

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

BALTIMORE, Md.—3617 Forest Hill Road, 21207.

GREETINGS in Jesus Name.

It is with sorrow that we report the death of our sister, Beulah H. Williams. She fell asleep on May 5, 1964, a few days before her eighty-sixth birthday. Sister Williams had been in the Truth since her baptism on March 28, 1894, a period of seventy years. She had just recently returned to the Berean Fellowship.

We are now meeting from home to home each Sunday morning for our Memorial Service. The address given above is the home of the recording brother.

We have been encouraged around the table of the Lord by the visits of our sis. Hallie Smith of the Houston ecclesia, and sis. Grace Frisbie and bro. Nicholas Mammone of the Honesdale ecclesia. Brother Mammone has given us the word of exhortation on several occasions, and assisted us in the work of our ecclesia.

Your brother in Christ,

—Russell C. Frisbie

* * *

DENVER, Colo.—432 S. Emerson—Sunday School 10 a.m.; Memorial 11.

LOVING Greetings in the One Hope of Israel!

We have been encouraged and spiritually uplifted by the recent visit of sis. Sarah Sadler of the Richard ecclesia, Sask., Canada, who visited relatives in Denver and extended her visit by staying at the home of sisters Osborne and Hoage for a few days. The hours spent in visiting and meditation together were enjoyed by the whole ecclesia.

We extend a welcome invitation to all those of like precious Faith.

Sincerely, in the Bonds of the Truth,

—bro. John Osborne

* * *

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

SIX months have become history since we last communicated in this way; months that have seen the tide of world affairs shaken by assassination, world fears resulting, major power revolutions, and the tinder-box of Middle East affairs ignited by civil war on Cyprus.

While many nations have been "casting up mire and dirt," there has been a new "peace offensive" launched between major powers, as new alignments are framed to bring the Colossus of the North closer to Europe and the Papacy and his appointed position.

Again there appears a re-alignment of African nations as the end of Gentile times draws near. And above all the disunity of United Nations Organization is made increasingly obvious, confirming the accuracy of scriptural prophecy that the nations are angry and the day of God's wrath is near to come.

Such is the record of six months of human rule. It is designed to teach the servants of God that all things are under the control of God, that an unerring pattern is being woven, and a web of destruction drawn from which human pride and power cannot escape.

As we see these things rapidly moving into place in the Divine panorama, we in the words of Scripture are warned and exhorted to watch and keep our garments white and unspotted from the world, to rejoice in the knowledge we have of God's purpose and to lift up our heads for our redemption is drawing very near.

We are counselled to walk as children of light, and to patiently wait the coming of God's glorious Son as the Day Star of the morning without clouds. The blackness of the prevailing world sky is about to give place to the Rising Sun's brilliance.

We are encouraged to hear of the doings of our brethren and sisters in these columns and would urge a more frequent use of these channels as a mode of ecclesial communication. By this means, by visits, and by correspondence we are drawn together. Certainly the quickness of world communications today is a means whereby we can perform the Spirit's command (Heb. 13:16)—

"To do good, and to communicate forget not."

By these things we know that the love of God is working in various parts of the body, and thereby it is knit together by the bonds of the Truth. These alone—sound truth and fellowship—can be the only permanent binding forces to prepare us to withstand the trials and temptations of worldliness and indifference. May we pray for strength to remain firmly entrenched in the Word of Truth. Application to its pages daily and prayerfully is the only avenue to life.

We have been strengthened by visits around the table of the Lord of several in recent months: bro. Frank Truelove of Richard, Sask.; bro. David Clubb and sis. Ruth Clubb of London, Ontario. Brethren Truelove and Clubb exhorted us to faithfulness in our sojourn toward the Kingdom of God.

We also enjoyed association with bro. James Truelove as he passed through the city on his return from visiting our brethren and sisters in England. We gained thereby a knowledge of those associated with us in other countries.

We have also enjoyed the company of: bro. & sis. Pickford, Lethbridge; bro. John Randell, S. Calif.; and bro. Edgar Davey, Worcester.

While encouraged by visitors to Detroit and by correspondence, we have journeyed to other ecclesias in the meanwhile, and have been uplifted by meetings at London, Toronto, and Hamilton, Ont; and at Pomona, Cal. and San Angelo, Tex.

To all of like faith we send love and fraternal greetings.

* * *

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

WE have had the pleasure of having bro. & sis. H. A. Sommerville of Lake Ariel, Pa., in our midst for about a month. Bro. Sommerville exhorted us. —bro. C. Banta

* * *

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

IN our last news report, we mentioned our proposed series of monthly lectures and gave particulars of our first one. Since then, we have had two lectures. The first on Mar. 29, when brother Fred Higham Sr. spoke—his subject being, "Jesus Christ—Heir to the Throne of David." This was well attended, and so was our third lecture on Apr. 26, when brother Gibson spoke — his subject being, "Christ's Personal Return to the Earth—Who may Abide the Day of His Coming?"

Our recent visitors were, James Truelove of Richard, Sask., and from Detroit, brethren Growcott, Fred Higham Sr. and Fred Higham Jr., and sisters Jean and Beth Higham. From London, brother Dave Clubb and sisters Helen Boyce, Grace Cartlidge, Connie Clubb, Mary Gwalchmai, Olive Gwalchmai and Ethel Ross. Brother Growcott gave us the word of exhortation on Mar. 29. The

work of our visiting speakers was deeply appreciated, and the association and fellowship of our visitors was sincerely esteemed.

In our senior Sunday School Class, we are now reading and considering *The Life and Work of brother John Thomas*. We have not advanced very far in the book, but far enough to convince us that if every brother and sister in the world would take the time to read this book, they would, without a doubt, have a much deeper appreciation and love for their knowledge of the Truth.

As we proceed in our reading, we become fascinated by his wonderful faith, and his implicit trust in God's Word. No persecution was strong enough to turn him aside from the one subject of his life—to find the Truth of God as revealed in His Word. He gave himself no rest until the whole Truth loomed up before his mind in all its glorious beauty. The search has ended, and now the treasure he left to us is in our hands to read, appreciate and love. —bro. G. Gibson

EDITORIAL

Strengthen the Things That Remain

"I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences CONTRARY TO THE DOCTRINE WHICH YE HAVE LEARNED, and avoid them"—Rom. 16:17

BECAUSE of the structure or substance of our editorials for the first four months of this year, it is possible that someone might feel that we are unduly exercised over the condition that exists in the Christadelphian world today.

In February, we called attention to the fact—and it IS a fact—that when Jesus returns to the earth he will find similar conditions that existed in the days of Noah. We did that because he declared that it would be so. If we are his brethren, as we claim to be, then we must of necessity believe what he has said.

In March, we reminded our readers that we are living in perilous times, and quoted the words of Jesus that—

"Because iniquity shall abound, the love of (the) many shall wax cold."

And finally in April, we called attention to the rapid falling away of the people of Israel in the days of Moses. We did so because Paul stated that these things were written for our instruction.

The earnest and urgent warnings that have characterized our monthly messages might cause someone to think that it had become an obsession on our part.

If that be true, then we plead guilty, for the word means "the besetting or dominating action or influence of a persistent feeling, idea, or the like, which the person cannot escape." That defines our position exactly, for we are deeply exercised, and because of abundant reason.

Before we look at the present, let us refresh our minds regarding the situation in the days of the apostles. Twenty-three years after his conversion, we find Paul speaking to the elders of the ecclesia in Ephesus (Acts 20:29-30)—

"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter among you, not sparing the flock.

"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

Four years later, he wrote to them a letter that has been described as "the profoundest writing in existence" in which he pleaded with them to be faithful in their walk in the Truth. About 36 years later, a message came to them through John in which Jesus said to them, in Rev. 2:4-5—

"I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and **repent**, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will **remove thy candlestick** out of his place, except thou repent."

As Paul said, grievous wolves had entered into the ecclesia and, as a result of their work, they forsook their first love. The appeal of the Lord Jesus to repent fell upon deaf ears, and they went on from bad to worse until the lamp-stand in Ephesus lost its light so that the members of the ecclesia walked in darkness. In due time the other six ecclesias in Asia met the same fate, and the Truth was buried in rubbish, and remained so until the days of Dr. John Thomas.

During the year 1848, brother Thomas had come to a knowledge of the Truth, and the following year he published *Elpis Israel*. At this time also, ecclesias were being formed in the United States and Britain. How did they fare? Did they continue to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ?" Let us look at the *Christadelphian Magazine* for 1891. On page 130, we read:

"When is this all to end? It is crotchet, crotchet, with an insatiable, morbid appetite for something new and strange, and a cutting loose from the sure anchor of the Truth brought to light by one whom God made abundantly able for the work He providentially placed in his hands."

Still more impressive is what appears on page 471, where we read—

"A new generation has come upon the scene like the Pharaoh who 'knew not Joseph,' who under the tuition of other doctrines than those we first received ('from which some having swerved') are unconsciously laying the foundation for a still more general departure in the long run, from all that constituted 'first love' and 'faith unfeigned' . . .

*"It would be an advantage to the work of the Truth in Yorkshire (as also elsewhere) to have classes for the reading of *Elpis Israel* and *Eureka*. They are a good preventive against the inroad of false doctrine, and a complete antidote to the laxity of faith and fellowship into which some have lapsed."*

Seventy-three years have passed since the above was written. Are we so foolish as to think that the situation has improved? Look at history! In things spiritual, the trend has always been downward. Have we forgotten the "falling away" that took place after Christianity was established by the apostles? Do we realize that the downward trend has been in steady progress since the days of brother Thomas? If there are any who do not believe this fact, then there must be only one explanation—they have placed themselves in the same position as those to whom Paul quoted from Isaiah in Acts 28:27—

"For this people's heart has grown dull, and their ears are heavy of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn for Me to heal them."

