

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.

CONTENTS

ECCLESIAL NEWS: Boston, San Angelo.....	Inside Front Cover
EDITORIAL: Pressing Toward the Mark	257
THREE DAYS AND A HALF (Bro. Thomas)	259
Perfect and Complete in All the Will of God (R.R.)	262
MY DAYS AND MY WAYS (Bro. Roberts) Part 21	263
The Revival of the Apostolic Faith	267
EXAMINE YOURSELVES	268
Books Available	274
Be Ye Holy	275
The Wisdom That Is From Above	275
THIS IS MY FRIEND	276
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC INQUISITION	284
CURRENT WORLD EVENTS Related to God's Purpose	286

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

BOSTON, Mass. 02115-Hastings Hall, 320 Huntington; Ph. (617) 536-7800- S.S. 10:30 am; Mem. 11:45 am; Lect. 2 pm 1st & 3rd Suns.; Class Wed. 7:30 pm at YWCA, Stuart St., Boston. Bro. Kenneth MacKellar, 86 Walnut, Reading, Mass. 01867; Phone (617) 944-9094.

SINCE last writing we have had the pleasure of fellowship with bro. & sis. D. Gwalchmai (London); and recently of bro. & sis. Fred Higham Sr. and their daughter, sis. Beth Higham (Detroit). Bro. Higham gave us the word of exhortation, and the ecclesia enjoyed a pleasant afternoon together with our visitors.

Sis. Inez Cummings (Miami) was another visitor from afar.

We had an interesting exchange of lecturing brethren from Worcester this Spring season. Strangers were few but the talks were enjoyed and we plan to continue them this Fall. Included were: bro. Wm. Davey, bro. & sis. Edgar Davey, bro. & sis. Wesley Prentice. Bro. & sis. Waid also visited from Worcester.

Mutual enjoyment of our Sunday School outings was had by adults and children alike, in Worcester and in Boston.

We send our ecclesial greetings to all our brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ.

—bro. Kenneth MacKellar

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SAN ANGELO, Tex.—English Room, Cactus Hotel—(2nd & 4th Sundays): S.S. 10 a.m.; Mem. 11 (Other Suns, home of bro. M. Edwards). Phones near hall; bro. Bill Muter (915) 653-7434; sis. LaRue (Mrs. Donald) Smith (915) 655-7665. Bro. Melvin Edwards. R 1, Paint Rock, Tex. 76866.

SINCE the Gathering at Hye closed, Aug. 7, we have enjoyed very much the company of bro. Randell (Portland), and bro. & sis. William Sharp (So. Calif.).

We appreciated so very much having bro. Randell at our Friday evening Bible Class at bro. & sis. Billy Muter's home. His explanations were very beneficial. There were 10 present.

Bro. Randell gave the exhortation at our meeting Aug. 14, which was very encouraging to us all.

It is with great joy that we announce that GARY SMITH, a Sunday School student, after a good confession of the One Faith, was immersed into the Saving Name of Christ on Aug. 14. He is a son of sis. LaRue Smith.

We pray that our young brother may hold out faithfully until the end, and have an entrance into God's glorious Kingdom that is to be set up here on earth.

Recently we had a total of 23 (brothers and sisters and their families) who enjoyed assembling at bro. & sis. Billy Muter's home for lunch and to converse on the Truth.

On July 17 we welcomed bro. Bob Wolfe at the table of the Lord. And we enjoyed having bro. & sis. Richard Wolfe, of the Lampasas ecclesia, visiting in our homes recently.

On Aug. 21 we welcomed bro. & sis. Ross Wolfe at the Lord's table, and were spiritually uplifted by an exhortation by bro. Ross, at the home of bro. & sis. Melvin Edwards. We also enjoyed their 2-day visit in our homes.

—bro. Melvin Edwards

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.

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

EDITORIAL

Pressing Toward the Mark

"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"—Matt. 6:20

ALMOST every person has an objective of some kind. No matter what phase of life we examine, we find people looking with anticipation to an end toward which their efforts are directed, being hopeful that some day their labor will be rewarded.

In business circles, this takes various forms. We see it in both trades and professions, where men and women take long periods of training in schools and universities. This is often followed by protracted terms of apprenticeship.

During all this period, their thoughts are centered on the future as they hope for the time to come when their ambitions will be realized, and they will become successful in the vocation of their choice.

We, too, have similar objectives because of the necessity of providing for our daily food, and other requirements of this life. Such action is in harmony with the spiritual, as well as natural standpoint. Paul says:

"If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an infidel"—1 Tim. 5:8.

In the matter of making provision for the things of this life, Paul set a good example in many ways. When writing to the believers at Thessalonica, he was careful to remind them:

"Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you"—2 Thess. 3:8.

We are expected to try to be in a position to "minister" to the needs of others (Luke 8:3); and to be able to "give relief" when the need arises (Acts 11:29)—and there is always need (Matt. 26:11).

But we are commanded not to labor to be rich (Prov. 23:4), or, as Jesus expresses it, "Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth" (Matt. 6:19). Why? Because "**where your treasure is, there will your heart be also**" (Matt. 6:21). Another time Jesus said (Matt. 19:24)—

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God."

While Paul realized that temporal things were essential to human affairs, he also understood that a **far greater provision must be made for the future**—a future that goes beyond all that is comprehended in this transitory life. Paul's determination to succeed is expressed thus (Phil. 3:13-14)—

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do:

"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before—

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

In the first place, he wanted to forget his former life as a Pharisee, and to reach, or stretch forth, unto those things which were ahead of him, or the joy set before him.

Then, says Paul, I press toward the mark. To press, or pursue, or follow with a view to overtake, or adopt measures to obtain his objective.

There was nothing lukewarm about Paul's manner of "walking in newness of life." The record in the Acts of the Apostles, and his letters, reveal one of the most unusual men that ever lived.

From the day that his journey to Damascus was intercepted by a great light from heaven, Paul never faltered, hesitated, nor swerved in his course of utter devotion to Christ, in the face of every conceivable hardship and danger.

Therefore, when the time came to die, he could say without any boasting whatever—

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith.

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day:

"And not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing"—2 Tim. 4:7-8.

This is the man that could say in all seriousness, "Be imitators of me, **as I am of Christ.**" Now that the question faces us, **what are we doing about it?** Are we really trying to imitate Paul, or have we joined company with Demas who, in love with this present world, deserted him?

From the day of our acceptance of the obligations of the Gospel, we face two paths—the path of the wicked, and the path of the just. We must choose between them because it is impossible to walk in both of them at the same time. "Ponder the path of thy feet," says Wisdom, "let all thy ways be established"—

"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.

"Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

"The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day"—Prov. 4:14-19.

Therefore, if we are not imitators of Paul, and are not walking in the path of life, it would be far better not to preach the Gospel at all, for the Gospel calls us to come out of the world.

If, in our preaching, we tell individuals that they must give up the things of the world, and do not give them up ourselves, we create confusion, because we are feigning to be what we are not. That is a dangerous course.

Brethren throughout the world must arouse themselves, and realize that the high standards of the Truth are being abandoned on every hand. Many are trying to walk in one path that leads to the Kingdom, and in another path that leads in the opposite direction.

We thank God that there are a few who know that such a method is impossible. They also know that the situation is not hopeless, for when Jesus comes, he will find **some** (not all) who are watching, and **some** who are ready.

If we would be among the "some," then we must exercise vigilance, and be on the alert constantly, and remain steadfast to the end in the one faith. That must be our objective.

As bro. Welch said 70 yrs. ago:

"I would thunder these words in the ears of the Lord's Household, and write them upon their minds with a pen of iron, and stamp them upon their hearts with an impression that never grows cold, but burneth continually—

"Let us be wise TODAY, for our today may never see tomorrow."

—Editor

Three Days and a Half

"And they shall see among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations, their corpses 3½ days. And they shall not suffer their corpses to be put into tombs."

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

THE **ptomata**, in this text (Rev. 11:9) rendered "corpses," are so called because they had fallen down from their former position of "standing before the god of the earth." They were to be in this prostrate condition until something providential should occur to cause them to "stand upon their feet"; when, of course, they would no longer be corpses. The text before us, then, informs us that the witnessing prophets, having finished their tormenting testimony, were silenced.

When witnesses are put to silence, they are symbolically dead. And so long as compelled by authority to keep silence, they are in the death-state.

And though they may continue associated into bodies, yet being forbidden to assemble, and to propagate their principles upon pain of death, as by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, they are—to all witnessing intents and purposes—dead bodies, or corpses.

They were reduced to this condition of death in all the breadth of the Great City over which the "Deity of the earth" exercised ecclesiastical sovereignty; not in France alone, but in Italy, and other papal countries also. This appears from the formula—

"They shall see among the peoples, etc., their corpses."

They must have been put to silence among these peoples, tribes, tongues and nations, or they could not have been seen by them as unburied corpses.

These nationalities had often experienced the potent effects of their witnessing when "in their days of the prophecy" they had turned the waters into blood: but this they were now no longer able to do, for they had fallen down from their standing in their midst; and the time was come for these "waters upon which the Great Harlot sits," to rejoice over them in this day of their prostration.

Now, when people are dead, it is usual for the living to put them out of sight, or to bury them, as soon as possible; but, in the case of these corpses "they would not suffer them to be entombed."

Who would not suffer it? Their enemies? Or some others friendly towards them? Certainly not their enemies; for these did their best to destroy them, and to blot out the remembrance of them for ever.

It was the protection afforded them in the Protestant States that prevented their burial and decomposition.

The refugee witnesses that fled by 100's of 1000's from the presence of the Deity of the earth and his regal adherents, settled in Holland, Britain, Protestant Germany, and America, where, under the protection of the laws, they existed as corporate societies, but bearing no testimony as of old.

Some of these governments remonstrated in their behalf, which was not without influence in staying the destroyer's hand. Hence, an unburied remnant of them was permitted to remain in the breadth of the Great City—a prostrate remnant no longer able to testify, but waiting in silence for their resurrection to life and power.

And what length of time was to elapse from the slaying of the witnessing bodies in 1685, to their resurrection? The answer of the text is in mystical terms "3½ days."

Now, during all the time of their lying dead and unburied in the breadth of the Great City, no one was able rightly to conjecture what number of years was signified by this enigmatical formula.

But when they arose and "stood upon their feet," they convulsed the Great City, and made it tremble in all its ten kingdoms. There could be no mistaking the fact that the advocates of civil and religious liberty and the rights of man, who had been so cruelly massacred by Louis XIV, were again, in the reign of Louis XVI, in intense and terrible activity.

This was, therefore, a "resurrection" of the same class that had been slain. New life had entered into them, and they were again a power in the state.

On May 15, 1789, the States General of France, consisting of 601 deputies of the Third Estate, 285 nobles, and 308 clergy—in all 1254 representatives—opened their sitting at Versailles. The Third Estate, which was the popular element, desired that the 3 orders should form but one assembly. This the nobles and clergy at first refused to do.

On June 17, however, some of the clergy having joined the Third Estate, the deputies declared their assembly to be the only legal one, and constituted themselves as The National Assembly; which, on the 27th, was joined by all the rest.

On Aug. 23, this new assembly published a decree proclaiming Liberty of opinions, religious as well as political; on Oct. 1, it made a declaration of the Rights of Man in society; and on Dec. 24, issued a decree declaring all Frenchmen who are not Catholics admissible to all offices, civil and military.

Civil and religious liberty and the rights of man were the ancient testimony, both of the true believers, and of "the Earth" that helped them; and here we find the doctrine authoritatively reaffirmed by "the Earth" in its National Assembly, which restores these inestimable blessings to all non-catholic Frenchmen, who had been so mercilessly deprived of them in Oct., 1685.

A Louis had taken away this liberty from his non-catholic subjects; and his descendant by the same class of people was compelled to restore it.

Here, then, are two important and signal dates—Oct., 1685, and Oct., 1789.

