is from its mother.

But if the meaning of it be that Joseph was his father, how is he the Son of God? This point has already been brought out.

Josephites ask: "Could Adam have been styled 'Son of Man'?"

Certainly not, because there was no antecedent man-nature from which to evolve him. But what is he called? "SON OF GOD" (Luke 3:38).

This point tells destructively against Josephism. Adam is styled Son of God **because he was the direct product of the Creative Power as distinct from human procreation.**

With this fact in view, we have scriptural light shed on Christ's title as Son of God. His being called Son of Man as well is due to the intervention of human instrumentality by Mary his mother.

* * *

THE genealogies of Luke and Matthew, while apparently giving the descent of Jesus through the line of Joseph, are two separate lines. They coincide from Abraham to David, but here there is a complete divergence.

One line (that of Joseph) proceeds through Solomon and the kings of Judah his successors; and the other (that of Mary) through Nathan the prophet, into a collateral branch of the royal family.

The two lines once more unite in the family of Salathiel, in the days of the Babylonish captivity; but in the days of his grandson they again separate, and do not again approximate until the espousal of Mary and Joseph, with whom all genealogical traces of the line of David terminate.

These facts will be apparent to any one who will take the trouble to write out and compare the two genealogies.

The difficulty with some is that Joseph **appears** to be the terminus of both lines. He is introduced at the end of both lines, but an inspection of the genealogies will show a difference.

As regards Matthew's genealogy, there is no obscurity. It brings the line from Abraham to Jacob, father of Joseph (an interval of 42 generations), and concludes with the words—

"And JACOB BEGAT JOSEPH, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."

This, then, is the line of Joseph beyond doubt. But even this does not favor the view that Joseph was the father of Jesus. The very opposite. It does not say, "And Joseph begat Jesus." It ought to have done so if it was so.

But as soon as it reaches Joseph, it breaks away from the style of phraseology by which the descent of the line is previously traced, and introduces Joseph, not as the father of Jesus, but as "the husband of Mary."

It isolates Joseph from all connection with Christ's paternity, by declaring that of Mary was Jesus born, and that Joseph was merely her husband.

This shows the object of this genealogy, and suggests an answer to the question—

"Why was this line given if Joseph were not the father of Jesus?"

As the husband of Mary, Joseph was legally one with Mary. The two were made "one flesh" by marriage. Hence, in a legal point of view, Jesus was the son of Joseph by being the son of Mary, and through Mary inherited the lineage and rights and titles of Joseph.

Had any other than a son of David been the husband of Mary, it would have interfered with the legal and blood relationship of Jesus to David.

Jesus would not in ALL respects have been the son of David. His relationship would have been obstructed by the legal power of the husband over the wife.

It was necessary that the husband of Mary should be the son of David as it was that Mary should be a descendant of David; for if it had not been so, Christ's legal rights under the covenant made with David would have been destroyed.

But by both father and mother being "of the house and lineage of David," the natural and legal proprieties and necessities of the case were preserved, in spite of the marvel of Christ's supernatural begetting. Hence, the genealogy of Matthew is of the utmost value in showing that Joseph is descended from David.

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

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.

Elect According to Foreknowledge

“And if ye call on the Father, Who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear”—1 Pet. 1:17

FIRST PETER, CHAPTER ONE

V. 1: *"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ."*

Do we realize how fortunate we are in being able to read a letter with such an author as this—an apostle of Jesus Christ—one sent by the Lord himself to preach and teach the way of salvation? The Lord told him:

"Feed my sheep . . . Feed my lambs" (John 21:15-17).

That is what Peter is doing in this epistle, and what he says herein is as important to us as if the Lord Jesus wrote the words himself; for Jesus said—

"He that heareth you, heareth me."

We might wonder why such strong words of exhortation as Peter gives us would be necessary when the mighty works of God that were done through the work of Jesus and the apostles, were so recent—when only about 25 years had passed since some of them had seen the Lord after his resurrection from the dead.

Would not their faith and anticipation still be aflame with the promise of his second coming to “restore again the kingdom to Israel” and give eternal inheritance to his disciples?

One might feel that the whole body of believers of that day would be knit closely together in true love and devotion, serving the Lord with one accord and with one mind.

But there are things that we must remember before we come to such a conclusion: the flesh and the world of Peter's day were similar to what they are today. Paul says—

"In the flesh dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18).

And of the wisdom of the world it is said (1 Cor. 3:19)—

"The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

Most, if not all, those who are turned away from the Lord to shame and the second death, in the day of judgment, will have lost the race for eternal life **because of the influences of the flesh and the world warring in them against the mind of the Spirit.** John says—

"All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:16).

Peter addresses the saints (v 1.) as "strangers scattered." But these are not strangers "from the commonwealth of Israel," they are strangers in the world of their day, like Abraham, of whom it is said—

"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God" (Heb. 11:9-10).

* * *

V. 2: "*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.*"

Elect simply means chosen. They were called, or chosen, of God for His purpose in Christ. Jesus said—

"No man can come unto me except the Father, Who hath sent me, draw him" (John 6:44).

Yes, the calling is of God; for He "**seeketh** such to worship Him" (John 4:23).

But to make this calling and election sure, we must "give all diligence in allowing the moulding and directing influence of God and His Word to have their perfect work in our lives. We must close out all other things that defile.

When Peter speaks in v. 2 of the foreknowledge of God in connection with the election of the saints, he does not mean to infer that this foreknowledge in any way affects the free will of man. James says—

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

And of Christ, Peter says—

"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" (v. 20).

God did know that the Lord Jesus would render faithful obedience unto the death on the cross, but we know that the trials and sufferings of the Lord were real and voluntary, and that his free will was in no case interfered with.