During the days of bro. Roberts, resolute vigilance and courageous action kept the trend from progressively corrupting the Body. The issue was faced and met with Dowieism, Renunciationism, Partial Inspiration, Non-Responsibility, etc. Sad and painful separations were required, but through them the Truth was preserved.

But after the death of bro. Roberts the picture gradually changed.

The downward trend came to a head in 1953 when the doctrines that caused separation as far back as 1870 were all cast aside, and a general reunion took place, and open fellowship was adopted. The Berean minority remained to uphold the Truth as taught by brethren Thomas and Roberts. Therefore we have sound reason to be exercised.

If we are truly interested in our salvation, then let us by all means look to our standing in the household, for out of the called, only a few will be chosen. The "to-day" of salvation is nearly ended.

Let us give earnest heed to the voice of wisdom—the Word of God—for our today may never see tomorrow. —Editor

He Shall Rule Over Thee

"In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children: and thy desire shall be subject to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee"—Gen. 3:16

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

AS the woman had so wilfully sought the gratification of her flesh, when the Lord God passed sentence upon her He made it the ground of her punishment. God said—

"I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children: and thy desire shall be subject to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

This being her portion as the consequence of sin, the reverse would have been her condition, so long as her animal nature should have continued unchanged, if she had remained obedient. She would have brought forth children without pain, and would have had fewer of them; nor would she have been deprived of that equality she enjoyed in the garden, and consequently she would have escaped that degradation she has experienced in all the countries of the world.

The punishment, however, was not inflicted simply as an individual sorrow. The pain was personal, and the subjection likewise; but the multiplication of woman's conception became necessary for the altered circumstances of things; which were then being constituted for the ensuing 7000 years.

In the war divinely instituted between the seeds of the Serpent and the Woman, there would be a great loss of life. The population of the world would be greatly thinned; besides which great havoc would be made by pestilence, famine, and the ordinary diseases of the flesh.

To compensate this waste, and still to maintain an increase, so that the earth might be filled, necessitated that part of woman's punishment involved in the multiplication of the conception, which is a great domestic calamity under the Serpent-dominion of sin.

* * *

WE hear much in some parts of the world of the political rights and equality of women with men; and of their preaching and teaching in public assemblies.

We need wonder at nothing which emanates from the unenlightened thinking of sinful flesh. There is no absurdity too monstrous to be sanctified by unspiritualized animal intellect. **Men do not think according to God's thinking**, and therefore it is they run into the most unscriptural conceits; among which may be enumerated the political and social equality of women.

Trained to usefulness, of cultivated intellect and with moral sentiments purified and ennobled by the nurture and admonition of the Lord's truth, women are "helps meet" for the Elohim; and **much too good for men of ordinary stamp**. The sex is susceptible of this exaltation; though I despair of witnessing it in many instances till "the Age to Come."

But, even women of this excellency of mind and disposition, were it possible for such to do so, would be guilty of indiscretion, presumption, and rebellion against God's law, in assuming equality of rank, equality of rights and authority over man, which is implied in teaching and preaching.

It is the old ambition of the sex to be equal to the gods; but in taking steps to attain it, they involved themselves in subjection to men. Preaching and lecturing women are but species of actresses, who exhibit upon the boards for the amusement of sinful and foolish men. They aim at an equality for

which they are not physically constituted; they degrade themselves by the exhibition, and in proportion as they rise in assurance, **they sink in all that really adorns a woman.**

The law, which forms a part of the foundation of the world, say to the woman—

"He shall reign over thee."

The nature of this subjection is well exhibited in the Mosaic Law (Num. 30:3-15). A daughter being yet in her youth in her father's house, could only make a vow subject to his will. If he held his peace, and said nothing for or against, she was bound by her word; but if when he heard it, he disallowed it, she was not bound to perform; and the Lord forgave the failure of the vow.

The same law applied to a wife. A widow, or divorced woman, were both bound to fulfil; unless their husbands had made them void before separation. If not, being subject to God, they had no release.

This throws light upon the apostle's instructions concerning women.—

"They are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law."

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over man, but to be in silence."

The reason he gives for imposing silence and subjection, is remarkable. He adduces the priority of Adam's formation; and the unhappy consequences of Eve's talkativeness and leadership in transgression; as it is written—

"Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" (1 Tim. 2:11-14).

And then, as to their public ministrations, he says—

"Let women keep silence in the congregations; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but to be under obedience, as saith the law.

"And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the congregation" (1 Cor. 14:34-35).

It is true, that in another place the apostle says,—

"Let the aged women be teachers of good things."

But then this teaching is not to be in the congregation, or in the brazen attitude of a public oratrix. They are to exercise their gift of teaching privately among their own sex—

"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God (which they profess), be not blasphemed" (Tit. 2:4-5).

Christian women should not copy after the god-aspiring Eve, but after Sarah, the faithful mother of Israel, who submitted herself in all things to Abraham, "calling him lord"

(Gen. 18:12; 1 Pet. 3:6).

Nor should their obedience be restricted to Christian husbands only. They should also obey them "without the Word"; that is, those who have not submitted to it, in order that they may be won over to the faith when they behold the chaste and respectful behaviour of their wives, produced by a belief of the Truth (1 Pet. 3:1-6).

* * *

SUCH are the statutory provisions enacted in the world's constitution at the beginning with respect to the position of women in the body social and political. Any attempt to alter the arrangement is rebellion against God, and usurpation of the rights of men to whom God has subjected them.

Their wisdom is to be quiet, and to make their influence felt by their excellent qualities.

They will then rule in the hearts of their rulers, and so ameliorate their own subjection as to convert it into a desirable and sovereign obedience.

A man should never permit the words of a woman to intervene between him and the laws of God. This is a rock on which myriad's have made shipwreck of the faith. Adam sinned in consequence of listening to Eve's silvery discourse. No temptation has proved more irresistible to the flesh than the enticing words of woman's lips—

"They drop as a honey-comb, and her mouth is smoother than oil; but her end is bitter as wormwood, and sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; and her steps take hold on hell" (Prov. 5:3-5).

Adam was a striking illustration of this truth, as appears from the sentence pronounced upon him. The Lord God said—

"Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake:

"In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.

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

Thus, having passed sentence upon the serpent, the woman, and the man, the Lord appointed them a new law, and expelled them from the garden He had made.

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The Divine Sonship of Christ

By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

"The Lord Himself shall give you a sign: behold a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son, and call his name Emmanuel"—Isaiah 7:14

PART TWO

LUKE'S genealogy is a little more obscure than Matthew's, but not a whit less fatal to the Josephite theory. Luke begins at the opposite end from Matthew. He traces the line backward, while Matthew does it forward. He begins with Jesus at the time of his baptism by John, and says —

"Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age (being as was SUPPOSED) the son of Joseph."

Now, why does Luke employ the word "supposed"? If, as Josephism hints, Luke believed Jesus to be the natural son of Joseph, why does he not say so, in the simple unequivocal style observed in all the other cases, instead of introducing a word which suggests doubt and mystery?

Who "supposed" that he was the son of Joseph? And why was it the subject of "supposition"? Does not the existence of a "supposition" show that a contrary idea had been asserted, namely, that Jesus was not the son of Joseph in a natural sense, but "Son of God"?

Does it not show that there was a diversity of opinion existing at the time of Luke's writing? Supposition only comes into play where uncertainty exists; but according to Josephism, there was no uncertainty; "for," say the Josephites —

"All the Jews believed and knew Jesus to be the son of Joseph, and the evangelists did not contradict it."

Yet, according to Luke, "supposition" was active at the time of Christ's baptism, on the subject of his paternity. This "supposition" could not be as to **which** man was his father, for his supposed father was well-known, and all his family. The supposition therefore could only relate to the question of human versus divine paternity; and Luke treats the popular view of the question as a "supposition," in the sense of an idle and wrong supposition.

Luke's words prove that to his (Luke's) private information, Jesus was not the son of Joseph in a natural sense; for in penning this public record of his genealogy in which he is bound to admit the legal relation of Jesus to Joseph, he inserts a parenthesis which fences off the popular idea of his being the natural son of Joseph. It is as much to say —

"The common idea was, that he was the real son of Joseph, but this is just a popular delusion; for though the legal son of Joseph, he was the product of creative power, through Mary, the wife of Joseph."

This is the effect of Luke's parenthesis.

On no other principle can the occurrence of such a parenthesis be rationally accounted for.

* * *

THERE is another, and, if possible, more conclusive aspect of the matter. A glance at the original suggests that Luke's brief parenthesis is wrongly marked in the Common Version; and that it really includes the whole supposition alluded to. Luke's words literally translated, would read—

"And he (Jesus) was beginning about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed, a son of Joseph) of Heli."

The words "which was the son," that precede "of Heli," in the common version, are NOT IN THE ORIGINAL. Their introduction changes the significance of the verse.

It makes it allege that Joseph was the son of Heli (Mary's father), whereas he was the son of Jacob; and it destroys the connection between Jesus and Heli, which it is evidently Luke's intention to point out.

Paraphrasing Luke's words, so as to express their evident significance, they would read—

"Jesus was at this time about thirty, and the general supposition was that he was the natural son of Joseph, but he was, in reality, genealogically of Heli."

Genealogy being only reckoned by males, Heli, Mary's father, would be put for Mary in stating his natural extraction.

This harmonizes all the apparent difficulties in the case, and destroys the proof which Josephites see in Luke's genealogy.

