

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

*We plan, God willing, to list ecclesias in Jan., Apr., July & Oct. issues
PLEASE NOTIFY US OF ADDITIONS, CORRECTIONS OR CHANGES*

HALIFAX, N.S.—Bro. & sis. J. Jackson, 82 Glenforest Drive; Ph. (902) 453-0731.

GREETINGS to the Household.

During Nov. we were pleased to welcome around the Table of the Lord, bro. & sis. E. Sargent of Vermont. Their visit was most encouraging to us in these last days.

A close watch of Mr. Nixon's actions as he assumes the role of President of the U.S. will prove very interesting. He must of necessity draw closer to Israel, just as Russia must strengthen the hands of the Arab.

As we see the current world events develop before our eyes, we thank God for His beneficent love in calling us aside and revealing to us, by way of the Scriptures, His plan and purpose with the earth.
—bro. J. Jackson

RICHARD, Sask.—Mem. 10 am; S.S. 12 noon; Lec. last Sun. 8 pm; Class Fri 8 p.m. Bro. Fred G. Jones, Rte. 1; Ph. Richard 6, ring 15.

"REJOICE in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice!"

Paul here gives expression to our feelings as we announce the good hand of our God upon us in bringing 3 more of our group to the obedience of faith.

On Dec. 19, 1968, Mrs. KATHERINE FRAZER (sister to sis. Frank Truelove), after a very satisfactory declaration of her faith in Christ Jesus, was baptized into the Master's Name and now rejoices in the hope of her high calling.

On Jan. 2, GORDON W. JONES, 17, and EILEEN M. JONES, 16, son and daughter of the writer, after having given a good testimony of their belief in the things of the Kingdom and the Name, were also baptized into the only Name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved.

The right hand of fellowship was extended to our 2 sisters and brother on the following Sundays. They now rejoice with us in the consolations in Christ, in the comfort of love, in the fellowship of the Spirit, being likeminded, having the same love, of one accord, of one mind.

Our new members know this is only the beginning of their journey to Life, and that to attain the reward they must perform their good works until the day of Jesus Christ, that they may approve things that are excellent and be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.

In the meantime our efforts (though feeble) are to continue to hold forth the words of life to perishing mankind. We can still report further interest and progress in this part of God's Vineyard.

To God be the honor and glory, both now and forever, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

—bro. Fred Jones

CANTON, Ohio—YMCA, 405 Second St NW—S. S. 10 am; Mem. 11 am. Bro. Paul Inman, 1520 Bonnot Place NE, Canton 44705, Ph. (216) 456-5319.

IT is with deep sorrow that we report the death of our sister Mary Mathews. She fell asleep in Christ on Nov. 18, 1968. She was 87, and had been a member of the Berean Christadelphian ecclesia for 20 years.

She was laid to rest in Forest Hill Cemetery, bro. Braden Edwards taking the service. Our sister now rests from her labours and awaits the return of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ

We held our annual election on Dec. 1. Bro. Paul Inman was elected Recording Brother.

To our brethren and sisters we send our love and greetings.

—bro. Paul Inman

LAMPASAS, Tex. 76550-Christadelphian Hall, Ave. I East-S. S. 10 am; Mem. 11. Bro. Ross Wolfe, 1802 Rumley Rd., Lampasas 76550, Ph. (512) 5564249.

IT is with great joy we report another of our regular Sunday School scholars has put on the Saving Name of Christ. On Jan.19, after giving a good confession of the Faith, SANDRA KAY WOLFE was immersed into Christ. She is the daughter of bro. & sis. Ross Wolfe of Lampasas.

Recent visitors to Lampasas include: bro. Gibson (Toronto); bro. & sis. Joe Burkett, bro. & sis. David Carroll, bro. & sis. L. C. Carroll, bro. & sis. Randy Scott, bro. & sis. Troy Haltom, and bro. Jack Carroll (all Houston); sis. Cooper (Carlsbad, N.M.).

We receive all visitors with joy, as it is a great encouragement to us in the final days of our pilgrimage.

—bro. Ross Wolfe

WORCESTER, Mass. 01607—Vasa Hall, 1 Ekman St; Ph. (617) 753-4492.—S. S. 10 am; Mem. 11; Lec. 2nd-4th Suns. 2:30 pm; Bib. Cl. Tue. twice mo. 8 pm; Bro. W. Davey, Strawberry Hill, Dover, Mass 02030; (617) 785-0881.