These decrees of the National Assembly were as "the Spirit of life from the Deity," and on July 10, 1790, they "stood upon their feet;" for the Earth's Assembly on that day decreed that the property of the expelled Huguenots unsold at date, confiscated by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, should be restored to their heirs.

They called this the National Justice, which it was the providential mission of the Third Estate to execute; and with terrible fidelity did they fulfil it in vindicating the oppressed, and in punishing the oppressor.

Now, between 1685 and 1790, is a period of 105 years. This is the duration of the death state in which the witnesses were deficient of all political life; and must consequently be the sum in common years of the mystical formula "3½ days."

But, then, the enigma still remains to be solved, namely, upon what principle do "3½ days" represent 105 years? As we have seen, two years after 1685, Peter Jurieu proclaimed to the world, truly, that the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes signalized the witnesses' death.

And 3 years after the decree restoring to them their unsold confiscated estates, in 1793, Mr. Bicheno, an English Baptist pastor (who, though cloudy upon some points, was sufficiently sound to be regarded as one of the resurrected witnesses) proclaimed his conviction in a pamphlet styled, The Signs of the Times, that 1789-90 was the year of their standing again upon their feet; and that the 105 years then ending were the full measure of the "3½ days."

But the best part of his discovery was, that he was enabled to explain to the public upon what principle "3½ days" are symbolical of 105 years. The reader will, no doubt, be gratified in perusing what he has to say about the matter. I shall, therefore, reproduce it:—

"What length of time is intended by these 3½ days? My answer is, that days in this v. 11 are the same with months in v. 2, or lunar days, reckoning as the Jews did, 30 days to a month, (and as in the method in calculating the above 42 months, to make them agree with the 1260 days in v. 3).

"Thirty multiplied by 3, adding 15 for the half day, makes 105. When this way of reckoning first occurred to my mind, I had no idea of the events which this number connected; for I did not recollect the year when the Edict of Nantes was revoked.

"But I found it to be Oct. 18, 1685, to which, if 105 be added, it brings us to 1790. Whether this may strike others as it struck me, when I first observed the coincidence, I cannot tell; but from this agreement of the number 105 with the time which elapsed between one of the greatest persecutions ever experienced by Christians, and this wonderful revolution which has taken place, a thousand ideas rushed upon my mind.

"Is it probable—is it POSSIBLE—that this can be the quickening of the Witnesses? What! The Olive Trees? The Candlesticks? I have always supposed these to be all Saints!

"And can that zeal which hath fired Frenchmen to combat for civil and religious liberty, be 'the Spirit of life from God?' Is this resurrection, in the vision, the rising of this civil and religious liberty, previous to better days?—I will do all that I can to discover the truth

"I feel great satisfaction that this interpretation of a most important passage, about the publication of which I felt so much, has been approved by some of the best judges of such matters; and that some have strengthened the hypothesis by additional arguments, and those more apposite than what occurred to me.

"What the sensible and indefatigable author of Illustrations of Prophecy, has brought forward to show the propriety of this use of the term day, is very much to the purpose—

" 'A prophecy concerning future events, is a picture or representation of the events in symbols (I quote from Dr. Lancaster), which being fetched from objects visible at one view, or cast of the eye, rather represents the events in miniature, than in full proportion.

"And therefore, that the duration of the events may be represented in terms suitable to the symbols of the visions, the symbols of duration must also be drawn in miniature.

"Thus, for instance, if a vast empire persecuting the church for 1260 years, was to be symbolically represented by a beast, the decorum of the symbol would require that the said time of its tyranny should not be expressed by 1260 years, because it would be monstrous and indecent to represent a beast ravaging for so long a time, but by 1260 days'.

"In the like manner, in the present instance, as Daubuz expresses himself—

" 'The Holy Ghost was tied to the decorum of the main symbol of a dead body that will keep no longer unburied without corruption:

"From these observations, it will, I think, appear evident, why, in the prophetic scenery, it was proper to represent the body of the witnesses as having lain dead only 3½ days antecedently to their symbolical resurrection."

Perfect and Complete in All the Will of God

NO one can attentively read the apostolic writings without being struck with the frequency and the prominence of the "WILL OF GOD." Jesus refers to it often in his discourses, and says plainly that the doing of this will is the rule by which his friends will finally be selected.

So distinctly was it before his mind that those only who did the will of his Father would finally be chosen for companionship with him in glory—that when one, upon a certain occasion, exclaimed concerning the blessedness of the mother of Jesus, he said—

"Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and DO it."

What is meant by the will of God no one need be at a loss to know. There is no simpler idea in the whole range of Scripture. A child may grasp it. **The will of God is that which He wishes us to be and to do.**

The smallest capacity can take this in. In fact, the terms of salvation are altogether such as any ordinary mind can understand. The difficulty is not in knowing; it lies in another direction.

The difficulty doubtless lies here—in remembering constantly all that God would have us to do and to be, and so remembering as to conform. —Bro. Roberts

We have received requests to reprint material from the Berean. Anyone is at any time free and welcome to use anything published in the Berean. To the best of our knowledge and endeavour it is God's Truth, and the more it is proclaimed and publicized the happier we shall be. We would tremble to presume to claim the right to license, restrict or assert ownership of the life-giving Word of God in any form that it could conceivably be expressed. This would be popery.

My Days and My Ways

By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

"From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence even of your lusts that war in your members?"—James 4:1

PART TWENTY-ONE

At the close of the American Civil War, which had nearly involved the brethren in that country in the toils of compulsory military service against which they had petitioned in the document published in the last chapter, Dr. Thomas visited the South, and on his return, wrote me an account of his journey, dated June 28, 1865. I cannot better occupy this chapter than with the following extracts from his interesting narrative—

"I arrived in Richmond on Saturday, May 27, and next day spoke to a few who happened to meet in the Universalist House. I sent no previous notice of my visit, so that I came upon them quite unexpectedly. Ten righteous would have saved Sodom, but Sodom fell. And Richmond fell; but is this proof that there were not ten righteous in Richmond? I cannot say.

"This, however, may safely be affirmed, namely, that, taking the Gospel of the Kingdom of God as the rule or measure of the community, there are not many over ten righteous in Richmond; they certainly fall far short of the number originally suggested by Abraham, as the few brethren in the city are free to confess.

"Richmond, in the business part of it, is a scene of desolation. Viewed from the capital square is an open space of about 11 acres, filled with burnt bricks and tottering walls and chimneys. There is but little business doing; for, though many goods have been brought in from the North, the people have no money to buy.

"The citizens of Richmond say that the Federals have behaved very well since they entered the City. It is well that the non-combatants of the South can at length find some protection from the Federals; for hitherto they have oppressed them cruelly. An officer of the Federal army declared that the army of the United States was 'an army of thieves.'

"The accounts I heard from citizens in Richmond and Petersburg, and in Widdie, Lunenburg, King William, Goochland, and Louisa counties, all corroborate the thievishness both of officers and men. Men in Federal uniform, rare exceptions to the general rule, have said they did not think human nature was capable of such villainy until they witnessed it in the Union army.

"This is the saying of the men who are ignorant or infidel of the word which testifies that 'in the flesh dwells no good thing.' It is not necessary to go into the sectarian army of the Union to learn this.

"Lust is the devil, and flesh the devil-nature; and when the Truth has found no lodgement in a creature, there is nothing in it to control its diabolism. Hence an army of such sectarian creatures, whose 'piety' is the mere blind impulse of excited feeling, is an army of devils.

"Only think of thousands of such lawless marauders being let loose against non-combatant old men, women, and children, as was the fact, and you can imagine results without exaggeration. The fiends spared nothing they could carry off; and what they could not remove, they wantonly destroyed.

"In Petersburg, I stayed a night with Captain Silvanus Johnson, who has lost about \$700,000 by the collapse of the Confederate Government. On the entry of the Federals in the city, the mob broke into his mills, and stole all the flour and tobacco stored there.

"Mr. Johnson is very friendly to our brethren, and no little interested in the Truth. He re-published copious extracts from Elpis Israel, at a cost of \$400, and sent copies to the clergy, whom he invited to refute the doctrine taught, if they could. But from those gentlemen he could elicit no response.

"He requested me to address his family, which he had assembled, on the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. There were 11, including the Federal officer who boards with him.

"I spoke to them about 2½ hours on man's condition by nature, as a material and moral being; of the means appointed for his cure; of his destiny; of sacrifice in general; of the sacrifice of Jesus in particular; of faith, repentance, immersion, and so forth.

"The teaching was sown in the ears of seemingly attentive listeners, but whether any of it will settle into their hearts and spring up thence to eternal life, is beyond my ability to say. The Federal, who is an Episcopalian, said he had been much edified, and that it was all new doctrine to him.

"He asked several questions for explanation, which I endeavoured to answer. At the conclusion of our sitting, he remarked that such a social exhibition of Bible teaching, he thought, would do more good than many years of such preaching as usually sounded from the pulpits. Such was his opinion, which seemed to be endorsed by all the rest.

"In the afternoon, my friend Silvanus, having obtained the loan of this Federal officer's horse and buggy, drove me out some 16 miles to bro. Joel M. Ragsdale's. Brother R. is cultivating one of Mr. Johnson's plantations.

"I never travelled a worse road than this same 'Cox Road.' Over 50 miles out from Petersburg, the distance I travelled upon it with Captain Johnson and afterwards with bro. Ragsdale, desolation reigns. The wagon trains of the armies have made it in places almost impassable. The fences being all destroyed, the road and field are blended into a common wilderness. Very many of the homesteads are burned, and the chimney stacks only remain to indicate their former position.

"Bro. R. and I were 12 hours in going 40 miles. Travel of this kind (at 3 miles an hour) in an open vehicle and in the hot sun, is very fatiguing; and with so many unburied dead horses and mules as lie along the road, very sickening. I was seized with vomiting and diarrhoea the second day after leaving Petersburg, which I could attribute to no other cause than the foul smell arising from putrefying animal matter.

"I fear there will be much sickness among the people this autumn from this cause. The dead are but superficially buried, so that much of their effluvia must exhale through the ground.

"We arrived at brother Ragsdale's at sunset. He received us with a Southern welcome, and treated us with all the hospitality that could be shown by one whom the Federal marauders had so thoroughly cleaned out as not to leave him 'enough to feed a mouse.' He was receiving rations from the military authorities in Petersburg; and Captain Johnson, taking thought of his necessities, and that we might be as little burdensome as possible, took with us some additional supplies from his own stores. The captain returned the next day, and I remained.

"At midnight bro. R's son arrived from the North. He had sojourned with me some 3 months in the previous winter, and had been immersed in New York City. He was now re-united to his family, and prepared for a common effort to repair their fortunes, broken and prostrated by the troubles of the times.

"Five hours after his arrival, bro. R. and myself started for Lunenburg county. We came to a halt at sunset at bro. Maddux's. We were kindly and cordially welcomed here, as indeed in every place visited, and were glad to find that though the robbers had been here, they had not done as much damage as elsewhere.

"On Sunday I spoke about 3 hours to an overflowing house at Good Hope, about 8 miles from brother M.'s, and some 30 miles from the North Carolina line. My visit to the neighbourhood was only known a few hours before I arrived.

"I found some of the brethren absent. This ought to be a rare thing, because the only proper place for the faithful is around the Lord's table on the first day of the week. But all who pass for saints at present are not faithful, and, therefore, do not act faithfully.

"Some day the Lord's angel will come upon them unexpectedly, as I did, and find them missing, when it will be no excuse that they were at home and engaged in entertaining some newly-hatched and newly-fledged acquaintances of the world.

"Cry aloud, spare not! Lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins."

"In the spirit of this testimony I addressed them, as I did in all the places I visited. They recognized the truth of what was said and will, I trust, be stirred up to an earnest preparation to meet the Lord, whose coming must be near.