* * *

LUKE'S genealogy is not the genealogy of Joseph, but of Heli, Mary's father, and Joseph's father-in-law. If Luke gives the genealogy of Joseph, Matthew does not; for the lines are different.

Josephites allege them both to be that of Joseph. How can this be, when they are different? Josephites must reject one, for two conflicting pedigrees cannot be right.

But there is no necessity for rejecting either. One is the genealogy of Mary, and the other of Joseph; and both are essential to show that, notwithstanding the departure from the natural order of things in Christ's begetting, Jesus is still the son of David, and heir to his throne.

Luke does not state (as the Josephites say) that "several spurious gospels had then begun to be circulated." He simply observes that many had attempted a narrative of the facts of Christ's life, and that he, having authentic and personal knowledge of the whole matter, had been induced to put forth his account.

It is probable that the "gospels" in circulation were feeble, and it might be, in some particulars, inaccurate; but surely it is a tremendous liberty to take in the discussion of a subject of such momentous importance as this to suggest without the shadow of proof, that the miraculous conception of Jesus was a feature in these current gospels which Luke wrote to correct!

It is true that "the prophecies in the Old Testament" represent the Messiah as a prophet like unto Moses, a son of David, a man of sorrows, and so on, but these representations are in no way incompatible with the fact that the method by which he was constituted a man and a son of David, was by supernatural begetting, constituting him son of God as well as son of David.

* * *

THE prediction of Isaiah cannot be harmonized with the Josephite theory—

"The Lord himself shall give you a sign: BEHOLD, A VIRGIN shall conceive and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

Some say "a virgin" should be translated "a young woman."

Where would the "sign" be then? What would there be in the nature of sign or wonder in a young woman conceiving? Is it such a rare and extraordinary event for a young woman to conceive, that its occurrence would be "a sign?"

And where IS the "young woman" that has born Emmanuel? How is Jesus, if the natural son of Joseph and Mary, Emmanuel—GOD WITH US?

If Jesus was a mere man, he was not "God with us." If he were God with us by simply having the Spirit, then all the prophets and apostles were "God with us," and there was no meaning at all in Christ being called Emmanuel.

But while discussing the suggestion that "virgin" may be changed to "young woman," we are bound to affirm its utter inadmissibility from a philological point of view.

The word (**almah**) translated "virgin" in the passage quoted from Isaiah, is never translated "young woman," and never used in any sense other than that of an unmarried female.

This may be seen by reference to the only places of its occurrence, which are Gen. 24:43; Ex. 2:8; Ps. 68:25; Pro. 30:19; Song. 1:3; 6:8; Isa. 7:14.

The word most frequently used for virgin (**bethulah** — Gen. 24:16), is not the one used in Isa. 7:14. This is agreed.

The word sometimes translated "young woman" (**nagara**—Ruth 4:12.) is most frequently rendered "maiden" and "damsel."

It is probably this fact that has suggested the attempt to get rid of Isa. 7:14 as a proof of Christ's miraculous conception, by the assertion that "young woman" (married or unmarried) is interchangeable with the "virgin" of the passage in question.

The suggestion is entirely false. The word means a young virgin female in the absolute sense; and we can only eliminate this idea from the passage by deleting the word, **almah** and substituting **nagara**. And even then, the unscrupulous critic who would dare upon such a liberty, would not be much assisted in his designs, for even the substituted word would more naturally bear the construction of "virgin" than "young woman."

* * *

THERE are those who say that the explicit narratives of Matthew and Luke are spurious additions to the original. This is, of course, essential to the Josephite argument, but lays a terrible onus upon those who take this ground, for the records themselves are prima facie evidence of their genuineness.

It is not sufficient in such a matter to establish a plausible case. The reasons against must be more than equal to the reasons for; they must be crushingly preponderating, for if it is only a case of equal probability, there is room for the attacked theory to be correct, and in that case, general considerations must be allowed to turn the scale.

Now, the Josephite arguments are not of this character; they are precisely of an opposite character. They are vastly inferior to those which establish the genuineness of the assailed narratives, while the general considerations are all on the side of the doctrine which Josephism denies.

These general considerations are of different kinds. First, there is the existence of a belief in the miraculous conception in the first century. This fact destroys the force of any non-belief which existed, so far as such non-belief might be construed unfavourably to the miraculous conception; because the argument on one side would be equally forcible on the other.

If the non-belief of men living at the time is presumptively against the doctrine on the ground that they may be supposed to have had opportunities of ascertaining the truth of the matter, the belief of other men living at the same time and with the same opportunities is of equal weight on the other side; nay, it is of much more weight, for one "yes," on a matter of fact, is worth a thousand "noes."

"Yes," implies a reason and evidence; "no" only indicates the absence of reason and ignorance of evidence. A thousand men ignorant of a thing and unable to appreciate the evidences of it, may say they don't believe it; but is their negative of any value against the positive assertion and arguments of those who know the facts?

Twenty men may come in a court and say of a prisoner, "We don't believe he is guilty," but the evidence of three men who have **witnessed** the fact of his guilt, will blow their opinions to the wind, and bring the jury to a verdict.

Now the fact that **any** number in the first century believed in the miraculous conception, destroys the value of every adverse expression of opinion which Josephites might be able to quote.

* * *

NOTHING is more characteristic of John's epistles than the assertion of the divine sonship of Christ, as against those who denied it by asserting he was the son of Joseph. He says—

"Believe not every spirit; try the spirits whether they are of God; because MANY FALSE PROPHETS ARE GONE OUT INTO THE WORLD" (1 John 4:1).

John therefore recognizes the existence of error in his time. It will not do to quote the opinion of these false prophets as evidence in favor of their opinions. John says—

“We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error” (4:6).

Now, on the subject of Christ's sonship, he says—

"We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.
"Whoever shall confess that JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (vs. 14-15).

Those who alleged he was the son of Joseph would come under the implied condemnation of this passage. Every declaration that Christ is the Son of God (and they are numerous throughout the whole New Testament) is a condemnation of those who asserted he was the son of Joseph.

* * *

THE omission of Mark to notice the miraculous conception is no disproof of the miraculous conception. If it is, it would prove that Christ was not born at all, for Mark never mentions the fact, but commences his narrative with the active ministry of Christ.

The same argument applied to Matthew, would disprove the ascension, for Matthew does not mention it.

* * *

AS TO the argument of the omission of the account of the miraculous conception in some early copies of Luke and Matthew, it is without weight. For if a few early copies are without these chapters, a great number have them.

The question to be decided would be: were the chapters in question fraudulently excluded from the **few** copies, or fraudulently introduced into the **many**?

As a question of probability, no sane man would hesitate to pronounce upon it. It would be easier to withdraw them from a few than to introduce them to many.

There is no moral doubt that the fraud was practised in the few copies. In the production of these, those who asserted Christ's purely human birth would purposely omit the chapters that stood in their way. There is early ecclesiastical evidence that this was done.

The internal evidence of the chapters is conclusive in their favor. They are of a piece with the books of which they form an accredited part. The successful perpetration of such an imposition would have been a literary impossibility. The patch would have been visible.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH, IF THE LORD WILL

As One That Serveth

“The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister”—Matthew 20:28

IN John 13 we have a picture set before us which cannot fail to engage our attention. The scene which commends itself to our thoughtful consideration is the picture of Jesus kneeling to wash Judas' feet.

The picture is one we might like to put away from our mind. In a sense it is difficult for us to contemplate such a thing actually taking place. So we must look for the reasons just why Judas was present at the table that night.

Here we have pictured before us the best and the worst. We have the perfect love of the Lord Jesus, and the hateful bitterness of Judas at the same table. It is indeed difficult for us to envision Jesus

kneeling at the feet of his betrayer. To us, it may seem very wrong; so we could ask the question, Why did not Jesus wait until Judas had gone out?

But would our feelings be satisfied even had that been done? We naturally tend to feel that Jesus should not have been kneeling at the feet of his disciples, **if we regard him as highly, and with as deep appreciation and admiration as we should.**

We can understand how Peter must have felt: we can understand why he protested. I am sure had we been there we would have said very much the same as did Peter —

"Lord, dost thou wash my feet?"

Yet none of the disciples seem to have realized how great an honor it would have been for them to have washed Jesus' feet. It took a woman to do that, and wipe his feet with the hair of her head.

We can understand the feeling of Peter's protest. Though well intentioned, he was misguided. And in a few words Jesus showed him his objection was based on a mistaken view of the true situation. Jesus said:

"What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

And in due time Peter did understand. Some years later he was inspired to write his 1st Epistle, in which is the exhortation that applies to all —

"Yea, all of you be subject to one another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

The example set by Jesus was not forgotten by Peter, nor by the others. Even though there was jealousy among them at the table as to who should be the greatest, they continued steadfast unto the end.

* * *

BUT Judas, what of him? It seems hard for us to believe that there could exist a man so hardened in evil. He had been in the company of Jesus for over three years; he had witnessed the miracles wrought by Jesus, he had listened to his counsel, but to no avail. He was covetous, and he was a hypocrite; he professed to care for the poor while satisfying his own greed.

Yet with all these faults it seems hardly possible he would betray his Master, and sacrifice his own salvation for thirty pieces of silver!

And he betrayed his Master with a KISS! What should have been, and is, a token of affection, branded him a hypocrite. And he had sat with the Master at the table, accepting the sop from Jesus and asking—

"Lord, is it I?"

That evil man! — how much longer would he tarry at the table? Then Jesus said to him:

"That thou doest, do quickly."