He could have escaped the suffering if he had so desired; but his love for God and those he came to save from death constrained him, like Moses, "to suffer affliction with the people of God" rather than "enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

God's purpose of redemption through him was always before his mind to carry him through to victory, as when he said—

"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?"

But he must NOT fail, for—

"How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that **THUS IT MUST BE?**"

* * *

V. 3: "*Begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*"

Peter knew that Jesus rose from the dead. He had seen him many times after his resurrection; he had been with the others on the Mount of Olives and watched Jesus as he was taken up into heaven. There he heard the words of the angels, who said—

"This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, SHALL SO COME IN LIKE MANNER as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

No wonder Peter could say—

"We have not followed cunningly devised fables!" (2 Peter 1:16).

It is not possible for evidence to be presented in a stronger and more convincing way than the resurrection of Jesus had been presented to Peter.

* * *

V. 4: "*To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.*"

How different and more glorious is such an inheritance from anything to be obtained in the present world! We can see why Christ turned down the offer of all kingdoms of the world and the glory of them—

"All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

Where are all these great kingdoms now? They have passed away, and so will all the present systems of world dominion—

"The fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor. 7:31).

Let us pass the time of our sojourn here in fear, as Peter admonishes us for, like the apostle Peter, we do have this sure hope of an enduring inheritance. —W.J.P.

God Is My Salvation

"The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord. He is their strength in the time of trouble"
—Psalm 37:38

IT IS well that we draw aside from a world that is filled with fear and apprehension. The events of the past months and years have forced upon the mind of even the most thoughtless, the difficulties of the times in which we live. When the representative heads of nations have visited one another, the hopes of the people would rise in the belief the threatening war clouds would vanish and there would be peace.

But these meetings only aroused a spirit of jealousy, and no progress was made. Several unfortunate incidents took place that sent a wave of dismay throughout the world. It seemed as if an unseen hand was guiding matters, frustrating man's efforts for peace without righteousness. And so it truly is, for the Spirit declares throughout Daniel—

"The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men."

And we have the words of God in Isaiah 45:7—

"I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things."

And in Amos 3:6, we are told—

"Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"

So the hand of God is in all affairs relative to the nations of the world. Men may try, but lasting peace by men is doomed to failure. But it is a reminder to us to consider the signs of the times;

and how a trifling incident could bring an invasion of Palestine, leading to the great day of God Almighty.

The nations realize their difficulties, but their methods do not change; so the situation will have new threats leading to the inevitable climax.

The nations may desire peace but they forget the words of Jesus Christ (Matt. 10:34)—

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a sword."

Many have closed their eyes and ears to matters that would benefit the world, preferring sports and pleasures. Therefore the nations are drifting to their destruction. Worldly behaviour confirms the Faith, that there can be no peace until the return of the Prince of peace; and that reminds us that "the day of redemption draweth nigh."

Those who have the Truth are greatly privileged; for while the world is sunk in depression and fear we can rejoice; for the signs show the world is nearing the fulfilment of God's purpose. It should bring a sense of responsibility to us, realizing that we may soon have to give an account of our stewardship.

It is noticeable how these events that cause friction between the nations can turn a thoughtless people to serious thinking, for it can alter the outlook of millions. But when the sense of danger passes, the people return to their pleasures and folly.

The day may be nearer than we think, when our hopes will become reality. When the Lord Jesus is back on the earth again, many of his servants will look at life very differently from now. The real issue then will clearly stand out: eternal life or eternal death? All then will be brought face to face with the solemn words of Hymn 51—

"There is an hour when I must stand before the judgment seat;
"And all my actions, thoughts and words, in trying ordeal meet."

We pray daily for the coming of the Master, and the setting up of the Kingdom. But do we live and think as though we expect a long delay? There is the danger our thoughts can wander to things we would not express in words. There may be some things our hearts are set on, that we would like to do, and we are tempted to put off the reality of the early return of Christ.

But all such thinking can have an ill effect upon our spiritual life and our service for the Truth. The edge of our zeal may become dull, and our urgency to serve Christ can be set aside. So it is wisdom to heed the words of the apostle, that we (2 Pet. 1:10) —

"Give diligence to make our calling and election sure."

Let the international quarrelling of the nations make us none the less eager to work for the Master, but rather more so. Let us avoid the attitude of the mind that prompts one to say—

"The Lord delayeth his coming" (Matt. 24:48).

We are warned this will be a sign among his professed servants in the last days. But rather let the ecclesias foster closeness and fellowship among themselves while there is yet time and opportunity. Wrong attitudes can produce weakness, criticism, and contention, and this is scripturally defined as "Smiting our fellow-servants."

All believers hope for eternal life with its love, joy, and peace which will prevail in perfection; and probation is the time to exert ourselves that we may develop these divine characteristics and so attain to these great blessings. Paul gives wise counsel when he says—

"Herein do I exercise myself, to have a conscience devoid of offence towards God and man"
(Acts 24:16).

Paul had no reservations, no counting the cost. His faith was unfeigned, not a surface faith, but deep in the heart.

One can make an outward show of serving, yet have impure motives not realizing their position or their responsibility before God. When we allow the thinking of the flesh to dominate our mind, then the trouble begins; and the apostle warns (I Tim. 1:6)—

"That some have swerved and turned aside into vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm."

There are various ways in which stumbling blocks may be set before us in our walk in the Truth; and one can be guilty today just as in the days of Israel. And God sees and knows today just as He did in the days of Israel. And punishment may come as it did then, in whatever form God may choose.

It may sound very pious to say, "The Lord will provide." And truly He will. But we must help, we must do our part diligently, and in the right spirit. Only then can we expect God's blessing to be on our efforts.

So let us consider: What shall we think? What shall we say? What shall we do? All the signs remind us that the day draws near when the rewards will be given to the faithful. And if we are found worthy we shall be led into the Land of Promise by a greater Captain than Joshua; following the way as did Israel many centuries ago. For then it shall be a time of conquest, and Judah and Jerusalem shall be saved.