ON Sun., June 23, after our Memorial Service, we held our regular ecclesial Outing at Dover. A large portion of the Boston ecclesia joined us and we had an enjoyable time.

On Sun., Aug. 11, we held our Sunday School Outing on the farm of bro. & sis. Warren Rankin in Charlton, Mass. The Boston ecclesia closed their meeting to be with us for the whole day, and again we had a time of mutual upbuilding and joy.

After more than a year of sickness, our bro. Russell Waid died on Sept. 18, and after a touching prayer by bro. H. Ricketson of Boston was laid to rest in Hope Cemetery, Worcester, on Sept. 20. Up to the time of his sickness, despite his age, bro. Waid was a faithful worker and attendant at all meetings of the ecclesia. We miss him a great deal.

We also miss our bro. Stanhope, who healthwise remains about the same, and consequently is unable to meet with us.

On Oct. 27 we had the pleasure of hearing bro. Fred Higham lecture. His subject was: "God Controls World Problems—Will Soon Replace All Governments with a Divine Rule of Peace." The lecture was held in the Little Theatre in the center of Worcester, and was well attended by both Christadelphians and strangers. There were upwards of fifty strangers. The Boston ecclesia closed their meeting to help us. We appreciate the help given in this important work.

On Sun., Jan. 19, 1969, we had the pleasure of witnessing the immersion of Mary and Rebecca Sommerville, daughters of bro. & sis. David Sommerville of the Lake Ariel ecclesia. Bro. Nick Mammone gave the brief exhortation at the immersion, and bro. Sommerville presided at the Memorial Service giving the right hand of fellowship on behalf of the Lake Ariel ecclesia and the Berean fellowship.

We have welcomed the following visitors around the table of the Lord: bro. & sis. W. Stephen, bre. Gary & W. Stephen Jr., bro. & sis. J. Garvey Sr., bro. & sis. J. Garvey Jr., bro. & sis. K. MacKellar, sis. E. Lancour & sis. F. Coye (Boston); bro. & sis. Edgar Sargent Jr. (N. Springfield, Vt.); bro. & sis. D. Sommerville, sisters Lois, Mary & Rebecca Sommerville, sis. Ella Smith & bro. Nick Mammone (Lake Ariel); bro. & sis. Dan Gwalchmai, bro. & sis. D. Clubb (London).

We have been refreshed with the word of exhortation by bre. J. Garvey Jr., D. Sommerville, D. Gwalchmai, H. Ricketson; and we have been helped in our lecturing efforts by bre. F. Higham, J. Garvey Sr. and K. MacKellar.

We plan a Fraternal Gathering, Oct. 10-12, God willing. A short program will be held the evening of the 10th for those who arrive early.

—bro. Will Davey

EDITORIAL

He Spake a Parable unto Them

"And he said to them, To you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God; but to them that are without, all these things are done in parables."

THE parables of Jesus are intensely interesting, and instructive to a high degree, for in some manner each one is related to the way of salvation. In addressing the Scribes, Pharisees, and doctors of the Law, it was his custom to use parables because of their hatred and opposition to his teaching.

It was their general practice to listen to him. They did this in order to learn what he was teaching, for they were constantly watching him to see "how they might entangle him in his talk."

One of these cases is brought before us in Mark 2: here in the first 12 vs. we have the record of the healing of the man sick of the palsy—one of the great miracles performed by Jesus.

In his home town of Nazareth, Matthew says—

"He could do no mighty work there because of their unbelief."

In fact, after teaching in their synagogue, they were so enraged that they thrust him out of the city. Therefore he came to Capernaum and made his home there. Mark says the news got around that he was in the house. Luke says—

"There were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem."

With so many gathered together in and about the house, Jesus preached the Word unto them. As to the nature of his teaching, it is not recorded; but no doubt his subject related to the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, for in Luke 4:43 we read—

"He said unto them, I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent."

* * *

HERE in Mark 2 we also have the remarkable call of Levi, or Matthew as he apparently preferred to be called. This is also given in Matt. 9:9-13 and Luke 5:27-32. To show his great appreciation for being called by Jesus and his desire to extend the Good News to all his acquaintances, Luke says—

"And Levi made a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and others that sat down with them."