The people of this country have suffered, but not nearly so severely as in other places. We stayed near the meeting-house with bro. Smithson. His family is in deep affliction. He is himself over 70 and enfeebled by disease.

"His two sons and son-in-law were forced into the Confederate army and made prisoners. One of them died in prison; the other son was released, and died on his way home at Captain Johnson's in Petersburg; the son-in-law also died. Thus brother Smithson has left upon his hands his son's wife with 8 children, his own daughter with two, beside his own wife and two single daughters.

"He has land and crops growing, but in the present anarchy of labor, no reliable aid to work and gather them. What a condition is this to be in! Surely there are states in this life worse than poverty!

"On the morrow we departed, brother Ragsdale for home, and I for Petersburg, where I arrived by train in the evening. And such railroading I had never experienced in America, where the railroad system is far superior to the British. The car I rode in had once been a respectable passenger car, with plush-cushioned seats with backs to lean against, but it had fallen from this estate to the low level of a covered pen, defiled with all abominations.

"After this exceeding unpleasant travel, I arrived at Captain Johnson's in the evening, and stayed under the shadow of his hospitality until three o'clock the next day.

"It was expected from Federal antecedents that when Grant's fellows got into Petersburg, they would steal everything they could lay their hands on. To prevent this wholesale appropriation, many sent their valuables to other places.

"Captain Johnson collected the gold watches and jewellery of his family, and sent them to the care of a professor of an institute in Farmville where one of his daughters was at school. The professor says he hid them, with \$2500 in gold and silver also committed to his care, between the floor and ceiling of his house. The watches, jewellery and coin all took to themselves wings.

"Thus all my friend's prudence was circumvented, and by his losses a new admonition was afforded not to set the affections upon things below, but on things above, that when Christ who is the life of his people shall appear, we also may appear with him in glory.

"I reminded him that the events of the past 4 years proved to this generation the vanity of riches, and that when a day of judgment comes they are only an embarrassment. Men were not sent into this life to labor for riches as the end of their being, but to use the world without abusing it, for all necessary purposes, while proving their moral fitness for a higher state of existence.

"Having returned to Richmond, I departed the day after for King William County. I spoke to the brethren and the public on 3 successive days, on the moral aspects of this 'day of the Lord' upon the United States—the righteousness of the visitation, and the necessity of individual and national repentance, lest a worse condition of things come upon them.

"Yahweh punished His Own people Israel with terrible evils because they turned not from their iniquities, nor devoted themselves to understand the Truth (Dan. 9:13). How then is it to be expected that He will spare Gentiles who are not His people, and guilty of the same crimes?

"Nay, but if these repent not they must all likewise perish. What is the 'Church' in America but a Body-Corporate of Blasphemy or, in Apocalyptic phrase, a 'Name of Blasphemy'? It is ignorant of the Truth and a blasphemer of the Word, which has no more influence upon its creed and practice than upon savages, so that the sentence falls upon it in full—

“‘Whoso despiseth the Word shall be destroyed.’

"This is the fate awaiting the thing called 'Church' in America, fruit which is solely of the flesh in all its abominations,

"But the 'Ecclesia' is a different institution from the thing called the 'Church' in the vernacular of the multitude. The 'Church' is a community of ungodly blasphemers—the World churchified, whose spirituals are 'the spirituals of the wickedness in the heavenlies,' who speak the things the world approves.

"Not so the 'Ecclesia.' This is a people called out by the Gospel of the Kingdom—called out of the World-Church—a people who have accepted the invitation to God's Kingdom and glory, and are the pillars and support of the Truth. The 'Ecclesia' is the Light of the world and the Salt of the earth; but if the light becomes dark and the salt insipid, putrefaction reigns, and judgment must follow.

"The brethren in King William are responsible for the Truth there, for they have believed and accepted it. It was for them to say whether they had been faithful to their trust, not for me. God had visited them and judged them, and reduced them from affluence to comparative poverty.

"Would they not turn over a new leaf, and for the future live less for themselves and more unselfishly for the Truth, and for the widows and orphans and needy of the Household of Faith?

"On my leaving them, they confessed their shortcomings with tears. They thanked me for my visit, and that I had thought so much of them as to come so long a journey for their especial benefit.

"They acknowledged the truth and justice of all I had said, and sent by me some money, bacon, fish and butter to a needy family of 2 adult sisters and their children in Richmond, with a promise of more.

"God's way of retributing men and nations, in the present state even, is remarkably effective. He empties the rich, and makes the poor poorer. This is the nature of the present situation here. Men's eyes stood out with fatness, and their hearts swelled with pride. But all this is changed now.

"Yet will not the people turn from their iniquities, and seek to understand the Truth. The words of Isaiah concerning Judah and Jerusalem, though spoken exclusively with reference to them, are highly descriptive of the situation of the South—

"Ah, sinful (American) nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, offspring that are corrupters. They have turned their backs upon Yahweh, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger, they are apostate. Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more.

"The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in the body politic, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

"Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire. Your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate as overthrown by foreigners. Except He-Who-Shall-Be-Hosts (Yahweh Tzvaoth) had left a very small remnant (the Ecclesia), we should have been as Sodom and like unto Gomorrah.

"From King William I returned to Richmond, where I radiated to Louisa County. I met several brethren and friends here, from the surrounding country, at the meeting house. A large congregation assembled here to hear what I had to say about the times, for the idea had taken possession of many—though not believers—that I can tell them more upon the subject than the preachers in general.

"I spoke there 2 days: on the first for 3 hours, and on the second for 4. I conclude that they must have been interested in the indictment found against them, as on the second day they sat so long on the hard benches without restlessness, and, after I had finished, sat an hour longer to hear bro. Albert Anderson, whose name you may have seen in the Herald.

"Well, what would have been the use of me going 400 miles to preach a sermon of the fashionable length of 15 to 20 minutes? No; I had their ears, and as I might never have the chance of speaking to them again, I was determined to hold on to them as long as I saw them attentive, and my own strength was not expended in expounding to them the principles by which God governed the world, and the premises from which there is good reason to conclude that the coming of the Ancient of Days must be exceedingly near."

CONTINUED NEXT MONTH, IF THE LORD WILL

REVIVAL OF THE APOSTOLIC FAITH

IN THESE days, when the times of the Gentiles are nearing their end, and the era of the Lord's return has approached, there has been a revival of the original apostolic faith, through the agency of

Scriptural study and demonstration. This work has been perfectly natural in its proximate features (see *The Life and Work of Dr. Thomas*), but thoroughly spiritual and apostolic in its results.

It has been unaccompanied by any visible manifestation of the Spirit, such as characterised the apostolic era, but is none the less the evolution of the Spirit's work in its individual and collective achievements. There is no reason to expect any recurrence of this manifestation of the Spirit until the Lord's actual re-appearance in the earth. On the contrary, there are reasons for believing the divine program to be such that it cannot take place. —*Ecclesial Guide*

Examine Yourselves

"Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept Thy Word"—Psalm 119:67

TIME takes its toll, it is a one-way road for all mankind, and the great river of human life stays not for a moment. We are units of this vast stream, all proceeding to the ocean of oblivion, unless . . . unless—here is the difference—unless we find grace in the eyes of the great Creator.

Many grow old worldly, living miserably, often realizing it too late. Vast numbers grow old worldly, living for life's little day, and that alone, then dying "as the beast that perisheth."

Few grow old triumphantly, for the gate that leads to life is narrow, "and few there be that find it."

Today we are living in a day of unparalleled trouble; burdens grow heavier and problems become more difficult of solution. The pen of the times writes its furrows with much greater depth than 50 years ago. And as the days pass swiftly, and months turn into years, those that love God's Word realize more than ever the fuller meaning of those words of Jesus in John 16:33—

"In me ye shall have Peace."

The only Peace we have left in this order of things in the world is in our Lord Jesus Christ. He says—

"In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Those who have this abiding Peace can grow old in the confident knowledge that they are journeying towards a Kingdom where time has no meaning, and age no effect.

We are often painfully conscious of the limitation of advancing years, but those who are trustful enough to consecrate this fleeting existence to God and His beloved Son, whom we are remembering with the emblems on the table, shall renew their strength eternally.

Yes, the Spirit says—

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

"They shall mount up with wings as eagles: they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:31).

One of the world's heathen poets has said (and it is sadly true within the world's own godless, hopeless framework)—

"The pride of heraldry, the pomp of power, and all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,

"Awaits alike the inevitable hour: the paths of glory lead but to the grave."

But what does the enlightened wisdom of the Spirit through Solomon say?—

"In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death"

(Prov. 12:28).

* * *

WE see today the feeble props of human governments and civilization weakening under the strain of a Divine judgment fast approaching. Let us keep our eyes fixed on that Kingdom wherein eternal Peace and Joy are for ever more.

Today everything is at a high tension. Worry and fear are all about us. What a great enemy of man is fear, for it has slain its millions! The nearer we get to God through the reading and meditating on His written Word, the further we will get from fear, for God is the source of infinite power, and it is recorded that—

"Perfect love casteth out fear."

We are assured, therefore, that Inward Peace—which is more to be desired than fine gold—can be had by all who will daily commune with God through His Word.

Is it not a greatly comforting thought to realize that round about us is that power of the Most High—a rest which the greatest storm cannot ruffle, even in this life? For there is a present rest in Christ, quite apart from the promised eternal rest, a feeling of strength or power, of courage and mental harmony, which only comes from being and keeping in touch with the Divine things written for our—

"Instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Does not the Word say?—

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect Peace whose mind is stayed on Thee" (Isa. 26:3).

The deep inner realization of this great Truth would have much more wholesome and healthful and beneficial effect than the host of medicines and prescriptions with which the world seeks to ease its ills. Jesus says—

"In me ye shall have Peace."

—a much greater Truth than perceived at first sight.

Does the thought arise that fear or worry in relation to the present things show lack of Faith on our part? There is a remedy for this:—live closer to God in word and deed.

Surely we are in those terrible, wonderful days for which all God's people through the ages have looked and longed— the Time of the End! There is no doubt of this: the Signs of the Times and the movements of the nations tell us so with unmistakable clearness.

If we could but dissociate our minds from the little discomforts and inconveniences which press upon us so closely, we should realize that the days in which we live are the most vital and interesting in all the long ages of Gentile history.

The quickening tempo of events of the last 30 years has left us all but incapable of grasping their great significance in the Divine plan. It is well for us to endeavour to cultivate a sense of separateness in order to view the march of events as they speed up to their mighty climax—the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And as we are fast approaching this time, would it not be well to pause for a few moments in order to inquire into our individual spiritual health?

How have we striven? How are we employing our time and talents? For Christ or for ourselves? What progress are we making—or are we slipping back? How close are we to that divine standard of true stewardship?—

"ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN THE WORK OF THE LORD."

The answer is known to each one's self and God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who has sent us the message—

"I know thy works."

It is a wonderful and yet awe-inspiring thought expressed by the Psalmist—

"My times are in Thy hand."

Job puts it similarly—

"He knoweth the way I take."

If our conscience is clear when tested by the high divine standard, then we can approach God without shame and face the future unafraid, with strength born of quietness and confidence.

As we look back over the years in the Ecclesial News of our magazine, we read of withdrawals from such a brother or sister for continued absence from the Lord's table, forsaking allegiance to Christ and taking allegiance to an earthly king, conduct such as should not be mentioned among saints, preaching another gospel, etc.

It is a sad story and one that should make us tremble, lest we be found to come short. But rather let us with renewed determination take to ourselves the Spirit's warning (Heb. 3:6):

"Hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

The exhortation to be steadfast finds added point in the apostle's further warning—

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the power of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance.

"Seeing that they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4-6).

Yes, it is possible for the Lord Jesus to be "wounded again in the house of his friends."

Does not this remembrance of our mortal frailty give added emphasis to David's words—

"Lord make me to know my end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.