Then shall the accepted be made strong perfect beings, immortal and equal with the angels; and the glories of the Kingdom shall be before us. Then shall we rejoice, having received the gift of eternal life bestowed through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us ever pray we be found worthy of a place in that glorious Kingdom, that we may see the King in His beauty. So may our faith and our works be pleasing to God; that we may be able to say with the prophet Isaiah (12:2) —

"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation."

"So may we now be wise while still that hour's in future stored.

"And live acceptably to him who is our Judge and Lord."

—C.H.T.

Divers Seed

"Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds, lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled" — Deut. 22:9

THE lesson is clear. The principle is unmistakable. Jesus said—

"The SEED is the Word of God."

And Paul declares—

"If any man preach any other Gospel, let him be ACCURSED!"

Hard words indeed, but they are not ours; they are the necessary words of warning from God.

In all the world, there is no hope of life except in the True Seed. Whoever contributes in the slightest way to the contamination of that Seed is a murderer, however exalted his intentions may be.

This is a matter of life and death. Very, very few things in this world really matter or are important, but here is one that is vital.

Whoever we cannot conscientiously welcome to the table of the Lord has another gospel. We dare not encourage them, nor bid them Godspeed.

It is neither kindness to them nor ourselves, nor faithfulness to God to allow the seriousness of the issue to be lost in a haze of ill-advised fraternization. We are stewards and custodians of something far more important than ourselves.

Great plainness of speech is called for, although at the same time great kindness and forbearance.

By His Own Blood

"Through his own blood he entered in once for all into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption" — Heb. 9:12

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men" (Rom. 5:12).

"Through the offence of one, many be dead" (v. 15).

"Judgment was by one to condemnation" (v. 16).

"By one man's offence death reigned" (v. 17).

"By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation" (v. 18).

"By one man's disobedience many were made sinners" (v. 19).

THE above quotations teach that death came upon **all men** through Adam—that condemnation came upon the **whole race** by the offence of one man, Adam—that the consequences of Adam's sin passed through him to all his posterity—that "in Adam all die" (1 Cor. 15:22).

This is the "breach" (as a question expresses it) between God and the human race. Christ's mission was to heal that breach and reconcile the race to God. If we carefully examine all Paul's teachings on this subject, we shall find that all the advantage for us of Christ's sacrifice hinges upon the fact that he was **one of us** "in all points" and under the **same condemnation** that Adam brought upon the race.

Christ was one of the race which, **as a race**, was separated from God by the defilement caused by Adam's sin, and only as one of that defiled race could he fulfil the requirements for that race's redemption.

Christ was a man, born of a woman, born of the flesh. It would naturally follow, even in the absence of any other testimony, that he was subject to the same constitution and racial condemnation as the rest of mankind—that he had the same law of sin in his members as Paul and everyone else had. Condemnation came upon **all men**, and Christ was a man.

But we are not left to infer this. It is very clearly and definitely stated. It is put forward as an absolute necessity that he should be—

"Made in all points like his brethren . . . to make reconciliation for sin" (Heb. 2:17).

This fact is the **very basis and foundation** of all Paul's reasoning upon the subject. Consider the following points—

1.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil.

"Wherefore IN ALL THINGS it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren"

(Heb. 2:14-17).

There are two points here.

First: the **fact**—

"Made in all points like his brethren."

Second: the **reason**—

"That he might destroy the devil."

Paul says it was necessary for him to take part of the same flesh and blood in order that he might destroy the devil by death. We know that the devil is sin in the flesh. Jesus had to **have** sinful flesh in order to **overcome** sinful flesh, and by dying to **destroy** sinful flesh. Is not this the very strength of Paul's whole argument?

2.

"He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to SAVE HIM FROM DEATH, and was heard in that he feared" (Heb. 5:7).

NOTE: "To save him from death." He was saved from death by his godly fear and obedience.

3.

"He needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, FIRST FOR HIS OWN SINS, and then for the people's: for THIS HE DID ONCE, when he offered up himself ."

(Heb. 7:27).

The simple and obvious meaning of this is that he offered once **for his own sins** and for the people's. The force of this is sometimes evaded by objecting to the expression "his own sins," inasmuch as Christ was free from personal transgression, but by an examination of the ordinance to which Paul refers, we find (Lev. 16) that the high priest offered (v. 16)—

"Because of the **uncleannesses** of the children of Israel AND because of their transgressions."

So "sins" in this passage in Hebrews includes uncleanness as well as actual transgression; it includes the whole conception of the sin constitution. It is only by considering these two aspects of sin as inseparable parts of one whole that we can understand how Christ, by destroying the body of sin on the cross, could cover our transgressions.

Our sins are not something separate from our nature—they are a development of it. In us, sin is too strong for us and becomes manifest in our actions: in Christ sin was controlled and overcome and never became manifest in action. But in both cases it is the same battle with the same adversary.

4.

"BY HIS OWN BLOOD he entered into the Holy Place" (Heb. 9:12).

We know what the Holy Place signified—the immortal state beyond the veil of the flesh; and Christ entered it "BY" (RV: through) **his own purifying, sacrificial blood**. Then Paul continues—

"Having obtained eternal redemption."

He entered having obtained eternal redemption **by his own blood**.

The spurious "for us" in italics in the Authorized Version is incorrect and is omitted in the Revised Version. The lexicons tell us that the verb "obtained" is in the middle voice, indicating reflexive action, that is, it means "**having obtained FOR HIMSELF**."

This is what one would naturally take from the passage as it stands in English. It is obvious that the translators of the Authorized Version added the "for us" in direct violation of the grammatical meaning and just to support a false theory.