Jesus could have made choice of dignified Scribes, or wealthy Pharisees, but he chose to select men whose experience of life would give them a practical knowledge of human needs. He chose by divine insight, and to God's glory, Who looketh upon the heart (1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Cor. 1:26-29). Levi was to be the 7th of Jesus' personal choice.

* * *

IT was apparently at this feast given by Levi that he spake to them the parable—

"No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old:

"If otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old" (Luke 5:36).

In recording this, Mark says "the rent is made worse." This parable was apparently directed toward the Pharisees and doctors of the Law that were sitting by, and Jesus did not intend that they should understand what he meant by it, for he had said (Mark 4:12)—

"That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand;

"Lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them."

Is it possible for US to understand the parable? We believe it is. The Law of Moses had been given to serve the double purpose of physical well-being for the people of Israel, and for their spiritual education. Paul puts it this way in Gal. 3:24-25—

"Wherefore the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

"But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

Here, then, was the change. The teaching of Jesus was presenting a new way of life, and it could not be used to patch up the old forms of Judaism. They could not exist together in harmony.

Any effort to patch up the flaws that had developed in Judaism by mixing the teaching of Jesus would make the situation worse. This thought is reflected in Heb. 7:19—

"For the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God."

The Law, the "Old Covenant," the old garment, he says (Heb. 8:13) had "decayed and waxed old, and was ready to vanish away."

From the days of Adam and Eve, clothing has been prominent in many ways. Their man-made garments were not satisfactory, and had to be replaced by skins of animals. In the prophecy relating to Jesus in Isa. 61 it is said—

"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God:

"For He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation: He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."

In contrast to this divine clothing, Isaiah in 59:6 compares human schemes, plans of worship, and ways of life, to spiders' webs—unsuitable for clothing, for he says—

"Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works."

The sacrifices under the Law provided a covering for the sins of the people because they were divinely ordained. But in the days of Jesus the system had degenerated to such an extent that they were teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. The garments of righteousness had become soiled, and so full of holes that they were as filthy rags and could not be repaired.

* * *

THAT too was the state we were in when we came into contact with the Truth. The Bible was like a scroll "written within and outside," firmly sealed with 7 seals. As it is written in Isa. 29:11-12—

"And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee. And he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed.

"And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee. And he saith, I am not learned."

How do we stand in this respect? Have we the courage and the humility to face the issue as the eunuch did when he was reading from the prophecy of Isaiah, and Philip asked him if he understood what he was reading. Do we respond as he did and say—

"How can I, except some man should guide me?"

Or are we conceited enough to believe we can understand the entire Bible without one to guide us? If we are truly interested in our salvation, we will never hesitate to seek for help when it is available. We will lay hold thankfully upon that which has been provided.

Is it not arrogant and childish to ignore the clear historic fact that the Truth has been brought to light in these last days by the indefatigable and self-sacrificing labours of bre. Thomas and Roberts, and that our present possession of it can be traced directly back to those labours?

Bre. Thomas and Roberts were sound and faithful expositors of the essential truths of God. Nay, more, they were the instruments who brought these glorious things to light for our day, and separated them from the corruptions and man-made traditions of the religious world. True Christadelphians have perceived and decided this long ago, and have built healthy ecclesias on this foundation.

Those who deprecate these brethren and their monumental works invariably have a crotchet to promote or a private interpretation to peddle.

There is a great effort today by speculators and innovators to get rid of this sound foundation of Truth, for as long as it is preserved it is a barrier to their speculations.

Let us not play into the hands of those who itch to sweep away the sound principles of Truth these brethren have established, so that they can lead us back to Rome in one great brotherhood of constantly-innovating Apostasy.

* * *

HOW do we listen to Jesus and the apostles? Do we let their message enter into one ear and go out the other—or do we let it sink down into our hearts, where it will germinate? Then, having germinated, it will grow and give us the necessary strength and wisdom to withstand the evil and deception that surrounds us.

We MUST, if we would find favor with Jesus when he comes to be glorified in his saints.

—Editor

The Bride, the Lamb's Wife

"And I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, descending from the Deity out of the heaven, having been prepared as a Bride who had been adorned for her Husband."

By BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

THE apostle informs us in Rev. 21:9 that he was presented with a view of the Bride, the Lamb's wife, that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, by—

"One of the 7 angels having the 7 Vials full of the 7 last plagues."

The reason of this reference to the Vial-angels here, is because the manifestation of the Bride belongs to "the time of the dead" when they are judged, and the approved and chosen receive the reward.