The hour of triumph for the forces of evil had come; Judas went out. The beautiful life and the principles shown by Jesus during his ministry were lost on Judas. He went out into the world of darkness where he belonged. Thus is shown the utter worthlessness of a human being to be a warning for all time.

* * *

AS we consider the matter we would expect that Jesus would look for comfort from his friends before he went out to his death? But no, his concern was all for them (John 13:1)—

"Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

What a wonderful example! His every thought was for their future well-being when he would have left them. He had become as a servant ministering unto them, exemplifying his command that they serve one another.

In this 13th chapter we learn of the thoughts that were in the mind of Jesus, he (v. 3)—

"Knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands; and that he was come from God, and went to God."

We learn also that he thought of the future, and the glory that awaited him with the Father. Having these thoughts in mind he became as a servant. Again, what an example!

In future years the apostles wrote of these things in their epistles. In Phil 2:7 we have the words of Paul—

"He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant . . .

"He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

And in Heb. 5:8 we read—

"Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."

* * *

JOHN is careful to explain the incidents of that night. He says of Jesus—

"He rose from supper, he laid aside his garments, he took a towel and girded himself, he poured water into a basin, then he knelt and washed their feet, and wiped them with the towel."

In our day of widespread superstition, "washing of feet" is done in many places by those of vain conceit. But by doing so, as in their other acts of ritual and mummery, the value of what Jesus did is lost. Jesus did not say as he did at the breaking of bread—

"Do THIS in remembrance of me."

What Jesus said is recorded in 13:15—

"For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

"I am among you as he that serveth."

And that holds good today as then. We have Jesus' words:

"Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

In our acts of service Jesus will be among us no matter what it is. Jesus did the service to impress the lesson for all who would follow him.

THE GREATEST DEED THAT MAN CAN DO IS SERVE.

Unless we realize that truth, **we have learned little from Christ**. We have Jesus' words, and by his words we must stand or fall.

* * *

THE mind of the natural man is to rule over others, but not to serve. And as the disciples sat at the table they still had that idea, and made rival claims to pre-eminence. As we read this chapter, we can see that Jesus was to—

"Show them a more excellent way."

—the way of love and sacrifice.

The disciples still had much to learn; and they would learn when the power of the Spirit had been bestowed upon them. But it would be wrong for us to indict them; for being concerned with other things they had failed to quite understand.

One question of the many that were asked shows their knowledge was limited. In John 14:8 Philip said—

"Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us."

And Jesus answered him—

"Have I been so long with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou, Show us the Father?"

What could have been in their minds? Had they expected a vision of blinding glory, thunder and lightning, and the sound of a trumpet as at Sinai?—

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

—a man kneeling in their midst with a basin of water and a towel!

The Father's love manifested: His goodness, His patience, His long forbearance, the Father's kindness to the sinner and the ungodly.

All that they witnessed in their midst. We can see how necessary it was that the service done must be done for all, even Judas. Had Jesus passed Judas by, following generations would have said: It is all right to restrict our acts of kindness just for our friends. But Jesus' example leaves no doubt; the love of Jesus Christ is offered freely to all—

"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

And the love Jesus showed for mankind, reveals to us that we have a duty to one another. But there are few of us who have not experienced the difficulty of fulfilling that duty. When temperaments clash as someone disagrees with the ideas of another, then arguments follow.

In our calmer moments we may examine ourselves trying to find the motive. We may try our best to cast out the beam in our own eye, so that we can see the more clearly.

But how difficult it is to renew the one-time affection we had! No matter how we may review the circumstances, we cannot escape the guilt of having failed to follow the example of Jesus. And we feel we have betrayed the Truth.

We all know that Jesus' example is a difficult one to follow; but there it is for all of us, WITH NO EXCEPTIONS.

* * *

JESUS was at the table for the last time. The cross whereon he was to "pour out his soul unto death" was already casting its shadow upon him. Surely the example he gave us to follow should be the hallmark of true faithfulness!

Can we who have put on the Name of Jesus forget Gethsemane, as our minds envision his awful conflict and agony, when he said—

"Oh my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me . . . Nevertheless not as I will, but Thy will be done."

Can we forget the awful scene on the Hill of Calvary? Does not that lonely cry of anguish ever ring in our ears—

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

NO, if we are faithful in the Truth we can never forget. We long for and pray to see his face; to see him as he is, in power and great glory.

If the disciples needed to learn a lesson, can our need be less?

"He that is chief shall be as he that doth serve."

And life in the Kingdom will still be a life of service, but then we will not be cumbered with the frailties of the flesh; then we shall experience the glory of having the King of kings in our midst.

But what of today? What of the words of Jesus?—

"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."

Either we are always with Christ, or we shall have no part with him. The words of Jesus must wash us, and cleanse us from pride and envy in the members of our human nature flesh.

But if the Word "dwell in us richly," then we shall have a part with him.

May we all have a part in the resurrection to eternal life; and with the multitude of glorified saints, raise our voices in praise to his everlasting Name!

Even—

"Unto him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:5). —C.H.T.

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Hell Is the Grave

Eternal Torture a Fiendish Invention of the Fleshly Mind

"The dead know not anything . . . There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest"—Eccl. 9:5-10

(It may be thought we are contending with a doctrine no longer believed and taught, but eternal torture of the damned is still Christendom's official creed, and a necessary corollary of the immortal soul theory.)

OF all the false doctrines of orthodox Christendom, or any other system of religious speculation, surely it can be safely said that the hideous conception of eternal excruciating agony for nine-tenths of the human race in the flames of hell has been the most destructive of faith in God and belief in the Bible—the most productive of atheism and scepticism.

There is no greater blasphemy or perversion of Scripture than to attribute such characteristics to God.

True indeed, He reveals Himself as a God of justice and vengeance upon the wicked and disobedient, and His firm declared purpose is to bring every evil work into remembrance and to pour just retribution upon the ungodly.

But He is never portrayed in Scripture as a merciless fiend who delights in the wanton and purposeless eternal torture of His Own creatures.

We are told, on the contrary, that in the great coming day of judgment, the wicked shall, according to their deserts, receive few or many stripes with shame and contempt, and that the end of them all is eternal destruction—a complete blotting out—a consuming into smoke and ashes.

The conception of eternal intense torture for the vast majority of mankind, with the few redeemed forever feasting their eyes on the scene with pitiless satisfaction, is so hideous and monstrous that it is difficult to think any rational mind has ever believed it.

Perhaps when some sensational preacher luridly portrays such characters as Hitler and his inhuman accomplices in eternal torments, people in the heat of emotion find it possible to conceive of such things and find satisfaction in them.

But just carry it to its logical conclusion. We are asked to believe by the exponents of hellfire traditions that of the people we work with, our neighbours, those we see and meet from day to day—of these the vast majority will, after a few brief years in which sorrow predominates, go to a hopeless destiny of eternal torment by vicious fiends of evil.

This is the view of the providence of God that we are shut up to if we accept these traditions of immortal-soulism and eternal torment.

We would not, upon reflection, wish this fate upon the worst character we could conceive of, yet upon the flimsy basis of a few scraps of misunderstood Scripture, the orthodox churches have, it seems almost eagerly, built up this fiendish and inhuman doctrine, and have wilfully or ignorantly ignored all the plain teachings of the Bible about the dead sleeping, being at rest, knowing nothing, having no thoughts, activities or emotions; and about the wicked being destroyed, consumed into smoke and ashes, being cut off, perishing in their own corruption and like their own dung.

Eternal torment is taught in theory, but denied in fact, for actually, no one is ever actually believed to go there. Some redeeming feature or deathbed repentance or extreme unction takes them to heaven.

This is one of the system's greatest evils. It is so horrible they are afraid to face it, and they consequently make a mockery of all the principles of equity and justice, and obliterate all distinctions of good and evil, right and wrong, by a thick layer of sentiment.

The Bible teaches plainly that the wicked will be destroyed—and they WILL, to trouble creation no more. This is just, reasonable, scriptural.

HELL

THE original and root meaning of the English word "hell" is "a covered, hidden, concealed, or secret place." As a verb, to hell or to hele is given in Webster to mean "to cover, conceal or keep secret," and it is still used in this sense in some parts of England, as to hele a house with a roof, or to hele seeds by covering them.

But this word, like many others, has unfortunately acquired a false ecclesiastical colour and meaning.

USE IN COMMON VERSION

THE word "hell" occurs in our common version 54 times, 31 in the Old Testament and 23 in the New. It is a translation of 4 different words in the original, one (**Sheol**) in the Old, and three (**Hades, Gehenna, Tartaros**) in the New.

The last, **Tartaros**, occurs but once (2 Pet 2:4).

Gehenna appears 12 times, it is always translated "hell," and it is always connected with burning and corruption.

Sheol and **Hades**, the other two, are synonymous terms, as will be demonstrated, and altogether occur 76 times. 41 times they are translated hell, 32 times grave, and 3 times pit.

While **Sheol**, **Hades** and **Tartaros** refer to the same place or state, **Gehenna** is entirely different in meaning.

SHEOL

SHEOL is a term for the place of the dead **in general**, and for this reason "hell" in its original and uncorrupted meaning is a better word for **sheol** than "grave" is

"Grave" primarily means the **specific** place of a particular corpse or corpses. The Hebrew for this is **geber**, as—

"My grave (**geber**) which I digged for me" (Gen. 50:5).

"The king wept at the grave (**geber**) of Abner" (2 Sam. 3:32).

On the other hand, **sheol** in the Hebrew and "hell" in its primary meaning are **general** terms as (Psa. 6:5) —

"In the grave (**sheol**) who shall give Thee thanks?"

"Hell (**sheol**) and destruction are never full" (Pro. 27:20).