5.

"He was *IN ALL POINTS tempted as we are*" (Heb. 4:15).

How are **we** tempted? Paul says:

"I see a law in my members, warring against the law of my mind" (Rom 7:23).

And James says (1:14)—

"Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

This is how Christ was tempted, and this is what he perfectly resisted and overcame, and this is what he destroyed by death.

6.

"*God sending His Own Son IN THE LIKENESS OF SINFUL FLESH, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh*" (Rom. 8:3).

He had to be in the very likeness of sinful flesh to be in a position to condemn sin in the flesh. Do we question the meaning of "likeness" and seek to weaken this statement by saying likeness does not here mean identity but only apparent similarity? —

Gen. 5:3 — "Adam begat a son in his own likeness, and called his name Seth."

Christ is said many times to **be a man**, and also to be in the **likeness of a man** (Phil. 2:7).

7.

According to Jesus' own testimony (John 3:16), *he was the antitype of the brazen serpent that Moses erected in the wilderness* (Num. 21:9).

What did this symbolize? How did this typify Christ?

That which **caused** death was lifted up as a type of **sin's body** being crucified and forming the basis of reconciliation for all who look toward it. Paul refers to this when he says (Rom. 6:8)—

"Our old man is crucified with him, that the **body of sin** might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

Christ overcame and crucified our master, sin-in-the-flesh, and delivered us from his service. He raised up the body of sin on the cross just as Moses raised up the serpent, exhibiting and condemning that which brought death, and those who look upon him are delivered.

8.

"Almost all things are by the Law purged with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission.

"It was necessary, therefore, that the PATTERNS of things in the heaven should be purified with THESE (animal sacrifices), but the HEAVENLY THINGS THEMSELVES with BETTER SACRIFICES than these" (Heb. 9:22).

Now we know that all the Mosaic pattern points forward to Christ. Consider Lev. 16:15-19—

"The high priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the **Mercy-seat** and he shall make atonement for the holy place . . .

"And he shall **make atonement for the Altar**, and he shall sprinkle blood upon it, **and cleanse it.**"

What is the antitypical fulfilment of the cleansing of the Mercy-seat and the Altar by blood? What is signified by this? Who is it that was typified by the Mercy-seat and the Altar?—

"God set him forth to be a **Mercy-seat**" (Rom. 3:25).

"We have an **Altar** whereof they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle" (Heb. 13:10).

Christ is the Mercy-seat and Altar, cleansed by his own blood from the uncleanness of sinful flesh.

9.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the (Mosaic) Law, being made a curse for us, for it is written —

"Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree" (Gal 3:13).

He had to **come under** the curse of the Mosaic law, reasons Paul, **in order to redeem** those under that curse. Is not this parallel with Paul's declaration that he had to be flesh and blood in order to destroy the Adamic curse? He had to **come under** it in order to destroy it **in himself**, and open a way out of it **for himself**, and for all those who united themselves with him in the appointed way.

The Adamic curse he came under by birth as we all do. The Mosaic curse he came under, as Paul says, by the manner of his death—both without the loss of his personal righteousness.

10.

ALL who took part in the ceremonial and typical processes under the Mosaic Law were themselves defiled in so doing (See Num. 19:7-10, etc.).

What is this intended to teach? Does it not typify the fact that the one whom all these things represented was **defiled** by the process required for cleansing the human race from sin, and had to be **cleansed himself**?

11.

"He was made sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21).

In what way was he "made sin," other than as Paul explains by partaking of the same flesh and blood as the children, in which the law of sin reigned?

12.

"Who his own self bare our sins IN HIS OWN BODY on the tree" (1 Pet 2:24).

In what way did he bear our sins "in his own body," except as Paul explains by partaking of sinful flesh, bearing "in his body" the root and tendencies of sin which he conquered and subdued.

"In his own body" establishes the connection between him and us. He was **one of** the defiled race. Therefore he could be accepted by God as **representing** the race.

If God had exacted a penalty from someone upon whom it did not rightly fall, this would be neither justice nor love. But when God especially provides and strengthens **one of the race**, and enables him to fulfil the conditions which all (including himself) should fulfil, and then is willing to receive all the rest on the basis of an identification with this one perfect example and sacrifice—there indeed is both love **and** justice demonstrated with beautiful and unsearchable divine wisdom and power!

13.

"God . . . BROUGHT AGAIN FROM THE DEAD our Lord Jesus BY THE BLOOD of the everlasting covenant" (Heb. 13:20).

Here is another key statement of great importance. Jesus was brought from the dead **by his own blood**.

14.

Jesus was the effectual SUBSTANCE of the SHADOWS of the Mosaic Law.

HE did ACTUALLY what THEY did SYMBOLICALLY. They could not take away sin, Paul says, because they were only symbols, only types. Christ was the actual fulfilment. He **actually** "destroyed the body of sin" (Rom. 6:6). He **actually** destroyed the devil (Heb. 2:14).

If he did not do this ACTUALLY, in himself, then his sacrifice was no more efficacious than those under the Law. He too dissolves into merely another symbol, merely another shadow.

To **actually** destroy the body of sin he had to **have** the body of sin. To **actually** destroy the devil in himself, he had to **have** the devil in himself, THEREFORE—

"He also himself likewise took part of the SAME, **that** through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death."

The whole plan of salvation is based upon the fact that Christ was ONE OF US—the seed of the woman—one of the condemned race—"A **man** made strong" (Psa. 80:17).

In redeeming himself he redeemed all who accept him as their head and make themselves one with him by baptism. Adam fell and involved the whole race in his ruin. Christ, as one of the fallen race, leads it back to God by his acceptable life and sacrificial death.

The "breach" between Christ and God, if one choose to put it that way (it is not really a scriptural expression or mode of thought) was involved in the fact that for his work to be effective for us, he had to be—

"Made in all points like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17).