"Behold, Thou hast made my days as an hand-breath: and mine age is as nothing before Thee: "Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity" (Psa. 39:4-5).

How in need of salvation is man, yea, how much in need of repentance and forgiveness are we! We live in a world of evil, and we all realize that we stand desperately in need of help outside of ourselves, in order that we may hold fast.

Where shall we find comfort and assurance? It is wise to remind ourselves of the "good hand of our God upon us," of the things from which we have been delivered, rather than to dwell overmuch on the things which we have to endure—

"The Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad" (Psa. 126:3).

As we look back through the year 1966, that is fast passing to history, and 1967 is fast approaching to the same end, Paul's words come to mind—

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the Faith."

And Peter emphasizes the same urgent need for constant self-examination (2 Pet. 1:12)—

"Wherefore, I would not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present Truth."

We are exhorted by these brethren to "examine ourselves." What sort of a response do we make? Do we react by mentally saying—

"I do not think I have done too badly during the past week."

Or perhaps—

"Yes, I am afraid I have slipped somewhat; I must try to do better."

Now while such reflections are better than nothing, we cannot say that this is real self-examination.

We have a *pattern*, and it is a standard for all God's children, and WE MUST COMPARE OURSELVES WITH THE STANDARD WHICH HAS BEEN PROVIDED.

There is one thing we must never forget, and that is this—just being baptized into Christ will not save us.

No, the form of new life in the Truth—the New Man, the mind of the Spirit—must be nurtured, fostered and given every opportunity to expand and grow, and the process is never finished right to the day of our falling asleep in Jesus. Growth in the Truth must continually be in evidence.

And this brings us to our point: it must be a progressive growth in the Truth of the right type; and we may ask ourselves, What is that? The answer is that which is well pleasing to the Father; that which can only be accomplished by an unswerving determination to base our lives upon the laws of Christ and the Apostles.

And can we not say **there is** where the real self-examination comes in, for without doubt this is a weakness with most of us. Even as we make a sincere effort to apply it to ourselves, naturally the fleshly mind directs attention to those points least likely to trouble us.

Sometimes questions are asked that make us feel uncomfortable, but if we hope for eternal life we must truly face them and examine our hearts; such questions as—

"Do I have sufficient living Faith in God so that when trials come I always humbly and cheerfully submit and accept them, realizing with Paul (Heb. 12:5) and John (Rev. 3:19) that:

"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth . . . Faint not when thou art rebuked of Him."

Now if any of us can sincerely say "Yes" to that, we are on the way of life; but if we cannot, then self-examination is a pressing and urgent necessity.

But we do murmur and complain about our trials and troubles, and sometimes the mind of the flesh prompts the thought that we are the only ones experiencing trouble.

Let us stop and think for a moment. Let us ask ourselves: Can we recall a single Scripture which tells us that we will not be tried in the furnace of affliction? And is not this especially an age of trouble, yes, "trouble such as never was" for Israel's seed and for the nations of the earth?

Should the children of God expect special exemption from trouble and trials? Is not God troubling the world for their wickedness? He is, and we are in the world. God troubles His children that they might see things in their right perspective, that they might reject and turn from the vanities of the present passing life, and cling tenaciously to the Truth which can alone save them.

The testimony of experience witnesses to the fact that nothing has such a corrective effect as trouble and trials. We all are familiar with what David said—

"Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept Thy Word."

And so there is a right way of acting in relation to our trials and chastening. If we give thought to it, we see it is wrong to complain, to chafe, to fret, and indulge in self-pity. Rather let us heed that good counsel contained in God's Word (1 Pet. 5:6)—

"Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God."

Again he says (1 Pet. 4:12)—

"Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you; but rejoice that ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings."

A faithful recognition of this would lead us to obtain the comfort that can be ours so that we can endure, for do we not realize that—

"God is a very present help in time of trouble"?

Surely we do!

One thing we must do is think and reason and meditate and seek to understand the purpose of all our experiences. Paul calls God the "God of all comfort," and says that He—

"Comforteth us in all our tribulation that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

Paul gives the true scriptural explanation that we must keep before our minds—

"No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous.

"Nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Is not that the right attitude? We must reason or exercise our minds upon our trouble. We must do it patiently and prayerfully in order to get the comfort which can and should be ours, if only we have sufficient faith and trust in God to truly realize that—

"Whom God loves He chastens."

And so let us not complain, but submit to it, knowing the chastening is of the Lord, and remembering there is always some one suffering far more than we are.

We are often struck with the courage and bravery and cheerfulness of many sad cases in the world. If such can be patient and cheerful, what of the children of God?

What a wonderful example to follow is the Apostle Paul. We are all familiar with his words, how he was struck with blindness on the way to Damascus, yet he responded humbly with the question—

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Leaving this, we ask ourselves another question: Do we sincerely believe all is open to the eyes of God, and govern ourselves accordingly?

Rather, shall we not admit that—although when we think about it, we know it is true—yet we fail to let our lives be governed by that knowledge.

The testimony is very plain:

"His eyes are upon the ways of man, and He seeth all his goings" (Job 34:21).

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. 15:3).

"Mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from My face, neither is their iniquity hid from Mine eyes." (Jer. 16:17).

So many fail to realize and understand the true import of these words! But how about ourselves?

Have we examples in Scripture of men who have failed to realize and understand the consequences, thinking no one would see them? Yes, we have. A little reflection which will take us back to Joshua 7.

Here we have Achan. He coveted, and took a goodly Babylonish garment and silver and gold. No one saw him: at least, that was what he thought.

Another, Gehazi, coveted, and ran after Naaman, and took gifts, and no one saw him. He said to Elisha—

"Thy servant went no whither."

Still another, Ahab, coveted and took Naboth's vineyard.

But in each case the eyes of the Lord saw it, and retribution followed.

Now, when we give thought to this, there may be things we engage in, in secret, and we may think that no one sees, or knows, but the eyes of the Lord have seen it, the testimony tells us. Whither can we flee from the Almighty? Even the thoughts and intents of the heart are known to Him.

Therefore let us be circumspect, redeeming the time; do not let us deceive ourselves. God sees all. The day is not far distant when every secret and hidden thing shall be made manifest, and how shall we feel then?—

"There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed.

"What ye have spoken in the ear shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."

Each of us knows his own heart, whether there are things of which we shall be ashamed when we shall stand before the Judge, even the Lord Jesus Christ. When we are next tempted to say, or do, something unChristlike, let us resist it—being very conscious of those eyes that are "in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

We are called to be labourers with Him.

Do we labor for the Kingdom of God, as earnestly as we labor for our daily bread? The more energy and perseverance we display in our daily work, the more we advance, which brings within our grasp many things that are desirable.

The same can be said of our labor and service to God, in an infinitely greater way. There are many, very many, desirable things to be had by those who are willing to labor and get on in God's service.

We are freely conscious that present-day conditions and demands can take a heavy toll of our time and energy, but we should not, and must not, reach a position where we have little or no time or energy for the Master's service.

It is well to examine ourselves on this point, and ask ourselves: How much labor have I given to my earthly master—self? How much to my Heavenly Master?

Another important question for our self examination: Do we "suffer the word of exhortation" as scripturally enjoined and see if it applies to us? Or do we resent it? Paul, writing to the Hebrews, said—

"I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation."

It is indeed difficult to suffer the word of exhortation, and why is this? It is because it is unpalatable to the flesh, for it finds the weak places in our armour; it is a reminder that we still have need of exhortation.

This thought reveals a dual responsibility. It is the duty of every exhorting brother to administer to himself and his hearers from God's Word, without fear, or partiality or favor.

And it is the duty of hearers to receive the Word "with all readiness" and humility, realizing that—coming from the Word of God—it is for their special benefit, that they may be admonished, comforted and throughly furnished unto all good works.

The brethren who exhort should be determined to speak none other things than those which become sound doctrine, wholesome advice, and faithful encouragement, kindly and gently, but very clear and searching.

If we follow back through the whole history of the Truth we find it bears eloquent testimony to the disasters that followed upon the utterances of smooth words by persuasive speakers—from the very beginning even up to recent and current experience.

We have the children of Israel, for example, wanting the prophets to speak "smooth things" unto them (Isa. 30:10), and we read the sad result in that same chapter.

So when we heed the Word, let us do it without resentment. If any of us do feel resentful, let us analyse our feelings, and ask ourselves:

"Is it the Word, or is it just the brother that is speaking that brings resentfulness?"

It matters not who gives the exhortation: if it is faithfully delivered, we must put down destructive thought, and "receive with meekness the engrafted Word."

As we give thought to this, what greater example could we have than Jesus. What wonderful exhortation came from his lips! Yea, what advice, what comfort, and what admonition!

But it was often resented, and not only resented, but rejected, simply because it was Jesus that spake.

For example, it is recorded that he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said—

"Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?"

"Is not this the carpenter's son and his brethren and sisters, are they not all with us?"

"Whence then hath this man all these things?"

The result was they were offended in him, you see here they stumbled more at the man than his words.

Just think what a different story the history of Israel would provide if only the people had heeded the word of exhortation which came from their prophets.

Well, it is quite possible we can fail as well. It is quite possible for resentfulness to take possession of us to harden our hearts, so that we stumble at the brother who is speaking, and give no heed to the Word.

Let us always remember this one thing—the Word is given for our benefit, that we may overcome the flesh and walk in the Way of Life. Therefore, we beseech you—

"Suffer the word of exhortation" with all meekness, and receive it into your life in order that ye may make your calling and election sure.

—R.A.W.

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Be Ye Holy

THE Mosaic ordinances form in their totality what Paul styles—

"The form of knowledge and of the Truth in the Law."

Their indications are plain. They show the terrible majesty and holiness of God, and the impossibility of man saving himself except by strict and reverential and loving conformity to His appointments.

These things are revealed in the Gospel; but they become more striking when contemplated over again in the pictures and symbols of the Mosaic example and shadow of heavenly things. Be it ours, to try to fulfil the part shadowed for the sons of God in the Mosaic ritual.

Every true son and daughter of the Lord God Almighty is a miniature tabernacle or temple, as saith Paul—

"Ye are the temple of the living God. If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy."

Our minds should be a Holy Place, lined with the gold of a tried faith, in which the one Christ-sacrifice for sins is continually offered, and the smoke of grateful incense, kindled by the fire of the altar, continually ascending; while deeply secreted in the innermost ark of the heart is the Law of God in its remembrance, the Scriptures in their affectionate study, the institutions of divine appointment in continual reverence, and the bread of God in its continual eating.

Thus shall we be the "sons of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation," misunderstood by all, hated by many, despised and rejected of men, persevering in a bitter probation that will end at last in life and light and joy everlasting, when—

"The Tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people . . .

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."
—Bro. Roberts

The Wisdom That Is From Above

HOW complete is the contrast between the wisdom of man and the faith of Christ! The reflecting mind realizes it at very point.

THE faith of Christ appeals to every motive of self-control, and induces and strengthens every effort at the attainment of all that can possibly be noble in human character.

It tells us that this life is not all—that this is but a steppingstone to a beyond—a preparation for things to come after, that will realize every aspiration of the human heart, and rectify every wrong experienced in the present state.

It brings to bear the powerful stimulus of hope—hope of perfect good to come; yet, the influence of fear—the fear of Christ's displeasure—the fear of rejection from his presence.

It purifies with the prospect of a divine tribunal, at which our whole life will be made manifest in its true and actual character, and in its just and unerring issues.

It opens and expands the heart with the adoration of God in fear and love of Him continually.

It constrains to deeds of righteousness and mercy, when motive for both would fail if we were left to the impulses of a decaying and self-concerned nature.
—Bro. Roberts.

"This Is My Friend"

"It is more blessed to give than to receive"—Acts 20:35

SONG OF SONGS 5; ACTS 20

THE Song of Songs is perhaps the most unique book of the Bible. As in Esther, there is no mention of God, but God is throughout it all, more intimately than in any other part of Scripture—its chief character is God manifest in the flesh, intimately described and detailed.