However, while "grave" used as a general term will well fit all passages where **sheol** occurs, "hell" in the popular sense would be absurd in some places and would immediately reveal the popular error. For example, where Jacob says (Gen. 37:35)—

"I will go down into **sheol** unto my son mourning."

And where Job says (14:13)—

"O that Thou wouldest hide me in **sheol**."

It is not to be supposed that either Jacob or Job anticipated or hoped to go to eternal torment.

In all the 65 places where **sheol** is found, there is not one that gives any countenance to the idea of a place of burning torment of the damned. It is always in the sense of the general hidden state of the dead—**all the dead**—good and bad alike.

And not only is **sheol** used as the resting place of all the dead indiscriminately, but we have specific mention of **righteous and approved** men going there and **expecting** to go there.

We have seen this of Jacob and Job. Also David (Psa. 88:3), Hezekiah (Isa. 38:10), Christ (Psa. 16:10; Acts 2:31; 3:15), and all the faithful (compare Hos. 13:14 with 1 Cor. 15:54-56).

Sheol is a place of silence—

"Let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in **sheol**" (Psa. 31:17).

"The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (Psa. 115:17).

There is no remembrance there (Psa. 6:5)—

"In death there is no remembrance of Thee, in **sheol** who shall give Thee thanks?"

Sheol is "in the dust" and there we "rest together" "in darkness" (Job 17:13-16). Beauty is consumed there (Psa. 49:14). There is no work or knowledge there—

"There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in **sheol** whither thou goest"
(Ecc. 9:10).

It is dark there, and is called the "land of forgetfulness," and "destruction"—

"Wilt Thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise Thee?"

"Shall Thy loving kindness be declared in **sheol**? Or Thy faithfulness in destruction?"

"Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark? And Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" (Psa. 88:10-12).

The "mighty" are spoken of as lying there with "their swords under their heads" (Eze. 32:27). This is a clear reference to the ancient custom of burying warriors in their graves with their weapons of war, but quite at variance with the traditional hell of torment.

THE STATE OF THE DEAD

AND what we are told elsewhere concerning the state of the dead fully harmonizes with what we have learned about **sheol**. Death is always associated with oblivion, corruption, dissolution, returning to the dust, passing away as a shadow, the end of thought, knowledge, activity or memory.

Consider what Job says of the state of the dead and see how IMPOSSIBLE it is to harmonize with it the tradition of reward or punishment at death—

"But man dieth and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost (**gava**—expires), and where is he?"

"As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: so man lieth down and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their SLEEP"
(Job 14:10-15).

Where is heavenly bliss or torment? He continues—

"O that Thou wouldest hide me in **sheol**, that Thou wouldest keep me secret, until Thy wrath be passed, that Thou wouldest appoint me a set time and remember me!"

In his affliction, he looked forward to the unconscious, peaceful rest in **sheol** until the day of resurrection and judgment. He had no illusions about **sheol** or hell being a place of fiery torment. He knew that there the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest, they lie still and are quiet together, for he says (Job 3:11-19—

"Why died I not from the womb? Why did I not expire (**gava**) when I came out of the belly? Why did the knees prevent me? Or why the breasts that I should suck?"

"For now should I have lain still and been quiet. I should have slept, then had I been at rest, with kings and counsellors of the earth, which build desolate places for themselves: or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver:

"Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been: as infants which never saw light.

"There the wicked cease from troubling and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there, the servant is free from his master."

Such is the great silent congregation of the dead, all together in one sleeping host: kings, counsellors, princes, stillborn infants, the wicked, the weary, the prisoners, the small, the great, the servant and the master. And of them all the preacher says (Ecc. 9:5)—

"The living know that they shall die, but THE DEAD KNOW NOT ANYTHING."

"In death there is no remembrance of Thee" (Psa. 6:5).

"The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (Psa. 115:17).

* * *

As to any part of man continuing in consciousness after death, the Scriptures rule out any such theory.

All the terms that are used in Hebrew to define the element of life or spirit or breath in man are similarly employed with respect to animals—

Nephesh—"soul, life, body, or person"; **Chayah**—"life abstractly considered"; **nephesh chayiah**—"living soul or creatures"; **ruach**—"breath or spirit"; and **neshamah**—"breath."

All these terms are applied to animals just as to man. And of both the preacher says (Ecc. 3:19)—

"For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts . . . as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath (**ruach**)."

And what is "death" in the **one** case is "death" in the **other**—the opposite of life, the absence of all life, and of all the things that make up life—vitality, action, knowledge, sensation, emotion, consciousness.

Death is darkness, silence, forgetfulness, corruption, dissolution, smoke, ashes, dust, oblivion—

"All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."

All through the Scriptures the picture is the same—

"Man goeth to his long home, the mourners go about the streets . . . then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit (**ruach**—breath) shall return to God Who gave it" (Ecc. 12:5-7).

"His breath (same word—**ruach**) goeth forth, he returneth to his earth: in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psa. 146:4).

"Thou takest away their breath (**ruach**) they (the animals—see context) die, and return to their dust (Psa. 104:29).

We know the common, simple meaning of death. We use the word without any difficulty, and we use it of animals just the same as of humans.

Again Paul, when comforting the Thessalonians concerning those who had died, does not say that they are in heaven in bliss and full consciousness as all the clergy tell us, and that the living will soon go to join them there.

He never mentions anything like this, strangely enough, but he says, on the very CONTRARY (1 Thess. 4:13-18), that the dead in Christ are ASLEEP, and that at the coming of Christ they will arise from that condition to join the living in his presence.

And many times we find Jesus, Paul, and others in Scripture, speaking of the dead as being asleep, and not only just asleep, but "asleep **in the dust of the earth**" (Dan. 12:2). How can this possibly be if they are wide awake in heaven or even wider awake in hell?

DEATH, NOT TORTURE, IS THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN

SUCH is death, and the Scriptures declare repeatedly that it is death that is the great penalty for sin. Right from the beginning, death is the sentence, and the wording of that sentence as originally given shows clearly what is meant. God said to Adam as a consequence of his disobedience (Gen. 2:17)—

"Thou shalt surely DIE."

There was no threatened eternal torment, but on the contrary Adam was told (Gen. 3:19)—

"In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread, till thou RETURN UNTO THE GROUND: for out of it wast thou taken: for DUST THOU ART AND UNTO DUST SHALT THOU RETURN."

Paul says, commenting upon the Adamic sentence— (Rom. 6:23)—

"The wages of sin is death."

"By one man's offence death reigned" (Rom. 5:17).

And Rom. 6:21—

"The end of those things (the works of the flesh) is death."

—not eternal living torment, but DEATH.

"Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth DEATH" (Jam 1:15).

The penalty of death and destruction is both just and merciful, the penalty of eternal torture is neither just nor merciful.

THE WICKED DESTROYED, NOT TORTURED

DEATH, we have seen, is oblivion and destruction, and death is the wages of sin. The term "DESTROY" is often used of the fate of the wicked. After the "few or many stripes" of chastisement, the end of all is destruction.

The popular conception leaves no room for few or many stripes, for it sweepingly gives all the full maximum penalty possible, eternal agony in hell, millions and millions and millions and millions of years for the sins of so brief a lifetime, and this for the overwhelming majority of mankind, for Jesus says (Matt. 7:13)—

"Broad is the way that leadeth to **destruction**, and **MANY** there be which go in thereat.

"And narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and **FEW** there be that find it."

But here again we note that in the Bible it is not eternal torment that is threatened but **destruction**, which is something very different.

In Matt. 25:46, Jesus says the wicked go into everlasting punishment," and what this everlasting punishment consists of is explained by Paul (2 Thess. 1:7-9) where he says that when Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, the wicked shall be "punished with everlasting **destruction**." Again (Heb. 10:27)—

"Judgment and fiery indignation shall devour the adversary."

Jesus says (Matt. 10:28) that God is able to —

"DESTROY both soul and body in Gehenna."

And Paul told the Philippians (3:19) regarding the fleshly-minded—

"Their end is destruction."

Peter uses as strong a word as possible when he says (2 Pet. 2:12)—

"These, as natural brute beasts . . . shall **utterly perish** in their own corruption."

David declares (Psa. 37:20)—

"The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away."

And Malachi 4:1—

"For, behold the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."

Psalm 145:20—

"The Lord preserveth all them that love Him, but all the wicked will He destroy."

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED IS FUTURE

IT will have been noted from many of the foregoing quotations that the judgment and punishment of the wicked is connected with a special day **IN THE FUTURE**, when Christ will return from heaven.

This is important, for it clearly demonstrates the error of the conception of immediate reward or punishment at death. In Matt. 16:27, Jesus says—

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, **THEN** shall he reward every man according to his works."

He says in John 5:27-29:

"The Father hath given him (Jesus) authority to execute judgment . . . for the **hour is coming** in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of condemnation."

Paul declares (2 Tim. 4:1)—

"He **SHALL** judge the quick and the dead **AT HIS APPEARING** and his Kingdom."

And again (I Cor. 4:5)—

"Judge nothing before the time, **UNTIL THE LORD COME**, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and **THEN** shall every man have praise of God."

And Peter (2 Pet. 3:7) speaks of a **FUTURE**—

"Day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

The word here translated "perdition" is many times translated "destruction." The future aspect of this judgment, the fact that it is always connected with the day appointed when Jesus will return from heaven to judge and destroy, should be well noted throughout. Paul says (Acts 17:31)—

"God hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that, man whom He hath ordained."

Malachi says of the same day, and of the destiny of the wicked (4:1-4)—

"For behold the day **COMETH**, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

"The wicked . . . shall be ashes under the soles of the feet of the righteous **IN THE DAY** that I shall do this, saith the Lord."