He had to "also himself likewise take part of the same" flesh and blood as the race he was to redeem (Heb. 2:14). To remove the curse he had to come under the curse—to remove the condemnation he had to come under the condemnation.

He was not a **substitute** FOR us, as the orthodox churches of Christendom teach; he was a **representative** OF us, and to be such he had to be truly one of us, made "in all points like unto" us, that God's righteous law might be vindicated in him, and we might escape from it by coming under the shadow of **his** escape, by becoming one with him.

The following 10 statements, outlining 4 points of error and 6 of scriptural truth, are the basic tenets of the Christadelphian beliefs regarding the sacrifice of Christ:

FOUR ERRORS TO BE REJECTED

1. That the nature of Christ was not exactly like ours.
2. That the offering of Christ was not for himself, and that Christ never made an offering for himself.
3. That Christ's offering was for personal sins or moral impurity only. That our sins laid on Christ made him unclean and accursed of God, and that it was from this curse and this uncleanness that Christ needed cleansing.
4. That Christ died as a substitute; that is, that he was punished for the transgression of others and that he became a bearer of sin by suffering the punishment due for sins.

SIX STATEMENTS OF TRUTH

1. That death came into the world extraneously to the nature bestowed upon Adam in Eden, and was not inherent in him before sentence.
2. That the sentence defiled him (Adam) and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity.
3. That the word "sin" is used in two principal acceptations in the scriptures. It signifies in the first place "the transgression of law," and in the next it represents that physical principle of the animal nature which is the cause of all its diseases, death and resolution to dust.

4. That Jesus possessed our nature, which was a defiled, condemned nature.
 5. That it was therefore necessary that Jesus should offer for himself for the purging of his own nature, first, from the uncleanness of death, that having by his own blood obtained eternal redemption for himself, he might be able afterward to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him.
 6. That the doctrine of substitution, that is, that a righteous man can, by suffering the penalty due to the sinner, free the sinner from the penalty of his sin, is foreign to the scripture and is a dogma of heathen mythology. —G.V.G.
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If Any See His Brother Sin

"If thy brother shall trespass, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone" — Matthew 18:15

I HAVE omitted the words "against thee." Some early manuscripts do not contain them.* And the text with the omission appears to me to read more in harmony with other parts of the Scriptures.

* The 2 BEST manuscripts, Sinaitic and Vatican, omit "against thee."

This is an affirmative answer to the question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" and fixes grave responsibility upon every brother of Christ.

The injunction to warn the wicked is as binding upon us as it was upon Ezekiel, and the omission on our part to give warning to a righteous man who may turn from his righteousness and commit iniquity, will bring us under the same condemnation as would the prophet's neglect (Eze. 3:17-21).

Yes! We shall certainly be answerable to Christ for our attitude toward our brethren, and as to how we have performed that part of Christ's service due to them.

If we can get this idea firmly implanted in our minds, our duty will be easily recognized, and our service in this direction rendered much easier.

It is a command of Christ of PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE that we—

"Love one another."

"Let love be without dissimulation."

"Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love" (Rom. 12:9-10).

"Seeing ye have purified your soul in obeying the truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of brethren; see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pet. 1:22).

"ABOVE ALL THINGS, HAVE FERVENT LOVE. AMONG YOURSELVES, FOR LOVE SHALL COVER A MULTITUDE OF SINS" (1 Pet. 4:8).

This is the most vital principle in the whole counsel of God.

Love is the only present existing principle among us that will continue eternally (1 Cor. 13:8). Its claims are inculcated and reiterated more emphatically, and frequently, than those of any other principle. This certainly is not without significance.

"Love is the fulfilling of the law; he that loveth another; hath fulfilled the law"

(Rom. 13.8-10).

"Let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (John 4:7-8).

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

"And this is the commandment that we have from Him, THAT HE WHO LOVETH GOD LOVE HIS BROTHER ALSO" (John 4:20-21).

Owing perhaps to our aggressive attitude in contending earnestly for the Faith, we are liable to overlook, or underestimate, the superlative importance of this principle.

We are frail, and whilst building up one side of our spiritual fabric, we may unconsciously allow another to suffer from the stress brought to bear upon it.

* * *

THIS golden thread of love runs through all God's revelation: from Adam to Christ: from Christ to John. Without it we are positively NOTHING (1 Cor. 13:2). It was inculcated under the Mosaic dispensation.

"Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him. **Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thy self**" (Lev. 14:17-18).

"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death" (1 John 5:16).

"Love suffereth long, and is kind; is not easily* provoked: thinketh no evil: beareth all things (or covereth the faults of others), and endureth all things" (1 Cor. 13:5-7).

* "Easily" is not in original: RV omits. Love is NOT provoked.

When the force of these passages is fully realized, and acted upon, the commandments of Christ are sure to have their full place and weight—

"For this is love that we walk after His commandments."

In such cases the offender will not be evilly thought of, or spoken of; for "love covereth all things," and the transgressors' status and feelings will be as fully considered and respected as one's own. Yea! much more so.

Neither will he be visited from motives and feelings personal to the visitor, but solely and purely for the good of the brother who has transgressed. The love of Christ will constrain such an one to seek to uphold the Truth, and to obtain a recognition of its claims, and obedience to its precepts.

With the object of gaining, not of sacrificing, his brother, he will, in the spirit of meekness, strive to restore the faulty; and will consider his own imperfections and weakness and consequent liability to fall into temptation and transgression (Gal. 6:1).

Trivial matters of intended disparagement of a brother will not enter or occupy his mind. He will be ready with the cloak of love for human frailties, while serious detraction of a brother he will refuse to listen to, as unworthy of a son of God; and an offence against Christ's law. He will silence the would-be scandal retailer by the admonition—

"Speak not evil one of another, brethren" (Jam. 4:11).