What is the value of this so strange book of love? It is to create and develop a frame of mind—a sweetening and softening of character—a disposition of gentleness and kindness and affection and care.

The spiritual is taught by means of the natural. We are led from something we know to something we need to know. It is spiritual food for the mind.

It is to develop and intensify our affection for Christ, which is the power and secret of all overcoming.

It is to counterbalance present things. By putting the things of the Spirit in the language of the natural, it impresses us vividly with the reality of the former, and their infinite superiority over the latter.

For the eternal spiritual reality must always be immeasurably more intense and meaningful than the mere passing fleshly shadow that represents it.

The book portrays the relationship of Christ and the Ecclesia. It is meant to express, and by its study to strengthen, the bonds between them; to portray the manifested beauties of Christ, and the required beauties of the Ecclesia, that the contemplation of the one may generate the development of the other.

Generally, a progression can be traced, through acquaintance, interest, deepening of the relationship, espousal, separation, delay, waiting, seeking, finding, ultimate reunion.

While these aspects can be traced, and in general, in this order, still the progression of the narrative cannot, in its very nature, be too mechanically forced, because there are aspects of weaving together, repetition, anticipation, retrospection, to give depth and meaning and interest.

The term used by the Ecclesia for Christ is the same throughout—"Beloved," except at the climax in today's chapter, where the much fuller term "Friend" is added.

But the terms used by Christ for the Ecclesia show a steady development, and this is one of the factors by which the narrative can be traced. His first address to her is 1:8—"O thou fairest among women!" This appears to stand apart as a general introduction comprehending the whole. Then in ch. 1 and in the beginning of ch 2 it is "My love"—more correctly as in the margin, "fellow" or "companion."

Later in ch. 2 it is "My love, my fair one." There are none in ch. 3.

In ch. 4 it is first: "Thou art fair, my love." Then: "Thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee."

Then 6 times: "My spouse," or even more comprehensively, "My sister, my spouse."

There is one occurrence in each of chs. 5 & 6 of a combination of earlier titles.

Then twice at the end of ch. 6 the proper name "Shulamite" is introduced, indicating that she now permanently bears the new Name, the name of the Beloved, Solomon, the Prince of Peace.

The last title, ch. 7, is "Prince's daughter." Here the aspect of royalty, majesty and rulership appears.

* * *

IN the latter part of today's chapter—in answer to the question, "What is thy Beloved more than another beloved?"—the Bride, the True Ecclesia, gives a description of Christ's beauty and excellence:

"My Beloved is white and ruddy"—v. 10.

Whiteness—purity—righteousness, is the first characteristic. Without it, all the rest would be meaningless. There must be this foundation; nothing else will endure.

The word for white also carries the idea of shining brightness, of brilliance, like Moses' face, or Jesus' at the Transfiguration.

"Ruddy" means "rosy." It was used of David when Samuel first saw him. It indicates strength, health and radiant beauty. Strangely, the root word is Adam—red—the word indicating sin and the flesh. But perhaps, it is fitting that we should be reminded that this is the root background of the word, though in the particular form used here it means glowing health.

* * *

"The chiefest among 10,000."

"Chiefest" is literally, as in the margin, "a standard-bearer, an ensign, a bannered one" — the one who leads, and around whom all rally for the conquest. "10,000" is not a specific figure, but means an innumerable multitude. It is translated elsewhere (Genesis 24:60—of Rebekah's seed) by "millions." So the true, and obviously much more fitting and significant meaning is —

"A standard-bearer for an innumerable multitude"—even the great multitude of the Redeemed, "which no man can number"—for they are known only to God.

* * *

"His head is most fine gold"—v. 11.

Gold is Faith—especially "fine" or refined gold. This picture of the Beloved, while it is primarily Christ as distinct from and viewed by the Ecclesia, inevitably introduces the inseparable aspects of the multitudinous Christ of which he is especially the head of gold, as the Mercy-Seat, the Ark's coverlid, was pure gold.

Gold is also preciousness, royal splendour and glory. Here is the true and eternal divine Head of Gold—Ruler of the nations—as Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon were the false, presumptuous human head of gold.

* * *

"His locks are bushy."

The word "bushy," occurring only once in the Bible, is taken by most lexicons to mean "waving palm branches," symbol of victory, peace and joy.

The abundant flowing hair is also the multitudinous unity of the Son of Man (Rev. 1), for the hairs of his head (v. 14) are the many sons he has brought to glory.

* * *

"And black as a raven."

Black normally indicates sorrow and affliction, as of the Bride in 1:5. But here we have not black as such, but black hair. The basis of the symbolism is the natural, and in the natural black hair speaks of youth and strength and vigor and health, as white hair is age and infirmity. Black hair was a welcome sign of health after leprosy (Lev. 13:37).

* * *

"His eyes are as doves."

The eye is perception, intelligence, discernment—the mental viewpoint and outlook. The dove symbol is clear in Scripture. Its highest representation is when the Spirit of God appeared as a dove. From this all other meanings must flow. The dove is humility, guilelessness, gentleness, harmlessness, and peace.

With the eagle symbol, which also represents the Spirit of God, it shares the aspect of free, heavenly flight, of outspread wings; of freedom from earthly bondage.

There is an eagle aspect to the operation of the Spirit, but the basic, permanent manifestation is the dove of gentleness and peace. God is a consuming fire as need may require, but God is Love ALWAYS and essentially.

* * *

"By the rivers of waters."

Water is life and fruitfulness: cleansing: refreshing. Water also can be affliction and tears (Psa. 69:14-15)—

"Deliver me out of the deep waters: let not the water-floods overflow me."

—not contradictory meanings, but all parts of one great whole. All things work together for good. Tribulation worketh patience (Rom. 8:20)—

"He subjected the creation to vanity in hope."

All things in life are interrelated, and sorrow and tears will at last bring forth life and joy (Ps. 126:6). The water that destroyed the wicked world saved the righteous Noah; and the water that destroyed the oppressor Pharaoh saved the people of God.

* * *

"Washed with milk."

Again there are many shades of meaning. Milk is primarily the abundance of divine blessing—

"A land flowing with milk and honey."

In Isa. 55 milk and wine are the free Gospel of salvation, the words of eternal life. To be able to digest milk only is a sign of sad infantile immaturity (1 Cor. 3:2). But though we must grow unto strong meat, still we must never advance beyond the point where we earnestly "desire the sincere milk of the Word" (1 Pet. 2:2) as our sound guidance and safe foundation.

Eyes washed with milk means pure and godly vision, a cleansed and enlightened outlook, viewing all things—understanding all things—by the light of the Gospel of Truth.

* * *

"And fitly set."

Literally, as in the margin, "sitting in fulness," a strange expression, but surely intended to direct our minds to the final consummation of the "fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

Sitting is completion of work. The dove aspect "sitting in fulness," is peace, end of labor, perfection—

"It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell" (Col. 1:19).

* * *

"His cheeks are as a bed of spices: as sweet flowers."

The flower-bloom of eternal youth and beauty. All things, except Christ, grow old and die. Nothing in this life is lasting, but of him it is said—

"Thou hast the dew of thy youth" (Psa. 110:3).

"They shall perish, but thou remainest: Thou art the same: thy years shall not fail."

The greatest of present joys must so quickly pass into sorrow, and loss, and final loneliness. But Christ is ever young and ever new.

It is hard to really enjoy anything we know must at last and before long pass away.

We have all experienced intense pleasures which in their very enjoyment have been sadness from knowing that in a short time they would be over and would never return. On only a slightly larger scale, this is life itself.

But there is more to "cheek" than this. "Cheek" or "cheeks" occurs 11 times in Scripture, other than in this Song. In all but 2 (and even 1 of these is related) there is a reference to submission to smiting and affliction—

"They smote the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek" (Mic. 5:1).

"If any man smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt. 5:39).

Cheek, therefore, inescapably turns our minds to patient submission to abuse and loss and suffering for righteousness' sake.

It is this that gave Christ all his value and his beauty, and his present never-ending bloom of youth.

* * *

"His lips are like lilies."

Most of the scriptural references to lilies are in the Song (8 times). All the others but one are either in the description of the ornamentation of Solomon's temple, or in Christ's comparison of Solomon's glory to the greater glory of the lily.

The lily as a symbol of purity does not appear to be a scriptural idea, nor do the Bible lilies appear to have been white.

The Bible lily appears to be a magnificent flower whose colour ranged from pink to purple, and whose scriptural significance was God-bestowed, inherent glory, as contrasted with human, superficial glory.

"His lips like lilies" refer to the divine beauty of all that he said—the "words of grace" at which his hearers marvelled—

"Never man spake like this man!"

"Dropping sweet smelling myrrh:"

The name myrrh is from the same root as Marah or Mary, meaning bitter, and refers to its bitter taste. The combination of bitter taste and a sweet odor make it a perfect type of the sacrificial affliction that beautifies the character and is a sweet incense unto God.

* * *

"His hands are as gold rings"—v. 14.

Rings are a symbol of sonship, royalty and authority. Nearly every reference to rings in Scripture, from Pharaoh's ring given to Joseph, to the father's ring given to the Prodigal Son, carries this meaning.

An inseparable part of the beauty of Christ is his relationship to God and his universal majesty and authority based on his **faithfulness**—a ring of **gold**:

"This is My beloved Son."

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

* * *

"His belly is bright ivory overlaid with sapphires."

This word belly, which occurs 30 times, is in all cases except 4 translated "bowels." It means internal organs. Its use is literal and physical. A Hebrew lexicon sums it up as "inward parts," and that best conveys the meaning to us, as in Ps. 51 (though not the same word)—

"Thou desirest Truth in the inward parts."

The word for "bright" literally means "elaborately worked so as to shine." The type is clear and beautiful both as to the being worked or wrought, and the resultant shining. Heb. 10:5 contains the same thought:

"A body hast Thou **prepared** me."

The point is in the preparing—the inward working, developing, perfecting. Anything in this life that contributes to this process is good and a blessing from God. That is why "sorrow is better than laughter" (Ecc. 7).

"Finely wrought ivory overlaid with sapphires."

Ivory was always a symbol of splendour—here, of course, of the true **inward** splendour of a pure and perfect character—"inward parts."

Besides general references of this nature in connection with the kings and wealthy classes of Israel, the most significant reference to ivory is in connection with Solomon's Temple where it would necessarily have a spiritual meaning.

“Overlaid with sapphires” intensifies the splendour of the representation, as though the pure white perfection of the ivory itself, though precious, was not sufficient to represent the character of Christ.

Here again the type is clear and striking. All was of God, symbolized both by the fine working of the ivory and the overlaying with the heavenly sapphire blue. **There must be the divine element throughout.**

* * *

"His legs are pillars of marble"—v. 15.

We have had the "sitting in fulness"; here is the standing in strength—faithful, determined and enduring. "Stand fast" is a frequent scriptural exhortation.

To stand is also to have dominion, to have conquered and overcome, as to "stand upon the sea of glass" (Rev. 15:2).

And it is to pass triumphant through judgment—

"Who shall stand when he appeareth?" (Mal. 3:2).

Pillars and marble turn our minds to the Temple, both literal and spiritual—

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God" (Rev. 3:12).
—an upholder and supporter of the edifice of God's presence.

The most precious marble is pure white. It is crystalline in structure, and its special lustre and beauty is due to the fact that light penetrates the surface and is reflected from the multitude of crystals beneath. There is an obvious typical fittingness in this penetration of the light and its reflection from within.

* * *

"His countenance (that is, general appearance) is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars."

The figure of the mountain—(eminence and power and majesty—the mountain that fills the whole earth)—is combined with the royal, unperishing glory of the cedar. A mountain of cedar trees—a living, flourishing, fruitful mountain—each tree an individual part of the glorious multitudinous unity of power that will at last fill the earth with God's glory.