Not eternal torture at death, but complete burning destruction in the day of judgment is the consistent scriptural picture.

One of the biggest inconsistencies of the popular belief is the fact that resurrection and judgment at the last day must be either flatly denied, or else it comes after centuries of bliss in heaven or torture in hell.

Where is the necessity or reason for either resurrection or judgment if the dead go to their reward at death? It would not only be unnecessary—it would be plain absurdity!

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH, IF THE LORD WILL

No Right to Eat

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are ONE bread and ONE body; for we are all partakers of that one bread" — 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

TO better understand the meaning and the purpose of the apostle's words in the above quotation, it is necessary to have a good understanding of the word "communion."

It is from the Greek word "**koinonia**" and means: "an act of having or using a thing in common." The word is translated "communion" 4 times, and "fellowship" 12 times in the New Testament, and in all these places means the same thing.

However, other words are translated "fellowship" in other places in the Scriptures where the word means "partnership, or joint partaker with," and in all these references it is a command NOT to have fellowship with certain things.

Those who have communion of the blood and body of Christ cannot at the same time have fellowship or communion with unrighteousness or darkness (2 Cor. 6:14); with idols (1 Cor. 10:20); with the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:11).

Communion or fellowship involves much more than the mere formality of partaking of the "sacrament" as practised by the apostate churches.

Partaking of the cup of blessing and the bread which we break is the outward expression of participation in the things related to the death of Christ. This participation involves unity, oneness of mind, a body of believers united in love, joint partakers of the emblems representing Christ's shed blood and broken body.

Such communion, if adulterated with anything which mars this unity, is not communion at all. The apostle says (1 Cor. 10:21)—

"Ye CANNOT drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons."

When the Corinthians had corrupted the memorial supper by failing to recognize its significance in the manner in which they partook of it, Paul says—

"THIS is not to eat the Lord's supper" (1 Cor. 11:20).

It was not the communion of the blood and body of Christ. When a motley group of people of diverse beliefs meet together and partake what they call the Lord's supper, it is but a mockery, bearing little or no resemblance to the communion of the Lord's table.

Communion in the scriptural sense, involves not only unity of the body of believers; it involves separation from everything contrary to that unity.

Obviously there were some in Paul's day who sought to impose themselves upon the body who would have marred the unity essential to communion. In Heb. 13:10, we read—

"We have an altar, whereof they have NO RIGHT TO EAT which serve the tabernacle."

To have permitted the Judaizers—or those who sought to serve Christ while still serving the tabernacle—to eat at the table of the Lord with believers in the grace of Christ would have perverted the communion of the blood of Christ, who, by the shedding of his blood abrogated those things related to the tabernacle. It would have thereby given 'Godspeed' to the perverters of the Word of God—a thing forbidden (2 John 10).

Likewise, to become partakers with any who believe, teach or practise things contrary to divine instruction is to create division and disunity, and destroy communion.

"Separation" has become an ugly word for those who seek "liberal communion," but fellowship at the Lord's table DEMANDS SEPARATION from everything that is false, everything that is unrighteous. Absolute separateness from these is JUST AS IMPORTANT as close adherence to truth and righteousness.

To "commune" with false teachers is to be a "partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 9-11).

No one can have communion with evil (and false teaching is evil), and at the same time participate in communion with the body of Christ. No one can fellowship false teachers and at the same time have fellowship with the Father and the Son. "Close communion" is a solemn obligation, as saith the Scriptures—

"Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord. . ."

The "receiving" by God as recognized sons and daughters is here clearly made contingent and dependent upon obedience to the first part—the "coming out" and "being separate." —O.B.

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The Sons of Zadok

"Even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel" — Num. 25:12-13

THE functions of the Levitical priesthood to be restored in the Temple of Ezekiel's prophecy, will be the duty of the immortal saints. The "priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok," are the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, who will, with "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," memorialize that sacrifice.

As this is a matter of sober truth, an insistence on it must be accompanied by proof, for God does not leave us to speculate on important matters, but gives us evidence whereby we may —

"Give a reason of the hope that is in us."

There is ample evidence of this, as well as of other important facts.

To ABRAHAM and his seed were the promises made of an everlasting possession of the land. Now, how do we understand this? Take Paul's line of reasoning —

"First that which is natural; afterwards, that which is spiritual."

Are not two classes involved in the promise—a seed according to the flesh, and a seed according to the faith? Do we not find that God's promise is completely fulfilled to these two classes?

In the first case, by their possession of the land for the age-lasting period of the Mosaic regime, and in the second case, by their possession of the land during the age-lasting Messianic reign.

To DAVID and his seed was the promise made of the establishment of his throne for ever, and does not the Word of Truth show us the fulfilment of this promise in the same way as the other?

* * *

NOW the priesthood in question is the Levitical, through Aaron and his seed. The first promise is in Exo. 40:15 —

"And thou shalt anoint them (Aaron's sons) as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto Me in the priest's office, for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations."

In Numbers 25 there is an interesting account of the zeal displayed at Baalpeor by Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, when the people went after strange gods. It was on this occasion the Lord said (vs. 12-13) —

"Behold I give unto him my covenant of an everlasting priesthood because he was zealous for his God and made an atonement for the children of Israel."

It would be well here to notice the **reason** of the covenant being established with that branch of Aaron's family, for it is evidently to this that Malachi refers in chapter 2 of his prophecy.

Like Abraham and David, he was first proved in faith and works, and his seed (representing two classes) was laid hold of by the Deity for the establishment of the priestly covenant—everlasting in the same sense as the Abrahamic and Davidic.

* * *

IT will be remembered that Aaron had four sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. The two former died for offering strange fire, and of the two latter we must look for the everlasting priesthood Mosaically in the line of Eleazar, for Phinehas was Eleazar's son.

Many were the vicissitudes that befell this branch of the family, but the Lord was faithful to His word, and in Samuel's time, the priesthood, in the person of Eli, having gotten into the wrong channel (for Eli was a descendant of Ithamar), God sent a special message that He would rectify this state of things (1 Sam. 2:35)—

"I will raise Me up a faithful priest that shall do according to that which is in My heart and in My mind, and I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before Mine Anointed for ever."

We should also notice particularly the wording of this covenant, so broad and yet so specific, so like the other covenants.

The promise began to take effect in David's reign, he distributed the priestly functions between 24 orders, and Zadok (the lineal descendant of Phinehas, the holder of the promise) was high priest.

What little is recorded of him answers exactly to the requirements of the prophetic message sent to Eli. In two political rebellions he remained faithful to David and, of course, in being faithful to David he was faithful to God, as David was God's representative, or Anointed, on the throne of Israel.

Zadok was thus the faithful priest who should walk before the Lord's Anointed for ever (his fleshly seed can be traced to the captivity).

Now this phrase "for ever" must have a scriptural interpretation, just as we have seen "everlasting" to have.

We never find that the occupation of the high places of the earth during the Messiah's reign is promised on a basis of fleshly descent.

That is a rule without an exception, so that if Zadok's family are to be in priestly authority "for ever" before the oil-anointed David, and "for ever" before the spirit-anointed David, it must be on the same principle of —

"First that which is natural, afterward that which is spiritual."

All covenants are made on the basis of faith and obedience, and fulfilled in conformity with those principles. It will not be possible for Levi to be in authority in Messiah's age-lasting reign, unless it is on the higher platform of a posterity according to faith and obedience. It was on that basis the covenant was made, and on that basis the covenant will be fulfilled.

The lapsing of the promises to Israel at the present moment is due to failure on their part to conform to the required standard. The covenant, as fulfilled with natural Israel, gave the opportunity of their becoming spiritual Israel, and if they are unworthy of a continuance of the former, why should a section of them be exalted to co-operate with the latter?

It is unquestionable that the covenants made with Abraham and David included in Christ a fleshly as well as a spiritual descent. The same thing holds good with the covenant made with Levi, for in the only possible way Christ descended from him also.

Mary's father descended from David, and her mother from Aaron, so that in Christ, Abraham and David and Aaron meet, and as the kingly office stands in duration before the priestly, so Mary's paternal descent stands in importance before the maternal.

* * *

AS TO the unreasonableness of promoting a class to great authority as teachers of God's ways "in the restitution of all things" who proved themselves unfit to be entrusted with the continuance of any at all during Israel's past times of favor, Malachi has something to say.

It is unnecessary to quote the whole of his testimony here, but a reading of Mal. 2:1-9 will show that God sends a commandment to the priests who had corrupted the covenant and caused many to stumble at the Law. God says He had cursed them, and would corrupt their seed, and make them bare and contemptible before all people. And in vs. 4-5—

"And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you that My covenant might be with Levi, saith the Lord of Hosts.

"My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared Me and was afraid before My Name."

Does this mean that the covenant was to be established with Levi's fleshly seed? Impossible; the whole scope of God's purpose forbids it; the covenant with Levi **will** be established, but not with—

"The Levites that went astray when Israel went astray, which went astray after their idols; they shall bear their iniquity" (Ezek. 44:10).

But it shall stand with those who have followed in the steps of that faith and obedience manifested by Phinehas and Zadok with whom the Levitical covenant was made.

THESE are "the Levites, the priests, the sons of Zadok," that shall go into the Most Holy to offer to Yahweh the fat and the blood (Eze. 44:13-15).

Perhaps the most positive assurance of this is to be found in Deut. 33:8-9. Moses is saying of Levi —

"Let Thy Thummim and Thy Urim be with Thy holy one, whom Thou didst prove at the waters of Meribah,

"Who said to his father and mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed Thy Word and kept Thy covenant.