* * *

BUT where he has good reason to think sin exists, he will, in the spirit of love and obedience, immediately communicate with the brother.

A visit made in such a spirit will generally be satisfactory, and bear good fruit. The mere mention of the matter at this right quarter, may immediately show the trespass to be mythical both in motive and action. (What a terrible injustice and trespass if it had been previously talked of to others!)

Or it may reveal the fact that the trespass was committed ignorantly or undesignedly. Exhibition of the Truth's bearings will in such a case be sufficient to show an earnest brother his exact position; and, profiting, by the brother's righteous example, he will be thereby—

"Provoked to love and good works."

The offending brother is thus benefited: and the Truth is upheld, and Christ is glorified.

On the other hand, enquiry may show the matter of offence to have a grain of truth in it, and a bushel of misrepresentation. Side-shaking of the head, and unintelligible hints, which may mean almost anything, and help to convey sly innuendoes, may have made a mountain out of the original mole-hill.

You do the Truth and the brother good service by thus affording him an opportunity of explaining his part and position.

* * *

AGAIN, perhaps the trespass was committed in a moment of weakness, reveals the operation of a besetting sin, which has caused the brother painful and continued remorse and anguish of mind, and against which he has struggled more or less successfully for some time.

He is distressed sufficiently. Upbraid him not, lest he be overwhelmed with "overmuch sorrow," and in despair fall away. Forgive him in sincerity and truth, even to seventy times seven, as you would have your trespasses forgiven. Point him to a merciful Deity for further forgiveness, and do all you can to encourage him.

Your object is to gain him for Christ's sake. Do not be sparing in your efforts. Pray constantly for him, and let him see that you are really anxiously concerned for his eternal wellbeing. Remember that—

"He that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas. 5:20).

Many weak and falling ones may be upheld by such Christ-like treatment.

* * *

THERE is a further possibility of its being an extreme case, where the brother has designedly trespassed. "Judge not," even in this. Be merciful. Take the Godlike attitude of—

"Come now, let us reason together."

If, after your utmost effort, there is no alteration of position, take further and necessary measures; and, if finally the ecclesia have to take action, and sorrowfully withdraw from him, remember EVEN THIS SHOULD BE DONE IN LOVE, for the good of the offender—

"For the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus"

(1 Cor. 5:5).

"Count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (2 Thess. 3:15).

In the carrying out of the commandments there is no room for spite, or tale-bearing, evil speaking, or personal animus of any kind. LET NO BROTHER IMAGINE HE CAN "WORK THE WORK OF GOD" IN THAT SPIRIT.

That is not obeying Christ's law, although it may possibly have that appearance. **It is the operation and prompting of the carnal mind**, and to be "carnally-minded" is death; for the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God (Rom. 8:6-7). Christ knoweth the heart and motive, and he will judge accordingly.

Those who act from fleshly motives are among brethren what Samson's foxes were to the Philistines' cornfields. If there be any such, let them read carefully through Proverbs, and particularly note every one of Solomon's wholesome remarks concerning such characters.

Fleshly feelings, uncontrolled by divine wisdom, are a terrible snare, and lead to Sheol; and those who sow them will "reap corruption."

"If ye have bitter envyings and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.
"This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.
"For where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work.
"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy, and good fruits. Without partiality, and without hypocrisy.
"And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, of them that make peace" (James 3:14-18).

They only who take Christ's attitude in this matter will "of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

It is essentially "sowing to the Spirit," and will be so regarded, and rewarded at the righteous tribunal of Christ, where doubtless many, who have been condemned even by their brethren, will, much to the chagrin of their detractors, be welcomed by Christ with approval, while the self-considered more righteous will be sent empty away.

We are all faulty, and have great need of mercy and forbearance, for—

"If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared" (Ps. 130:3, 4).

Therefore (Eph. 4:31-32)—

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."
—Christadelphian, 1889

Who Shall Separate Us?

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or peril, or sword?"—Rom. 8:35

AS we ponder the meaning of the apostle's question, we realize it is more than a question for us to answer, for it is already answered in v. 37. It is a declaration and a reaffirmation of trust in God and of an unflinching determination to continue to trust in Him. This is very obvious from v. 37—

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us!"

He mentions tribulations, distress, persecution and sword, which intimates the possibility of death itself, as shown in vs. 38-39—

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The Spirit, speaking through John, says (1 John 2:5-6):

"Hereby know we that we are in him: he who says he abides in him ought himself also to walk as he walked."

This is the criterion by which we shall be judged: by our actions, not merely our professions, for we are told plainly (James 2:17, 14, 22)—

"Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works: can faith save him?"

"Seest thou how faith wrought with his (Abraham's) works, and by works was faith made perfect."

Human nature is prone to render merely mechanical obedience to God's holy commands. The apostle Paul, in Rom. 6:17, thanks God that those to whom he wrote had—

"Obeyed FROM THE HEART that form of doctrine which was delivered them."

And surely such zealous, eager, heart-filling desire to obey and reflect the divine image is a cause for great thankfulness, and likewise the lack of it a cause for sorrow and concern. What blindness and folly it is not to be always filled with joyful zeal for the marvellous blessing of God's calling and goodness. And yet how many fail to manifest that zeal!

Truly we are weak and forgetful, and the present is so pressing. **But that is no excuse!** All the more fervently should we join with David and pray (Psa. 86:11-12)—

"Unite my heart to fear Thy Name! I will praise Thee, O Lord my God, with ALL my heart, and I will glorify Thy Name for evermore!"

We often hear of someone being "whole-heartedly" in favor of some worldly enterprise or arrangement, and even in such worldly things it has great power to kindle zeal in others. May we learn wisdom from this and may this ever be our attitude toward all God's commands and purposes. The beloved apostle John tells us (1 John 2:3)—

"And hereby we do KNOW that we know Him, if we keep his commandments."