* * *

"His mouth is most sweet."

This is not the common word for mouth, but rather, as the margin shows, "palate." The idea involved is taste, rather than speech, as the consistent use of the word elsewhere makes clear. It is sometimes translated "taste" as in the Song itself (2-3), and in its first use, Job 6:30—

"Cannot my taste (marg: palate) discern perverse things?"

The idea of the heavenly beauty of his speech is covered in the earlier reference to the lips. Here the reference is to the unerring and unhesitating discernment and choice of that which is wholesome and good, and the rejection of everything that is in the slightest way fleshly or evil or impure. It is summed up in a similar figure in Isa. 7—

"Butter and honey shall he eat that he may know (that is, learn) to refuse the evil and choose the good."

The lesson is that taste, appeal, desire, is not a blind, unchanging force to be catered to, but a delicate capacity and potentiality to be trained and developed and shaped to spiritual ends and satisfactions.

A child's untrained, undiscerning taste rejects the wide range and variety of taste experiences which the providence of God has provided in that which is good for food, and desires only sweets. The adult learns that bitterness mixed with the sweetness is a much richer and more satisfying experience.

In our present imperfect, incomplete, mortal condition, unalloyed sweetness soon becomes monotonous and sickening. We are not constituted to be able to stand it for long at a time. The immortal state will be a perpetual intensity of joy without surfeit.

* * *

"Yea, he is altogether lovely"—v. 16.

Rather, literally, and much more impressively and vividly—

"The whole of him is loveliness."

The power and beauty of Christ is his perfection. Nothing out of harmony; nothing to detract; no danger of later discovered flaws to disappoint and disillusion. Nothing to fear from the cruel, unsparring microscope of intimate familiarity. The more minutely we examine him, the more beautiful he is revealed to be.

This is an unfailing characteristic of all of God's handiwork, but never of anything of man's.

This is the pattern God has set before us—the ideal to which He would have us ceaselessly strive—the ultimate to which He will finally elevate the faithful.

* * *

"This is my Beloved; and this is my Friend."

Why add "This is my Friend"? It would appear to be an anticlimax, but it is not. It is actually a deepening and enlarging of the picture. The figure is taken from natural things. "Beloved" expresses only a narrow and restricted and passing aspect of the broad range of personal relationships.

Upon reflection, we shall perceive that "Friend" is the fuller and the richer and the more inclusive and enduring, less self-centered, term—

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

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

* * *

IN Acts 20, Paul is on his last journey to Rome not knowing what would befall him, except that bonds and imprisonment awaited him. The chapter begins at the time of the uproar in Ephesus that brought his preaching to an end there. He had been there 2 years. It was the principal city of Asia Minor, and a logical center for him to operate from, not only for the increasingly numerous ecclesias of Asia Minor itself, but also of Macedonia and Greece.

Naturally speaking, this would have been the reasonable place for him to stay and work, for the most effective propagation of the Truth.

But God's thoughts and ways are not man's. God had a greater and more glorious work for Paul—a work that required abuse and affliction, and a long bondage and imprisonment.

Paul was without comparison the most effective and fruitful instrument for the proclamation of the Gospel to the world, but God chose that he spend at least 2 years in confinement in Caesarea, awaiting trial, many months on a perilous voyage, and at least 2 more years in chains at Rome.

The first few verses of today's chapter briefly outline his farewell visits to all the ecclesias of Macedonia and Greece. The detailed story begins with his arrival back at Troas, on the NW coast of Asia Minor. He has now set his face toward Jerusalem.

* * *

IN v. 7 we get the clearest indication and example we have of the custom of breaking bread on the first day of the week. The Passover was over, and Paul was anxious to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost, 50 days later. This is why he did not visit Ephesus, but called the elders down to the coast to meet the ship.

But here (v. 6) he waited 7 days at Troas. It would appear he had missed the assembly of the disciples by one day, and waited till the next first day, when they would all be together again.

As Bro. Roberts points out, the command to assemble and break bread is clear and unmistakable. To fail to do so is disobedience. Therefore, to have any meaning, the required frequency must have been indicated—if not as an unbreakable rule, certainly as the normal, desirable and expected thing.

The first day of the week was clearly not chosen for any particular convenience, because the 7th day was then, among the Jews (who were the first believers), the day of rest and freedom from work.

So the first day must have been appointed for its significance—the day of the resurrection they were commemorating.

That it might not just rest on this one incident at Troas (which could be just a local arrangement), we find a passing but quite strong allusion to it in 1 Cor. 16:2, which confirms the general practice.

There Paul tells the Corinthians to lay a portion aside **each first day of the week**, that there be no last minute scurry of collections when he should come to get the gift for the poor in Jerusalem. If he meant just for each to lay by privately, there would be no point in specifying a particular day, nor would it serve the purpose he mentions—of avoiding hurried collections when he came.

* * *

WE wonder what the lesson and significance is in the incident of Eutychus. It was, like many sad things turn out to be, a blessing in disguise. The occasion, of itself, would be one of great sorrow and intensity of feeling.

Paul would tell them as he told the Ephesians a few days later, that they would see his face no more, and that he was leaving them to face foretold but unidentified perils and sufferings.

Paul spoke to them until midnight. The brethren would be enjoying, for the last precious time, the pleasure of Paul's inspiration, and deep understanding, and godly example. The sudden tragedy of Eutychus at this point would be a terrible blow of grief and shock, added to the general sadness of the occasion.

And the equally sudden, glorious resurrection, dramatically effected by Paul after the manner of Elijah (v. 10) would be an even greater shock to their keyed-up emotions. In view of this manifestation of the supreme divine power of life and death, the whole atmosphere of the assembly would be changed. Though saddened to lose Paul, they could hardly continue to be sorrowful or despondent.

They would see so much more vividly that all things—even the sleep of death itself—were harmonious parts of a triumphant divine plan—all in God's hands—and that Paul's labours and trials were a necessary part of that plan.

The sudden, dramatic death and resurrection of Eutychus at the midnight hour was a direct divine commentary and confirmation of Paul's teaching. After this experience, few could have been tired, few could have slept. Paul continued the discussion many more hours until daybreak.

At daybreak, Paul took off alone to walk the 7 miles across the peninsula to the port of Assos on the other side, while all the rest of his company went the longer way around by ship.

Why did he choose—after an active, sleepless night—to walk, and to go alone? We are not told why, but we are told that he did so, and so there must be some lesson in it for us.

Though he had many close companions from time to time—brave, devoted, pure-hearted men, like the disciples of Christ—Paul was still in reality, like Christ, very much alone.

In fact, everyone is, in the ultimate, very much alone. Communication, even at its most intimate, is very imperfect and limited, and leaves 9/10 of the inner soul unreached.

But with Paul this was more than ever true. He was a special man, with special revelations, a special mission and a special burden. He had communications and revelations of which he could speak to no one.

On this final journey, via Jerusalem to Rome, all his companions endeavoured to dissuade him, though he knew by the Spirit that he must go.

It does not seem that anyone was close enough to him to understand.

After the experiences of the night—the many long hours of intense and active communication, of which he was the continual focus and source of power—after the emotionally and physically exhausting experience of the death and raising again of Eutychus, he would have to be alone to think and to recuperate, for the trials that lay ahead.

* * *

THE next stop of which we have detail was Miletus, the seaport for Ephesus, to where he called the Ephesian elders to meet him. V.18 to the end is his farewell address to them, in which, like Moses, and Joshua, and Samuel, he reviews to them his ministry and his way of life among them.

It is a very moving and instructive address, as he reminds them of his many trials, of his faithful, ceaseless proclamation of the "whole counsel" of God, of his emphasis on their responsibility, of his charge to carry on after he is gone, of his solemn warning and prophecy that of their own selves misguided men would arise whose teaching would rend the Body and lead many astray, of his earnest commendation of the all-powerful Word of God's grace which was able to supply all the strength and wisdom needed to overcome every obstacle and deliver from every error, and finally, of how—though with a great burden of teaching—he had not only supported himself but laboured so as to be able to support others also.

He closes his exhortation with the one direct precept of Christ that does not occur in any of the records of Christ's own teaching, and yet which sums up all his life and teaching—

"It is more blessed to give than to receive."

It is not necessarily material things. That's a very small part of the picture. And the amount is quite unimportant. The widow's two mites were more than all the rich men's combined abundance. It does not have to be much at all. It just has to be EVERYTHING we have, to mean anything.

Nor does it mean that, in any particular instance, the giver is more blessed than the receiver.

Everyone can always be givers. Sometimes we give best by receiving. Sometimes it is the only way open to us.

It is giving of ourselves—giving as a way of life, rather than wanting, and getting, and hoarding. It is living outwards instead of inwards.

It is more blessed; it is more happy; it is more exciting and satisfying; it is more constructive and unifying; it is more Christlike and more Godlike.

That is the main point—it is more Godlike. God Himself is the Great Giver—

"He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all—shall He not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32).

What could God, Who has everything in limitless abundance—what could He give and make it a meaningful sacrifice? He gave His only beloved Son: His greatest treasure.

"IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE."

It is the precious privilege of partnership with God.

These were Paul's last words to them. Kneeling down, he prayed with them, and then bade them farewell and returned to the ship. —G.V.G.

The Roman Catholic Inquisition

The following extracts are not, as may be supposed, from some book of horrors of the Dark Ages of the Two-Horned Beasts rule of terror and bloodshed. All this is from a modern Catholic schoolbook, for the indoctrination of children 12 and 13 years of age.

It is from the "History of the Catholic Church," published in 1915 by the "Brothers of Mary," Chaminade College, Clayton, Missouri, for use as a schoolbook for grades 7 & 8. The extracts follow:—

IN the language of the Church, the term inquisition is used to designate an investigation made by competent authority in regard to a crime, pre-eminently that of heresy.

By virtue of a Divine right, resulting from their office, the bishops of the Church are commissioned to bring back to the fold those who have been led astray, to prevent the dissemination of error, and to suppress it, if possible, even by the application of punishments determined by the Church. This duty is so sacred that the Roman Congregation of the Inquisition is called the Holy Office.

Thus, at all times, the bishops were the lawfully appointed inquisitors in their respective dioceses. At the time of the terrible heresy of the Albigenses, however, this diocesan inquisition proved inefficient, so that Pope Innocent III, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, established a supreme and universal inquisition, under the immediate direction of the pope.

Long before the establishment of the Inquisition by the pope, the custom of punishing with exile or death those who obstinately persisted in spreading heretical doctrines had prevailed in Europe. It was generally conceded that the welfare of society demanded such stringent measures.

In 1184 Pope Lucius III agreed with the Emperor Frederick I to send investigators or inquisitors into those parts of the country suspected of harbouring heretical teachers, in order to hand over the guilty parties to the secular powers.

The Council of Toulouse (1229) decreed that the bishops should authorize a clergyman and several laymen in every parish to denounce those guilty of heresy. Pope Gregory IX appointed the Dominicans papal inquisitors. They were to examine all those accused of heresy, and simply pronounce them either guilty or innocent of the accusation; after which the guilty were delivered to the secular tribunal with the usual formula: "Let their lives be spared; let them not be put to death."

The judgments pronounced against the guilty by the secular power were: confiscation of property, branding, life-imprisonment, or death at the stake.

The popes in general recommend moderation in these judgments, and leniency in their execution, and hence the Church cannot be held responsible for occasional errors and individual acts of cruelty.

On the whole, the Inquisition was humanely conducted.

After being cited before the tribunal by the inquisitors, the accused was allowed three days wherein to make his avowal. If he showed signs of repentance, he was pardoned and released. The most persuasive means were employed to effect the avowal of the guilty.