"They shall teach Jacob Thy judgments and Israel Thy law; they shall put incense before Thee and whole burnt sacrifices upon Thine altar."

* * *

IN Zechariah we have a pictorial or symbolic representation of the ascent from flesh to spirit in connection with the Levitical priesthood.

Contemporary with Zechariah was the high priest Joshua, who occupied a position of peculiar interest, in being entrusted conjointly with Zerubbabel with the care of the returning Jews from the Babylonian captivity, and who, with Zerubbabel, built the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem.

In Zech. 3 we find him clothed with filthy garments, and then with a change of raiment; and as one result of the change, a fair mitre is set on his head—an habiliment, we know, belonging to the Levitical priesthood.

Of course the symbol means Christ, but why is Joshua taken and not Zerubbabel, and why mitred?

Let us look at the same fact as disclosed in Zech. 6:9. Here are certain members of the priestly house, selected with Joshua the high priest, and many crowns are put upon the head of Joshua, whereupon the Lord of Hosts says—

"BEHOLD THE MAN WHOSE NAME IS THE BRANCH! . . .

'He shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.'

It surely does not need very much wisdom to perceive here a multitudinous Christ combining royalty and priesthood. If it is not the fulfilment (in symbol) of the Covenant of Peace (Mal. 2:5 — Num. 6:12) even the Covenant of an Everlasting Priesthood (Num. 25:13), what is it?

* * *

IN speaking of the ascent from flesh to spirit as symbolized by Zechariah, we may ask, what does it involve?

We have seen that God's selection of Levi for a special department of His purpose is not an utter failure, as that tribe has shown, through some of its members, a character that saves the order from obliteration in the new heavens.

Will these "priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok," then simply take their old position?

Not exactly, for their order will be incorporated with another of far superior merits. They had hitherto —

"Served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things,"

But now, having become the heavenly things themselves, through Melchizedek, they form the Body of which he is the Head, and thus become the better priesthood of a better covenant.

They exhibit the attainment of eternal life, and as that is the result of the destruction of sin, surely they are the most fitting mediums to offer Yahweh the emblems of the destruction of the nation's sins, as well as memorialize their own escape from the full penalty of sin.

It would be most incongruous for the Deity to be approached through a human sinful medium after having provided Himself with a priesthood holy, harmless, undefiled. It was on the attainment of

this in the first stage that the Levitical orders ceased, as being only the mediatorial of the Old Covenant—a Covenant that was a picture of, and a stepping-stone to, the New.

Christ, in fulfilling the Law, so completely identified himself with it that he may be said to have absorbed the ceremonial functions within himself, with the result of his becoming a High Priest of a superior order, **proving himself to be the root and cause of the Levitical order.**

Should not the branches, therefore, be grafted on to their own root, and of twain form one NEW MAN, and thus become one ladder between heaven and earth? — Christadelphian, 1889

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.

Fellowship: What Can Be Done?

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another"—John 13:35

Reprinted From the "Berean" of February, 1950

(This aspect of the problem should have our primary attention)

THE question is often asked, "What can be done about the fellowship situation? What about the many who believe alike who are separated by various unhappy circumstances?" We believe much can be done, and should be done.

As we look back over the past 50 years of ecclesial history since brother Roberts fell asleep, there appears much to cause sadness and wonder.

And as the course of events is studied, the evidence of two human traits emerges—innovation, and drift. Together they have worked havoc among us. Many have travelled far beyond the sound, reasonable position and foundation of our pioneer brethren: many have drifted backward and no longer defend with zeal the clear principles of the life and doctrine of the Master.

The purpose of the Berean magazine is to serve, and to help unify and strengthen, those who believe that the Truth has not changed, and need not change.

We do not idolize or glorify brethren Thomas and Roberts, but we recognize their labor and position in relation to the establishment of the Household of Faith in these latter days. We believe they were thoroughly sound brethren who fully understood the fundamentals of the Truth. We are not at all ashamed of them. We feel no need to apologize for their supposed limitations and peculiarities.

We believe they perceived the vagaries of the mind of the flesh, and the folly of "worldly wisdom," much more clearly than their modern would-be correctors.

We are very pained when we see them belittled and condescendingly patronized as well-meaning but somewhat quaint and old-fashioned, in current periodicals. This "modern" trend is not good, sound Christadelphianism.

A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY

BUT the point is, what can be done about unifying those who desire to hold to the old paths of the days of brethren Thomas and Roberts? We believe, in this connection, that the Berean fellowship has a great work and a great responsibility.

And the work to be done is primarily upon ourselves. Every strong, zealous and active ecclesia is a great force for good in the direction of drawing to us those of sound and sincere faith.

Every occasion of worldliness, or laxness, or petty discord, is a stumbling-block in the way of this objective.

Consider an extreme case for the sake of example. Suppose every Berean ecclesia—the whole fellowship—were a perfect, spotless representation of zeal, faith, unity and labor. Would there be any doubt about its drawing into itself all the really sincere and earnest from other groups—the ones truly seeking the more excellent way?

Seeing our good works, they would be bound—in the very nature of things—to examine our foundation, be convinced of its necessity and scripturalness, and take their stand with us.

Suppose, on the other hand, every Berean ecclesia were loose and worldly and spiritually asleep. Regardless of how sound our foundation, would there be the slightest possibility of drawing earnest brethren and sisters to us? Would there be any point in trying to persuade and convince them?

ARE YOU A POWER FOR GOOD: OR A STUMBLINGBLOCK?

SURELY it is obvious from this that a great responsibility rests upon us—upon every individual among us. So much depends upon how we shed forth our light. Let us examine ourselves. Are we—is our ecclesia—a powerful drawing force, or a stumbling-block in the way of true and holy unity?

We know, of course, that at present the attainment of perfection is not possible. But we know too that **this must be the constant aim and goal.** When Jesus says —

“Be ye PERFECT, even as your Father in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5:48).
—he is setting a permanent, unchangeable standard that no one has the right to lower, and every one must ceaselessly strive toward.

Any ecclesia or individual that sets their standard lower than godly perfection, any that are admittedly and self-satisfiedly contented with less, that confessedly find the scriptural standard of perfection offensively restrictive—all such are in this way permitting themselves to be obstacles in the way of true scriptural "reunion" of the right elements.

This consideration is even more important and essential where there are other groups bearing the Christadelphian name in the same city. If we are sound and strong and zealous, we shall inevitably draw the sound and strong and zealous, if there are such.

But if we are weak and lax we are betraying a solemn trust at a time when outstanding faithfulness is most vital to our cause.

MUCH CAN BE DONE: BUT ALL MUST HELP

BRETHREN and sisters, let us constantly bear in mind the far-reaching consequences of our daily walk and our ecclesial conditions, for good or ill. There is much that can be done to restore unity among those who should be at unity.

The Ecclesial News columns are a very important factor in this endeavour. They must reflect zeal, unity, love, and spiritual activity. They must be an avenue of joyful, godly communion to the Household, and a source of mutual stirring-up and encouragement.

Let us—every one—do all in our power to "gather together in one the children of God that are scattered abroad."

* * *

The above editorial was written in 1950. In the following 4 years, a mass-hysteria for "enlarging the circle" swept the brotherhood, and the majority were carried away. It was a terrible time for self-searching; each had to make his stand. We are thankful that many remained steadfast.

It is not for us to glory, but to labor, and to leave the evaluations to God. But we believe we can legitimately take great comfort and encouragement in the gradual strengthening of the bonds of love and zeal and unity among us since those sad days when we mutually endeavoured to regather and regroup the faithful remnants after the storm had past.

We question no one's motives. We prefer to believe all acted in good faith. We are thankful that many have been able to see the unwisdom and unsoundness of the path the majority took, and that many more are coming to see it.

We believe, now as then, that our primary concern, and duty, lies in the course outlined in the editorial above—not, as some have assumed of us, in **disregard** of those who have left us, but rather **FOR THEIR SAKES**.

The Central structure, based, we believe, on unsound principles, is falling apart as the Endeavour movement gains momentum.

The old, all-too-familiar pattern that has led so many back into the murky darkness begins to emerge more clearly. Consider the question of whether Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible. A simple brother, deep in spiritual comprehension, would unhesitatingly answer this in the robust and joyful affirmation, and go his way rejoicing.

But the Endeavour's way is the world's way. Wait, my simple brother, not so fast! Have you considered all the aspects and ramifications? You ask, "Do you believe in the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch." Well, what does "Mosaic" mean? What does "authorship" mean? What does "do" mean? What does "believe" mean? What does "in" mean? What does "the" mean?—etc., etc.

We must call philology and palaeontology and archaeology and anthropology and endless other ologies to our aid. We must consider times and customs, ways and manners. We must obfuscate and pontificate. We must endlessly re-examine every settled question in the light of the latest theories of man's godless foolishness.

One thing the Endeavour Magazine has helped us to see more clearly. That is: the depth of feeling manifested in some of bro. Thomas' denunciations of the enemies of the Truth. We have a more personal understanding of the feeling behind some of David's words in the Psalms, and of Christ's in the Gospels.

The latter two, of course, were inspired. Bro. Thomas was not. We would not say, and he would not say, that he always said the right thing at the right time in the right way. The flesh is weak and tends to harshness under great provocation and depth of emotion.

But we do understand and sympathize with his position much better. We are drawn more closely to him in his battle for the Truth. He was not a man of personal vindictiveness, but when the Truth of God was challenged, or subtly undermined by the wise of the world, he was aroused to burning and vehement passion.