This explains the true meaning of actually knowing God. It can only be accomplished by obedience to His commands. **This is the ONLY avenue by which we can approach God,** and through which He will draw nigh to us.

John further tells us—

"And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him" (1 John 3:24).

These are not just words, but eternal FACTS—the great and basic facts of eternal life. These words have great depth of meaning for God's children. They will cherish them like purest gold.

This is the most intimate kinship that is possible. We are not only in Christ, but we dwell in God the Father, and He dwells in us. This relates to our mind and character, not our physical nature. Our bodily change must come later, if we are found faithful, for, as Paul explains in 1 Cor. 15:51-53—

"Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.

"For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed..."

"THIS MORTAL MUST PUT ON IMMORTALITY!"

—H.A.S.

To Him That Overcometh

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be My son"

—Rev. 21:7

SEVERAL times repeated in the seven messages to the ecclesias, Jesus promises a great reward to all those among his disciples who are able—by the power of the Spirit-Word brought to bear upon their minds, and the strength of their faith — to OVERCOME the world.

In the last of these messages, the one to the Laodiceans, Jesus says—

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21).

That these words apply to the saints of all generations, as well as those to whom they were addressed in the first instance, is evident from the words that immediately follow—

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the ecclesias."

From these words we can see that our place with the Lord Jesus Christ can ONLY be attained if we OVERCOME! We are to overcome, even as Jesus overcame and is set down with the Father in His throne. Jesus told his apostles at the end of his ministry on the earth—

"Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (John 16).

To overcome means to gain the victory, as in a battle with an enemy. It involves a long and patient struggle; it implies labor and effort and strong determination.

The particular enemy of ourselves and of God that we have in mind at this time is the world, as it is at present constituted.

Now when a general of the army goes into the field against an enemy with a view to gaining the victory, or overcoming him, he must first identify and locate his enemy. Then the general determines with as much accuracy as possible, what the strength of the enemy is, as well as his weakness, and he must know, before the battle is joined, what methods and strategy the enemy will use, so that he will be able to meet force with force, at the right time and place.

It is the same in our case, as we endeavour to overcome the world. We must clearly understand what the meaning of the term "world" is where it is used in connection with the command to overcome it, and where it speaks of the world as the enemy of God and His people.

Unless we know what our enemy is and where it is to be found, and the methods it uses against us, we would be beating the air, instead of gaining the victory over it.

Now in 1 John 5 this word "world" is used four times, and in each case the original word is "**kosmos**." The Greeks used this word when speaking of a system, arrangement or constitution of things. The same original word is used in the passage quoted from John 16:33—

"Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

The world, then, that Jesus overcame, and that we must overcome in order to sit with him in his great throne when he rules the world in righteousness, is that "arrangement or constitution of things" such as has prevailed on this planet since the entrance of sin.

It is an arrangement of things in which the thinking of the flesh or the carnal mind, as it is called in the Scriptures, is the controlling and directing influence in all human relations, political, social, family and ecclesiastical. That is why John says—

"THE WHOLE WORLD lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5: 19).

This gives us a general idea of the word "world" as used in the Scriptures as one of the great enemies we must overcome.

Looking at the matter in this general way, it might appear that the world is very far from any of us. We have no connection with the political, social and religious systems around us. Does this mean that we have overcome the world as Jesus did?

It is important that we do understand the FULL meaning of the word, else how could we obey the command to—

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world"

—if we are not sure just what is meant by the world and the things that are in the world? John says (1 John 3:16)—

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

This brings the world closer to us, and enables us to see what a formidable enemy it is to the servant of God. All our thoughts and actions of which we are capable are there divided into two distinct classes—those that are "of the **Father**" and those that are "of the **world**."

Everything that is not of God is of the world, as it is written—

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

Jesus explains in the parable of the sower how the world may enter our lives and choke the Word, and so cause us to be unfruitful in our service to God (Matt. 13:22)—

"He also that received the seed among thorns is he that heareth the Word, and the CARES OF THE WORLD, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word, and he becometh unfruitful."

From these passages we can see the broad and searching significance of the word "world" as scripturally used in the Spirit's warnings. James clearly and solemnly defined the choice of life and death that lies before us (4:4)—

"Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a FRIEND OF THE WORLD is the ENEMY OF GOD." —E.W.B.

Signs of the Times

IN the midst of world tension and turmoil, a kind of "peace and safety" situation is being envisioned by "experts" on international affairs. These idealistic opinions are based upon the following conclusions:

That war is no longer possible, because nuclear war is too horrible to contemplate, and ordinary war is not possible because it might lead to nuclear war. Little wars are bound to come, they admit, but these can, and will, be contained. A type of "cold peace," it is predicted, will take the place of "cold war."

UNDER DIVINE CONTROL

ALL such speculation is based upon the foolish assumption that world leaders are capable of directing the affairs of mankind according to their own plans. The wise men of the world, even though they sit in high places, and are in a position to understand something of the trend of world events, are blind to the purposes of Him Who "ruleth in the kingdom of men," and therefore they may cry Peace, when there is no peace.

Those who think they see a present trend toward peaceful relations among the nations, either are blind to, or else ignore, the divine pattern of international affairs shaping up in the world. Regardless of what world leaders think or do, at the set time in the divine purpose events will occur which will dash the doomed Gentile nations against each other

WAR PREPARATION DECREE

THE finger of prophecy points to a situation in the world today which forbids accepting the verdict of those who cry peace, for present world conditions coincide with divine prophecy. The decree has gone forth, and nothing can avert it, that the time of the end shall be an era in which unprecedented war preparation shall engage the nations, continuing until these engines of destruction shall be used in a final but vain effort by the nations to attain world supremacy.