Tortures were to be applied only once, without however, mutilating the condemned person, or imperilling his life.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, society was founded upon the Catholic Faith. Every attack directed against the beliefs of the Church imperilled the very foundations of the social organization. Considered in this

light, the Inquisition will prove to have been a necessary instrument in the hands of authority for pursuing the guilty, and for suppressing such doctrines as were subversive of the social order as it existed in those days.

Though the Inquisition may have given rise to a number of deplorable abuses, it is none the less true that the ensuing good results far out-weighed the evils that the spirit of the times made possible.

During the first period of its existence, the Inquisition maintained the religious unity of Europe, prevented the dangerous tenets of the Albigensian and Waldensian heretics from leavening society, and thereby rendered invaluable service to the Church and to Christian civilization.

At a later date it stemmed the inroads of Protestantism into Italy, thereby saving this country from the prolonged devastating wars that followed the wake of Protestantism.

The Spanish Inquisition proved an invaluable asset to the country, not only in presenting an impassable barrier to this new form of barbarism, whose martial tread blighted the progress of so many fair provinces of Europe, but it incidentally prepared the way for that most flourishing era of literature and science which added so much to the glory of the Iberian peninsula during the 16th and 17th centuries.

Those who retracted were pardoned, tortures being resorted to only in case of necessity.

Summing up, the book says —

The good results greatly out-balanced the evils resulting from the Inquisition.

(End of extracts from Catholic schoolbook)

In its glorification and justification of the Inquisition as a necessary instrument for the maintaining of Catholic power over the people of Europe, it clearly reveals that the Catholic Church, if it were ever able (as some day it may be), would again feel, not only justified, but compelled by duty to use the same cruel means to suppress "heresy" and enforce its will on all people.

It coolly regards burning at the stake as an acceptable procedure to maintain Catholicism, and considers it an indication of "humaneness" that tortures were to be applied "only once" and were not to be such as to permanently mutilate the victim. Surely the Psalmist saith not in vain—

"The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty."

Let us be humbly thankful we have the Word of God and the privilege of freely worshipping Him in truth, for which brave men have been tortured and burnt to death by the Catholic Church.

THE ONLY practicable basis of order in the circumstances existing in our dispensation, is that of mutual consent, expressed in the process known as voting, which literally means voicing, or speaking your mind. If God would speak, as in the day of the Spirit's ministration, there would be no need for man to speak; but, as God is silent, there is no alternative but to make the best appointments we can amongst ourselves, aiming in all things to come close to His mind and will, as expressed in the written Word.

—Ecclesial Guide

Current World Events

'NEW THOUGHT' IN ROME TOO

The Pope summoned a dozen Roman Catholic theologians and scientists to the Vatican last month and asked them to summarize contemporary concepts of original sin.

Jesuit Bone of Belgium scuttled the traditional notion of man's descent from a single set of parents. "The words 'Adam' and 'Eve' have no relevance for me," he said. Jesuit Rahner of Germany agreed, saying, "Theologians today tend to believe that man descended from more than one ancestral species."

The scholars wrote a report in which they unanimously agreed—

• 'Adam and Eve' is a literary device used by the Hebrew editor of Genesis to symbolize the first human being or beings.

• Man became man when he emerged from a previous form of biped, and developed reason and conscience.

Canadian Jesuit Stanley points out, "No reputable Catholic theologians today would argue that the earliest man was a preternaturally gifted human being who fell from grace through a sinful decision. If you accept evolution, Adam—which means 'Everyman' in Hebrew—was only a primate. The myth of a fall doesn't fit at all."

Concludes 'Father' Francoeur: "Evolution is only beginning to add new dimensions to Catholicism. We have gotten rid of Adam and Paradise at the beginning so we can properly locate the new Adam, Christ, in the Paradise at the end of man's evolution." (Nwk 8:22)

This is very interesting and instructive. It shows us very revealingly where the 'New Thinkers' in other groups get their 'New Thinking' which is not thinking at all but merely a sad parroting of the modern wine of the Old Harlot. It will be no problem for the Protestants to join the Catholics, nor for the Catholics to join the Communists, for they have cast away the only thing that stood in the way—the Word of God. Russia wants nothing better than a scientific, evolutionary, Bibleless religion that will give a palatable atmosphere and respectability to atheism and will pacify its subjects.

US & EUROPE LOSING TOUCH

US relations with Europe have changed so radically in the past few months that the European policies worked out in the post-war period are out of date, and so irrelevant to the actual situation that US influence has become negligible. This is due in part to the entanglements and preoccupation of the Vietnam war, which is enormously unpopular all over Europe. (Nwk 8:1)

The fading of US influence, and the increase of Russian influence, is what the prophetic picture requires.

ATOM BOMB RACE SPEEDS UP

The latest French A-blast in the Pacific is only the first of a new series of atomic tests. Chinese are busy again: so are Russians, British, US. Attempts to slow the rush for bombs are having little effect anywhere.

The atomic-arms race was never more intense than it is today. Russia doubled its nuclear stockpile in the past year alone—from 6000 megatons to 12,000. (It would take 50 Hiroshima-size A-bombs to equal a megaton—the equivalent of 1 million tons of TNT).

US has been testing, producing and stockpiling more and newer atomic weapons: US stockpile is rated at 25,000 megatons—double Russia's.

China has been making rapid strides in a crash program that promises to give them the H-bomb in a year—neck and neck with France. Chinese progress has been impressive. US took 7 years from a first fission experiment to a thermonuclear explosion; the British 5 yrs.; Russia 4.

At an outlay of over \$4 billion, Britain has stockpiled from 1000 to 1500 nuclear bombs. Russia keeps moving ahead relentlessly in its effort for nuclear superiority. At least 10 more nations have or soon will have the ability to make A-bombs: W Germany, India, Japan, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Israel, Italy, Holland and Sweden. (USN 7:18)

How inadequately we realize that the world today, for all its professions and veneer of respectability, is a jungle of wild beasts, held back from mutual slaughter only by mutual fear! These dreadful weapons are described by both sides as 'instruments of peace.'

INDIA'S MOOD IS CHANGING

The mood of India is changing from the days of Ghandi and Nehru. Mrs. Ghandi's wavering return to the Nehru dream of leading the 'neutrals' and 'non-aligned' of the world is not to the liking of many of today's Indians. They blame her with going along with the Russians during her visit to Moscow in denouncing 'imperialists and reactionaries.' (USN 8:15)

India appears to be moving, as it should, to the West. Mrs. Ghandi's policy has generally been this way; her tendency to waver back is apparently not popular.

Vietnam war is going badly. Limited bombing has not checked Communist build-up. Limited ground actions are not wearing down enemy forces. Communist forces seem stronger, not weaker. Talk now is for need of 750,000 men, with mention of 1 million if war is to be won. (USN 8:22)

CONFLICT IN THE ARAB WORLD

Two years ago, Egypt's Nasser convened the Arab world's first summit conference in Cairo, and built a facade of 'Arab Unity' against Israel. Kings and Presidents embraced as brothers, organized the Palestine Liberation Organization, set up a joint military command and created a Committee to divert the Jordan River.

The facade has been crumbling ever since. Last week, as the 4th summit meeting (Algiers, Sep. 5) approached, Nasser demanded its cancellation, while Feisal of Arabia demanded it go on—with or without Nasser. Feisal has support from Iran, Tunisia, Jordan, Morocco and Kuwait. (Tm 8:12)

* * *

Russia's Mideast Alliance of Arab states is growing steadily stronger, built around the tightening Moscow-Cairo axis and taking full advantage of US commitments in Vietnam, and China's internal feud, to sew up an unofficial alliance of 'unaligned' Arab states—Egypt, Syria and Iraq—into her system by long-term plans for dams. Her hand has been strengthened by the US giving military aid to Israel. With China and US opposing each other in Vietnam, Russia's hand in the Mideast is freer. (Chcgo Dly Nws).

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Middle East: US spends much time and effort trying to keep Arabs and Israel from war. Nasser is making little headway in uniting Arabs. Iran, Arabia, Jordan Tunisia, and others oppose him.

Russia still backs Nasser as the No. 1 Arab, but is also wooing Iraq's Bazzaz with arms and a visit to Moscow. (USN 8:8)

This must, in the end, prove to be the decisive frontier in the final world conflict.

Russia is working hard and successfully in the Mideast. This, and the back-to-Rome stampede of the Protestant churches, seem to be the greatest current signs.

DeGAULLE WINS IN GERMANY

Only 3 months ago, Erhard firmly maintained that if DeGaulle pulled his troops out of NATO, he could not keep them in Germany. "There can be no throwback to occupation status," he said.

Then, as De Gaulle's deadline crept nearer, Erhard negotiated a "temporary" agreement for the 72,000 French troops to stay. Last week it became clear that the "temporary" agreement would probably become permanent.

With recent election setbacks, Erhard apparently felt it was no time to give grounds for the charge of gumming up relations with France. No one was tactless enough to suggest DeGaulle had scored another victory. (Tm 7:29).

DeGaulle wins again, apparently because he is at present forwarding the appointed course of prophecy.

HIROSHIMA 20 YEARS AFTER

Hiroshima: the scarred faces of the survivors—there are 93,000 of them—serve as a reminder and warning. For reasons of illness, or because all the breadwinners and potential breadwinners were wiped out, many survivor families never made their post-war recovery.

Slums, tin shacks, house many of these unfortunates. Some of them never move outside their houses; others cover their faces with bandages in the street. Because of their looks, or because of employers' fears for their health, many find it difficult to get jobs.

People in Hiroshima are still dying from radiation effects. Leukaemia, other forms of cancer and faster aging, add as many as 500 a year to the roll of those dead because of the events of Aug. 6, 1945.

It is those so thoroughly mauled by the bomb that they have never reaped any of the pleasures of post-war Japan who can discuss the event only in snarls and shouts. Japan—and the world—will never be the same again. (Nwk 7:18)

If Hitler instead of US had won the Atom bomb race in the early 40's, this would have been a US or British city, still rotting and dying from an atomic attack 20 years ago. There is clearly no contrivance too horrible or devilish for 'civilized' man to use on his fellowmen, if he considers it to his advantage. Hiroshima is not a terrible dream—it actually happened and is still with us. And it was not perpetrated by 'savages,' but by those who consider themselves the most civilized and humane of nations. Truly the world can never be the same again!

GHANA: SOVIET PENETRATION

From a wild, rampaging kind of socialism—practised without rhyme or reason—Ghana is being switched to private enterprise in an effort to revive what's left of the country. Socialism is dead, and Communism is down for the count.

Ghana was once a hotbed of Communist subversion in Black Africa, but the Reds have been kicked out, and Ghana is looking to the West.

It was only after the armed forces overthrew Nkrumah last February that the world discovered how far he had gone toward changing this country into an out-and-out base for Russia in W Africa.

Members of the Russian secret police were all over the place. "Frankly, we were surprised," said a US official, "at the extent of the Russian penetration." (USN 8:22)

This is revealing. Russia was in process of building a tremendous airport there. Russia's present facade of bland respectability masks the same basic world conquest ambitions that will bring her down upon the mountains of Israel at God's appointed time.

WORLD FAMINE IN 20 YEARS?

One of the greatest peacetime armadas ever assembled—600 ships from 50 donor nations—has borne a million tons a month of mostly US grain to India this year.

Yet neither India nor other needy nations dare rely on largesse much longer. With world population growing twice as fast as food output, man's struggle against hunger has reached a historic turning-point. With India consuming a ¼ of the US wheat crop this year, US wheat stocks are at a 14-yr. low.

It took from the dawn of time till 1800 for the earth's population to reach 1 billion, but only 130 years after that to reach 2 billion, and only 38 years more to reach the present 3¼ billion. There could be 7½ billion by the year 2000.