This is the time of the Bride's adorning, and investment with the fine linen of incorruption, clean and bright, in recompense according to her deeds.

And as this adorning transpires at the coming of the Ancient of Days (which occurs under the out-pouring of the 6th Vial upon the Euphratean Power in preparation of her way), so it would be the 6th angel that shows John the Bride.

He is quite emphatic in stating what he saw; unusually so. He is not content to say, "I saw"; but he must say, "I John saw."

And he may truly say this; for when the Bride is manifested in the time of the dead, he, John, the beloved disciple himself, will see her with his own eyes; for he will be one of her constituents in glory, as he was formerly "in tribulation and patience" (Rev. 1:9).

The 6th angel, then, shows him the Bride. He hears his voice, saying to him—

"Come hither! I will show to thee the Bride, the wife of the Lamb."

And in obedience to this call, John will come forth from the house of death; and be carried away to see the Bride descending out of heaven from Deity, upon a great and high mountain.

When he arrives in Teman, he will again behold the Lord Jesus, whom he saw on Olivet, and before him a crowd gathered by the angels of his power (Matt. 24:31)—

"From the 4 winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

This mixed multitude is not "the Great City, the Holy Jerusalem," although all the prophets and all the apostles, and all the saints, are there; for—

"There shall in no wise enter into it any thing unclean, and working abomination, and falsehood."

The whole crowd, except "the living who remain," are recently emerged from the place of skulls, and bones, and corrupting carcasses; and therefore—from the necessity of the thing—are all "of the earth earthy," and consequently of an unclean nature or body, upon the principle that not one can bring a clean thing out of an unclean (Job 14:4).

And beside this condition common to them all, there are many whose deeds in previous life will consign them to condemnation, to the sea mingled with fire, and to second death.

Hence, a separation must be effected; and all deemed unworthy of the Holy Jerusalem, compelled to depart.

And when they are gone, and "the called, and chosen, and faithful," continue as they were, they are still not the New and Holy Jerusalem; for this Great City is said to "descend from the Deity out of the heaven," not to ascend to the great and high mountain out of the earth.

What then, is the solution of this mystery? If the approved and accepted saints be the Bride, and the New and Holy Jerusalem; and they by resurrection come out of the earth; how can the Great and Holy City be said to "descend from the Deity out of heaven?"

If in coming forth from the graves, the prophets, apostles, and saints, all emerge thence immortal, perfect, and thoroughly furnished, ought not the Bride the Lamb's wife, to be styled the New Jerusalem ascending from the tomb? Upon what principle, then, is it that John declares that he saw the Great City, the Holy Jerusalem, **descending** from the Deity out of heaven?

In answer to this question, I remark that the Holy Jerusalem is a **spiritual** body corporate; that is, it is a community of people, every one of whom is spirit, or an incorruptible, deathless, and powerful, individual. Their nature, or bodily substance, is clean, pure holy, and divine; and it is such, because it is "born **from above**."

That which is clean, pure, holy, and divine, is not produced from the earth. If the thing produced from the dust become so, it must be **made clean**, pure, holy, and divine, by being born of the Spirit from above; and then the thing born, made, created, or developed, is properly and truly said to be "from heaven," or to—

"Descend from the Deity out of heaven."

This principle is taught in the conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus (and afterwards illustrated in his own person)—

"Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the Kingdom of the Deity."

No; such a birth being wanting in his case if he come forth from the grave, he will be cast into "the sea mingled with fire," and tormented in that fiery lake without rest day or night, to the beginning of the 1000 years.

He cannot become part of the New and Holy Jerusalem; nor enter into the Kingdom of the Deity. Flesh and blood cannot inherit, or possess, that indestructible and incorruptible Kingdom; but only that which hath been born out of Spirit for—

"That which hath been born out of Spirit is spirit."

Therefore, said Jesus—

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born from above.

"The Spirit breathes where he will, and thou hearest his voice;

"But thou hast not known whence he is come, and whither he goes away: so is every one that hath been born of the Spirit."

—thou hast not known whence such an one cometh, nor whither he goes away (John 3:3-8). This was true of all the Pharisees, and others like them, in regard to him whence these "heavenly things" proceeded—

"I know (said he) whence I came, and whither I go away; but ye have not known whence I am come, and whither I go away" (John 8:14).