The Endeavour group revealingly manifest themselves and their utter non-comprehension of, and lack of sympathy for, the basic, historic (and we believe sound and scriptural) Christadelphian framework in the following from the Spring, 1964, issue, under the heading: "The Endeavour Magazine—Why?"—

"We regret to have to say that in recent years the censorship imposed on most Christadelphian publications has been stricter than that maintained by the Catholic Church on its publishing agencies.

"This policy arose in the first place when Robert Roberts decided that in the interest of ecclesial unity he should support the interpretations of Dr. Thomas, even where he personally was not fully convinced.

"THIS DECISION WAS OF COURSE POLITICAL, NOT LOGICAL OR MORAL."

* * *

This statement by the Endeavour editors reveals a terrible state of confusion, undreamed-of as a possibility a few years ago.

In the past we have been sympathetic to part of the Endeavour's outlook, blind and misguided as they are in so many ways. Truly the tendency to Pharisaical smugness and self-satisfaction is always present. Truly we all fall far short in both our realization and our fulfilment of our obligations of service to God, to the Brotherhood, and to all mankind. Truly LOVE—holy, divine, spiritual, transforming LOVE—is our greatest and deepest need and duty, in all our activities and relationships.

Truly the Endeavour has put its finger upon a weakness in the Christadelphian structure—a weakness inherent in all human activities—a weakness our pioneer brethren Thomas and Roberts saw even more clearly than their modern critics, and constantly exhorted against. **And they lived the exhortation in their lives of service and sacrifice for the Truth and the Brotherhood.**

But the real underlying trend is becoming more apparent. Confidence leads to boldness, and bro. Roberts' motives are now challenged openly.

If the foundation of Truth established by our pioneer brethren— that which distinguishes us from the churches of the Apostasy—is to be undermined, first brethren Thomas and Roberts must be called in question, and confidence in them must be destroyed. How can this better be accomplished than by telling a new generation that one played politics with the Truth just for the sake of "unity," because he could not accept the interpretations of the other?

The more closely we consider the Apostasy that took the Ecclesia back into the world in the first 3 centuries, the more we are impressed with its remarkable parallelism, even in detail, with the methods and viewpoints and lines of argument and persuasion being used today to accomplish the same end.

* * *

But our great concern should be: WHAT OF OURSELVES? How do we stand? Let us take seriously to heart the Endeavour's criticisms, to the extent that they are justified, for it is the obvious truth of some of these criticisms concerning lack of love, and of zeal, and of large-heartedness, and of compassion, and of labor, and of fellow-feeling for the suffering and unfortunate, that has given the Endeavour its toehold in its work of undermining the Truth.

Our great concern should be self-examination, not in a selfish or self-centered sense, but simply because we can do no eternal good for anyone except on the solid basis of a convincing example of **individual** godliness and a sound haven of ecclesial godliness.

We must turn our attention upon ourselves **because** of our concern for others. Our principal effort and interest and obsession should be to build something good. Anyone can tear down. Anyone can criticize. Anyone can view with alarm and expose others.

But building something worthwhile in a spiritual sense takes time, and patience, and love, and understanding, and constant self-examination and self-sacrifice and self-abnegation.

The drift and shipwreck in other groups should not lead us to fatal complacency and smug self-satisfaction, but urgently and intensely the reverse. These things can easily happen to us. We are but weak, foolish, mortal flesh: only God's help can save us from ourselves

Let us therefore strengthen the bonds of love, deepen the roots of understanding, raise the level of godliness and holiness, increase the dedication of time, and goods, and labor, and prayer, for all mankind, and especially the Household of God!

"The Law of Sin in My Members"

The following, from a Minnesota Crime Commission report, quoted in the April 20, 1964, U.S. News & World Report, pg. 68, is a very striking observational confirmation of the "law of sin which is in our members"—

"WHAT we call delinquent behaviour is as old and universal as man. It is not something to which only an evil or moronic segment of humanity, different from the rest of us, is liable.

"It must be remembered that no infant is born a finished product. On the contrary, every baby starts life as a little savage; is equipped, among other things, with organs and muscles over which he has no control, with an urge for self-preservation, with aggressive drives and emotions like anger, fear and love over which, likewise, he has practically no control.

"He is completely selfish and self-centered. He wants what he wants when he wants it — his bottle, his mother's attention, his playmate's toy, his uncle's watch. And deny him those wants and he seethes with rage and aggression which would be murderous were he not so helpless.

"He is dirty. He has no morals, no knowledge, no skills.

"What this means, of course, is that ALL children, not just certain children, are born delinquent and, if permitted to continue in the self-centered world of his infancy, given free rein to his impulsive actions to satisfy his wants, EVERY child would grow up a criminal, a thief, a killer, a rapist.

"And in the process of growing up, it is normal for every child to be dirty, to fight, to grab, to steal, to tear things apart, to talk back, to disobey, to evade. Every child has to grow out of delinquent behaviour."

And the author of the article, described as "dean of the nation's juvenile court judges," sums up another striking sign of the last days of the dark human misrule of the earth—

"I am becoming more and more convinced that, unless we find some way of halting this growth in crime, we are headed to ultimate disaster.

"It cannot go on the way it is going. I envision anarchy—a situation in which ultimately the nation will revert to what is comparable to the law of the jungle."

The whole article is a terribly sad commentary on the disastrous results of man's "wisdom" ignoring and rejecting God's wisdom.

Signs of the Times

WE regret very much that bro. Beauchamp has been unwell, and has not been able to prepare the Signs this month. He hopes, if the Lord will, to resume next month.

Bring Every Thought Into Captivity

"Humble your selves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up"—James 4:10

A MAN who is humble in the sight of the Lord is one who has come to realize what his true relation is toward God, knowing that he is a creature of the dust, condemned to a short life of toil, sorrow and pain that will soon end in the grave.

He knows, too, that whatever he may aspire to over and above the common heritage of the sons of men, must come from God.

The lines of man's destiny as a human being, as a son of Adam, are definitely laid out and well defined by the Word of God, "Which liveth and abideth forever"—

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground" (Gen. 3:19).

"The days of our years are threescore and ten: and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off and we fly away"

(Psa. 90:10).

We need to think on these things that we "be not high minded but fear." The system of divine law given by Moses was designed to keep man in his proper place, and to show him just what his real position was before his Master.

All the details of the service were so arranged as to teach holiness and reverence for God, and to force upon man a realization of his own uncleanness and unworthiness as a death-defiled creature of the ground. A way of approach and worship was arranged for, but only on the basis that would proclaim the greatness of the Creator

Of Moses we read—

"Now the man Moses was very meek above all men on the face of the earth."

This attitude of Moses was very well-pleasing in the sight of God as is shown by the way God exalted him above all the men of his time—

"My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all his house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold.

"Wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?" (Num. 12:8).

In God's final purpose with man there is to be no place for self-esteem and pride; for—

"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

"For the day of the Lord shall be upon everyone that is proud and lofty and upon everyone that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low". (Isa. 2:12-13).

The spirit of Christ, as we find it exemplified in his own life of "meekness and lowliness" and as he has given it to us in his teaching, is purposely given for our instruction—

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and **bringing into captivity every thought** to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

God will hear us now in our approaches to His throne of grace, and He will lift us up at the last and give us all things richly to enjoy IF we are able to learn the lessons of meekness, lowliness and humbleness and submission one to another in love. —E.W.B.

"No Good Thing"

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? . . . He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" — Jer. 17:9; Prov. 28:26

THOSE who by nature are firm have a natural tendency to be harsh and bitter; those who by nature are soft have a tendency to be weak and compromising.

Whatever comes naturally to us must be distrusted, for "in our flesh dwells no good thing." There are no natural virtues. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit."

To pride ourselves on our natural reactions, whatever they are, is to glory in our shame. We are only safe when we are consciously restraining nature and following the Spirit's expressed instructions contrary to nature.

Houston Tape Library

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

These have been recorded for the benefit and pleasure of the Brotherhood throughout the world, and they are happy to send them on loan to all who would like them.

A variety is sent each time (2 tapes, 4 addresses), in returnable shipping cases, and a record is kept to avoid duplication. All tapes are duplicates, and therefore may be kept as long as desired. If you wish to keep any **permanently**, just return in its place any tape (new or used). There is no cost.

Write to bro. Charles Banta, 815 Boston, Deer Park, Texas.

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

Richard Gathering

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, July 3-5, 1964

We call especial attention to the Gathering planned by the Richard ecclesia, as the date is close and it has not previously been listed.

Due to their location they do not see many brethren and sisters, and are especially happy when any make the effort to visit them.

Will all planning to attend please notify bro. Fred G. Jones, Route 1, Richard, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Flesh and Blood Cannot Inherit the Kingdom

QUESTION: "*Paul says 'Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God' (1 Cor. 15:50). You Christadelphians teach that the Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of Israel after the flesh restored, and consequently Israel after the flesh inherit it. You are at variance with Paul.*"

ANSWER: No! Israel after the flesh will NOT "**inherit** the Kingdom of God," but merely **live under it** in subordination to those who will inherit it.

The inheritor of an estate is the man who owns it and has the disposal of all its affairs. The servants and tenants are not inheritors.

Flesh and blood CANNOT inherit the Kingdom of God. Only immortals—men changed from the natural or animal to the spiritual—will reign with Christ. Only—

"The SAINTS take the Kingdom and possess the Kingdom for ever" (Dan. 7:18-27).

The rest, Israel after the flesh included, will be in the position of the servants and tenants, except that their lords will rule them not to make a gain of them as the lords of the present order do, but to bless them and fill the earth with the Father's glory. —**R.R., 1873.**

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