Unless the hungry nations learn to feed themselves, there will be world famine in less than 20 years. More human lives hang in the balance than have been lost in all the wars of history. (Tm 8:12)

World population today is doubling in 30 years, and that rate is rapidly increasing. At today's rate of increase, the next doubling would only take 20 years, and the next even less. Man has the theoretical knowledge to postpone and even solve the crisis, but not the political wisdom and stability, for it would take world government, which Russia realizes and strives for, as her literature makes clear. She will make headway, and gain supporters, but be destroyed in the end. It may be made to appear that, in opposing her, US and Britain are opposing progress and world hope.

WORLD CHURCHES MOVE LEFT

The World Council of Churches spoke to the world last week in a radical new voice. The tone of its pronouncements reflected the fundamental shift of power that has taken place within the Council since its founding in '48.

At that time, it mirrored Western theology and social thinking. With the gradual admission of many new churches from Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the Russian Orthodox in 1961, the majority of delegates became non-Western.

In the perennial debate on whether the stress of religion should be laid on the individual and his spiritual needs, or on the church working actively through society's institutions for the worldly betterment of man's condition, the World Council has now firmly chosen the course of involvement.

What troubled many Westerners was the highly partisan ideological tone that the conference put on participation. (Tm 8:5)

This is encouraging, and the inclusion of Russian Orthodoxy is significant. The churches of the world must gradually swing away from the West to support Russia.

VIETNAM: STRATEGIC IMPORT

SE Asia is a peninsula at the tip of which is S Vietnam. Communist domination of the tip of that peninsula, with land-based air power and havens for submarines, could assure control of the Strait of Malacca (between Malaya and Sumatra). That would frustrate access not only to Australia and India but to most of the countries washed by the Indian Ocean.

The liquidation of the British Empire and the decline of British sea power leaves a vacuum in the vast expanse east of Suez. US must accept the burden of filling it, or China and Russia will. The countries that border the Indian Ocean would not be secure if they looked out on waters dominated by the Communists.

Russia is rapidly building its naval power. It is second only to US. It has over 400 submarines, 25 nuclear-powered. At present, Russia's cold war consists of squeezing the spots of inter-ocean passage. There is Communist nourishment of disorder and movement of military power into the proximity of the narrow sea passages, as Panama and Suez. There are Russian attempts to establish a base in N Africa to dominate the Strait of Gibraltar. Russian support of N Vietnam is part of the same strategy. (Nwk 7:25)

This is clearly the significance and explanation of the Vietnam war. It is part of the strategic world conflict between the mountains of brass (Zc. 6:1).

CASTRO VICTORY IN AFRICA

Castro has scored his first triumph outside Cuba; 400 Cubans are entrenched as "military advisers" in the former French Congo. 80 more are due. All other foreign advisers (including Russian and Chinese) have been ordered to leave. It was the Cubans who saved the govt. from an army revolt in June.

Thus Castro has apparently succeeded in getting his own brand of Communism into Black Africa, where both Russia and China have failed. Moscow and Peking have had one African setback after another—in Ghana, Burundi, Dahomey, Central African Republic, Tanzania, Kenya. (USN 8:8)

This is interesting as a minor aspect of the world struggle, and helpful to the general confusion.

The World Court, on a technicality, has refused to rule against S. Africa's introduction of apartheid in SW Africa (mandated to S A by League of Nations).

This has greatly encouraged S. Africa to push forward its brutal policies.

Since 1947, Britain has withdrawn its rule from almost 700 million, creating in the process 24 new countries. (Nwk 8:15)

AFRICA: TRIBALISM RISING

Tribalism is playing havoc with Black Africa's dreams of progress. That's the real lesson of Nigeria; that is the problem in the Congo. Tribal rivalries keep Black African nations apart, even in the Organization of African States, where 'allies' often see one another as tribal enemies.

A new breed of Nigerians, known abroad as able, moderate men, took over a new 'nation' in '62. The country was rich. Africa's most populous (56 million), a possible leader of Black Africa. But the veneer was thin. Tribal rivalries broke through in bloody changes in January. The army took over. Again in August, violence swept the country. Officers of one tribe took over from officers of another, massacring many of the latter. Nigeria looks wobbly. Black Africa loses. (USN 8:15)

* * *

Nigeria, richest and most advanced country in Black Africa, appears on the verge of complete collapse, as a result of the 2nd army revolt in 7 months.

There are 250 tribes. Most important are Ibos (S'east); Hausas (North) and Yorubas (S'west). Each has its own language and customs, and no love for the others.

In January, a group of officers assassinated the Prime Minister, a Cabinet Minister, and Premiers of 2 regions. They were arrested by Gen. Ironsi, an Ibo, who took control. Now Northern officers, mostly Hausa Moslems, have deposed and apparently assassinated him, and slaughtered up to 2000 Ibos, including many officers. (USN 8:15)

* * *

Last week another coup rocked Nigeria. Northern Moslems, acting to avenge the Southern-led January coup that had thrown them out of power and killed many of their leaders.

The coup was a bloody affair. At Ikeja barracks, near Lagos, the capital, Northerners shot down every Ibo officer they could find, causing widespread panic in the capital. Nigeria's future as a nation is very much in doubt. (Tm 8:12)

It is remarkable that, with all Africa's instability and conflicts, and all its intense anti-white feeling as a result of centuries of exploitation, still Communism has apparently not been able to gain any real foothold. The general picture would seem to put Africa with the King of the South.

THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

Europe: Here are 4 medium powers, jealous of one another, living with dreams of lost grandeur, pulling in all directions, always counting on US to defend them.

Neither Britain, France, Germany nor Italy is strong enough to lead. US power still dominates Europe. Soviet power has a foot in the door. European power? Dream stuff! (USN 8:8)

ZAMBIA: BOLT COMMONWEALTH?

Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda has long stood staunchly with Black Africa's moderates. He has held his nation firmly within the British Commonwealth. But it is apparent he is thinking seriously of walking out, and he may carry others with him.

His reason: Britain has not only failed to bring down the rebel white Rhodesian regime, but sanctions against Rhodesia have had a much weaker effect than expected. Now Wilson is speaking of "talks about talks" which Rhodesia. Kaunda sees this as a sell-out. He has already begun chopping links with London. (Nwk. 8:1)

Division and conflict are the order of our times, and the deepening conflict between the races is one of its major aspects.

"THE SEA AND THE WAVES"

The weak and poor people of the earth have found a response to our wealth and weapons. Because they have learned to accept hardship, suffering and death, they can walk when the rich ride, they can subsist when the rich would starve, they can find shelter though their houses are gone, they can fight with simple weapons against the great and sophisticated weapons, and they are hard to conquer because so many of them are ready to die.

The old military superiority of the Western world does not find it easy to cope with the guerrilla. (Nwk 8:1)

Truly the long-oppressed "sea and waves" (Luke 21:25) are roaring today as never before.

COMMON MARKET MOVES AGAIN

Europe Common Market is moving again, after 3 years of crisis. First shock came in Jan., '63, when DeGaulle barred England. A second, more serious, blow followed in June, '65, when France walked out of discussions because of disagreement over the Market's role In Europe, paralysing the organization.

Now it is back in business. After 5 years' effort, it has agreed on a common agricultural policy. By July, '68. industrial and farm products will cross national frontiers free of duty; business can plan for a market of 185 million.

Economically it is already a clear success. Gross national production rose 44% since '58 (36% in US; 29% in Britain). living standards are 1/3 over '58—a faster climb than US. Exports jumped 110% since '58 (US 52%). Trade within the Market is 3 times '58. (USN 8:8)

DeGaulle, for the present, is blocking political integration, but commercial and economic Integration is now going forward. Perhaps political integration, still barred by national pride and rivalry, would have created too much unity and strength, and have thus deterred the necessary Russian absorption of Europe.

‘BACK-TO-ROME’ TREND GAINS

Another ancient barrier of suspicion between Roman Catholics and Protestants seems about to fall: the distrust of one another's sacraments. Catholics have historically refused to acknowledge the validity of such Protestant spiritual act as ordination, confirmation and celebration of the Eucharist, though they do not question Protestant baptisms or marriages.

The Vatican Council acknowledged the major Protestant faiths as 'churches' rather than just 'Christian communities.' Catholic theologians are in the process of redefining the church's sacramental theology, while Protestants are generally less zealous than they used to be about holding strictly to Reformation positions. (Tm 8:5)

* * *

A lot of brotherly things that would have been hard to imagine a few years ago are happening today between the Roman Catholic Knights of Columbus and their long-time antagonists, the predominantly Protestant Masons.

Masons and Catholic have been on the outs ever since Pope Clement XII in 1738 issued a bull condemning the Masons on the grounds that their beliefs and rituals amount to a false religion. (Tm 8:19)

The barriers are falling with increased tempo. A trend once started usually gathers momentum. This is why the first concession to error is the fatal step.

US TURNING TOWARD ASIA

The following decision is now dominating US policy toward the world:—W. Europe is stable politically, strong economically, able to look after itself—an area of declining concern to US. It is to Asia instead that US feels the tides of history are turning; US is to deepen its commitment to Asia.

Vietnam is viewed as the "Greece" of SE Asia. Just as Europe was unable to relax and forge ahead after WW II till Red aggression had been stopped in Greece, so Vietnam holds the key to a release of forces for large-scale development and progress in Asia.

The US view is that China can either forgo aggression and seek a basis of co-operation—as Russia is now doing in Europe after a long period of aggressive moves—or keep bogged down in isolation.

Johnson said. July 12: "Asia is now the crucial arena of man's striving for independence and order—and for life itself. Three of every 5 people live in Asia; 100's of millions of them exist on less than 25c a day." (USN 8:8)

This has an appearance of worldly wisdom, but ignores both the divine picture and the lesson of history. The deeper the commitment of the US in East Asia, the freer the hand of Russia in Europe and the Mideast, where the final decisive conflict must soon be.

THE TRINITY: AN ADMISSION

The Old Testament prophets first spoke of 'ruach,' the 'breath' or spirit of God, which manifests itself as a wind, or sometimes as fire.

The New Testament mentions the Holy Spirit 88 times variously as the 'spirit of truth,' the bearer of 'witness,' and the 'promise of the Father,' but gives no further definition.

Not until the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople in the 4th century was Christian Trinitarianism proclaimed: one God in 3 persons—Father, Son and Holy Ghost. (Tm 8:5)

The fact that the Trinity is not a Bible doctrine, but the invention of paganized Catholicism, will not be news to any who believe the Truth of the Bible, but it is interesting to see this confirmed.

POLARIS SUBS COMPLETED

The 41st and last US nuclear submarine was launched last week. It marked the end of a successful effort to develop sea-power able to strike any target on earth. Based in Spain, Scotland and Guam, they patrol 60 days. By the 70's, they are to be equipped with 3 megaton rockets (double the present Polaris). (Tm 1:29)

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The Polaris submarines could devastate Russia's cities, wiping out Russia as a liveable society. (Nwk 8:1)

We are reminded of the real nature and peril of our times. The Polaris subs, constantly prowling the oceans, may be the only reason Russia has not attempted an atomic destruction of US, which is the sole real barrier in the way of her world conquest.

BILLIONS TO BUY FRIENDS

US since WW II has poured out \$122 billion to aid more than 100 countries. The largest sums have gone to the nations of W Europe, India, Korea, Turkey, Formosa and Japan. France received the most: \$9½ billion. In the year ended last June, aid was given to 98 countries. (USN 8:15)

It is ironical that, in US's effort to buy friends and strengthen allies, France should receive the most and be the most antagonistic. An attention to prophecy could be a great help to the world's statesmen, but they are too "wise" to want to hear what God has to say.

AUSTRALIA'S RAPID GROWTH

Australia is one of the world's fastest-growing new oil sources. There have been recent discoveries of natural gas, bauxite, copper, manganese, silver, uranium, tin, nickel, zinc and lead.

Australia is now the world's largest lead producer, 3rd largest of zinc. It has 15 billion tons of high-grade iron ore. Bauxite reserves are 3½ billion tons—½ of world's reserves. (Tm 6:10)

PRINTED IN U.S.A.