While wishful thinkers ignore the threat of another world war, the prophecy of Joel 3:9 sounds a warning that the most terrible war of all time will be immediately preceded by world-wide war preparation. The prophecy speaks in trumpet tones—

"Proclaim ye this among the gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men.

"Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong."

Gradually building up for a half century or more, war preparation took a sudden spurt some 20 years ago, with the introduction of nuclear weapons and other advanced engines of destruction, and now the whole world is an armed camp. As indicated in the prophecy, the world population is more and more becoming trained for war, the weak as well as the strong. Nations once committed to peace, have become warlike; a large portion of the aid to needy nations is being used for implements of war. Semi-savage races are being trained in modern warfare.

To think that this immense war preparation will fade away into peaceful pursuits is supreme folly.

The prophecy of Joel 3 shows clearly (vs. 10-16) that this spirit of war will continue, and increase in volume until the nations are gathered to the "valley of judgment," where Gentile dominion will come to an end in the pouring out of divine judgments upon them.

SIGNS IN THE HEAVENS

CONCURRENT with the things foretold in Joel's prophecy, the great prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ in Luke 21:25-26 gives the signs in the political heavens preceding his coming and the conditions existing upon earth which would stir up the nations to engage in such a colossal armament race.

The phenomenal armament increase did not just happen. Underlying causes brought it about, and these causes are not being removed, neither can they be removed by the selfish bungling of world diplomacy.

The paramount cause of it all is that the time has come in the purpose of God to bring an end to Gentile dominion that HIS Kingdom might take its place. What is happening in the world is the beginning of the breaking up of Gentile supremacy. In detail the causes are these—

"Distress of nations, with perplexity . . . the sea and the waves roaring (general unrest among the masses)

"Men's hearts failing them for fear of what is coming on earth . . .

"The powers of the (political) heaven shaken" (indicating general revolution and overthrow of governments).

Fear of each other; fear of war; fear of poverty; fear of loss of territory and trade; fear of loss of powers. These and many other fears have spurred the nations and the peoples on to create huge arsenals of war munitions and to stage revolutions. And these fears will not be removed by pious expressions of a desire for "peace" and "international co-operation."

"DISTRESS OF NATIONS"

FEW nations on earth today are free from intense distress, anxiety and perplexity, and all are fearful of what the future holds for them and the world.

RUSSIA, although having made great strides, industrially, economically and militarily since the revolution, is beset with internal problems, not the least of which is the breakdown of her agricultural program and her inability to pursue her military program and at the same time provide her people with the comforts and luxuries being enjoyed by other nations which she seeks to equal or excel.

Just now Russia is further distressed over the fact that Red China is making a bid to challenge Khrushchev's leadership in the Communist movement, a situation which may have fearful consequences, as these two leaders of Communism engage in a test of power.

RED CHINA, while advocating an aggressive movement to enforce Communism upon the world, is neither financially nor economically able to pursue such a course. She sorely needs Russian co-operation, and is plagued by the apparent reluctance of Khrushchev to give her such aid.

China must therefore be content with stirring up revolution in small nations while she struggles with the problem of famine and unrest among her own people. But it appears most likely that, for mutual protection, the Russian-Chinese feud will go no further than a family quarrel.

Although the U. S. is reckoned as the most prosperous nation in all the world, it is not without distress. An endless war in South Vietnam, in what appears to be a hopeless task of trying to save S. E. Asia from Red Chinese domination, is costing the U. S. many lives and huge sums of money, and there is no end in sight. The billions spent on aid programs have, for the most part, resulted in failure to actually aid the needy nations, have made more enemies than friends, and have stirred up anti-Americanism all over the world.

And not the least of U. S. troubles is Castro, a Communist puppet, aided and abetted by Soviet Russia, who reigns just 90 miles from the U. S. mainland, stirring up trouble in other Latin-American countries, and there is nothing that Uncle Sam can do about it.

Ailing Prime Minister Nehru of INDIA is beset with mounting problems which threaten to wipe out what little progress the over-populated nation had gained. Famine, due to drought, has decreased the already short food supply and high food prices are causing rioting. Fear of war with Pakistan and invasion by Red China is ever present. And a religious war between Hindus and Moslems, in which thousands have been killed, adds to India's distress.

The civil war on CYPRUS is far from settlement. It is doubtful that a U. N. army will be able to prevent fighting between Greek and Turkish Cypriots for long. Trouble between Greece and Turkey over the Cyprus problem forms a weak link in the NATO Alliance which is not lost sight of by Russia.

THE HEAVEN SHAKEN

DURING the past 20 years 3 once mighty colonial empires have been cut up into small nations. In Africa alone, 36 new nations have been created, with 77 so-called developing nations having come into being since the formation of the United Nations.

This is causing alarm in U. N. official circles, because every one of these new and weak nations have the same vote as the big nations. There are only 113 members in all, which means that the new nations have a majority of 77 to 36, with more new nations still to come, and possibly Red China to add to U. S. problems.

Seeing that upheavals and revolutions are bound to occur in these impoverished countries, the U. N., already on the verge of bankruptcy, will be unable to cope with the problems arising from this situation.

BRAZIL, the "ailing giant" of South America, having its government overthrown, the nation now faces the grim reality of just how weak its economy really is. Although presumably a victory for anti-communism, it is doubtful that the new government will be able to bring order out of the chaos, and another revolution is likely. Brazil is the 7th Latin-American government to be overthrown during the past few years.

It is a picture of the events which prophecy has foretold would occur in the time of the end. Surely, the end is drawing near when all the distress and perplexity which plagues the nations shall be resolved by the coming of the Son of Man, who will abolish Gentile dominion with all of its evils, and speak peace to the nations. —O.B.

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