That burning and shining light, John the Immerser, testified that the Bridegroom, his friend, who is superior to all, "cometh from above"—"from heaven" (John 3:32): and when he appeared, he said—

"I came down from heaven to do the will of Him Who sent me" (John 6:38).

And again (John 3:13)—

"No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of the heaven, the Son of Man who is in the heaven."

Now, upon the same principle that it could be said, that one "born of a woman, and made under the Law," who, during his life, never went further from Palestine than Egypt; died on the cross, was buried, and came forth thence on the third day—came down out of heaven, and was "the Lord from heaven": upon this identical principle it can truly be affirmed, that "a multitude which no man can number," 1000's of men and women coming forth from the earth, and who had never visited any other planet of the universe; were seen, as the Bride the Lamb's wife, the New, the Holy Jerusalem, the Great City—

"Descending from the Deity out of the heaven."

But what is the principle? It consists in the writing, stamping, impressing, or engraving of the thing designed upon the subject or material to be engraved, stamped, or impressed.

The writer or engraver is the 7-Horned and 7-Eyed Spirit (Rev. 4:5 5:6) who "engraves the graving thereof" (Zech. 3:9).

When the dead body prepared for the Spirit (Heb. 10:5) was restored to life and had come forth from the sepulchre, the Spirit "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" engraved upon it, or impressed it with, every attribute necessary to constitute it "the Lord from heaven." He—

"Made it both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

The precious stone had come out of the earth (whence all precious stones also come); but it had to be cut, polished, embroidered, and adorned, to bring out all the beauties of which it was susceptible. This the Spirit effected in the operation of raising the risen body to consubstantiality with the Deity.

Now, it matters not whether it be **one man** to be made "the Lord FROM heaven" or a **countless multitude** of earth-borns to be made the Holy Jerusalem "descending from the Deity out of heaven"—the operation is the same. Every individual is subjected to a like polishing, embroidering, and adorning; as saith the Spirit who will do the work—

"Him that overcometh (saith he) will I make a pillar in the Nave of my Deity, and he shall go no more out;

"And I will write upon him the Name of my Deity, and the Name of the City of my Deity, New Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven from my Deity; and my new Name"

(Rev. 3:12).

To have the Name of Deity, the Name of the City, and the New Name, engraved or written upon one, is for such an one first to come into existence, and then, to become a constituent of the things engraved.

He becomes one of the City of the Deity, New Jerusalem; and in the operation is married to the Spirit in so close and intimate a union that he becomes one body, flesh and bones with the Spirit, so that all the earthiness and corruptibility of his grave-body is "swallowed up of life."

It loses its similitude to the nature of the first Adam, and acquires the 'heavenly image' of the Lord from heaven.

The prophets, apostles, and approved saints, having been all caused to exist incorruptible in being "clothed with their house from heaven" by the Spirit, are then regarded as the adorned Bride married to the Lamb, the Holy City, New Jerusalem, the Great City—

"Descending from the Deity out of heaven."

* * *

BUT when John was carried away to see her, he saw her as a "city on a hill"—on a "great and high mountain."

When he became part of the New Jerusalem in Teman, she had not finished her descent. She had not reached Mt. Zion; for it had not then as yet been wrested from the Gentiles.

But Mt. Zion is not "a great and high mountain." The mountain of Yahweh's House, however, established on the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills, with all nations flowing unto it (Isa. 2:2) IS both great and high.

It is "a great mountain filling the whole earth": and upon the top of this John saw the Great City, the Holy Jerusalem, then governing the world "with an iron rod," while she was descending and after she had completed her descent from Deity.

Fraternal Gatherings

PORTLAND, Oregon: Sat., Sun., Mon., July 12-14, 1969

Bro. A. Tilling, 2212 NE Prescott, Portland, Ore. 97211; (503) 287-3064

HYE, Texas: Mon., July 28 to Sun., Aug. 3, 1969

Bro. C. Banta, 815 Boston, Deer Park, Tex. 77536; Ph. (713) 479-2568

WORCESTER, Massachusetts: Oct. 10-12, 1969

Bro. W. Davey, Strawberry Hill St., Dover, Ma. 02030; 617-785-0881

Voyage to Australia

By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, understood as a child, thought as a child: but when I became a man I put away childish things"—1 Cor. 13:11

PART TWENTY-TWO

MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 1896

Ten o'clock found us at the railway-station accompanied by the 3 sisters, now become 5 in number.

The pain of our leave-taking was softened by the company of bro. & sis. Jenkins, who went in the same train as far as Hawera (20 miles distant), and sis. Sherwood, who went to Patea (still 20 miles further).

These were in addition to bro. Gold, who was going with me to Wanganui. At Hawera, the train stopped nearly two hours—an interval which bro. & sis. Jenkins insisted we should spend in refreshment at their house—half-a-mile from the station.

Resuming the journey, we came to Patea by the sea in about another hour, parting there from sis. Sherwood with great regret. She will be absolutely alone at Patea, but has some idea of arranging for a periodical visit to bro. & sis. Jenkins for breaking bread.

How did she come into contact with the Truth in the first instance? Well, this is how it was. There are two scenes in it.

Here is Scene I. A brother travelling in a business capacity was at her house. On the Sunday, when she got ready to "go to church," she asked the visitor if he was going to church?

He said, "No."

Wasn't he in habit of going?

"No."

How was that?

Well, if she would read a book that he would lend her, she would understand all about it.

She would be pleased to read, for, in point of fact, some things about the Church were perplexing her. (Lends her *Christendom Astray*).

Scene II. A railway train. Sis. Jenkins in one compartment, and Miss Sherwood in another—(both strangers to each other.)

Sis. Jenkins hears an old lady taking Miss Sherwood to task for not attending church, and Miss Sherwood excusing herself on the score that the truth was not taught in the church. She also heard her, with still greater surprise, recommend the old lady to read *Christendom Astray*.

When the train came to Patea, and Miss Sherwood got out, sis. Jenkins felt so deeply interested that she ran after her and introduced herself. In this way, they became acquainted.

Result: Miss Sherwood's presence at Stratford, and baptism on the occasion of my visit.

* * *

AT 4 p.m. the train reached Whanganui, next place of call on the program. It is quite an important town of nearly 10,000—a solidly-built and thriving place at the mouth of a broad river. It is surrounded with hills and picturesquely and compactly placed on the northern bank. A bridge leads over to the southern side where, on the top of a high cliff, many villa residences nestle among gardens and trees. The town is the seat of the rolling-stock and repairing works connected with the railway.

It used to be an important place with the Maoris before the English took possession. The surrounding country is beautiful, and the air a salubrious mixture of sea and woodland.

The presence of the Truth here is due to the lecturing efforts of bro. Baker of Dannevirke, some distance further south. The footline, "Seats free no collection," attracted the attention of a couple just arrived from England over 10 years ago. They said, "This looks genuine: let us go and hear." And bro. & sis. Dexter (as they afterwards became) went, and so the Truth began.

Bro. Dexter was waiting at the station and conducted us to his house where, after tea the same evening, a number of brethren and sisters assembled, including bro. LeSueur of Wellington, of whom I had long heard good things and bro. Wm. Challinor who had just arrived with his wife from Birmingham. I was also introduced to sis. Dexter whose characteristics are described in many a Scripture specification of womanly excellence.

We spent a very pleasant evening, during which, however, we had the unusual experience of an earthquake tremor—unusual, that is, to me. Such an experience is not unusual in New Zealand. The ground shakes about once in 3 months—sometimes too distinctly to be comfortable. In this case, the floor vibrated and the chandelier swung gently to and fro. Sometimes articles will be thrown off tables and piano-tops.

Once in a great while there is a violent visitation. But on the whole it is nothing to be frightened at, and the inhabitants have become reconciled to the uncanny phenomenon.

* * *

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 1896

AFTER writing, walking out, and resting, I lectured in the evening in the Oddfellows Hall to a large audience on "What Are Things Coming To?" The mayor and the local newspaper editor were in the audience. It was astonishing to see so large and respectful a company of hearers in so small a town.

But nothing from nothing springs. Where there is an effect, there is always a cause. If there was a large and curious audience, it was because steps had been taken to bring it together.

In addition to ordinary wall posters, handbills, and newspaper advertisements, there had been a house-to-house distribution of invitation cards. Every house in the place received one—Deborah (sis. Dexter) taking a leading part. In addition to this, the newspaper editors had been induced by the same active personality to insert preliminary paragraphs.

It is, of course, immaterial as regards God's view of the action of His servants whether many or few of the alienated sons of men turn out to hear the Truth at their call, but it is more encouraging to said servants to see a "full house" than empty benches.

A very fair report appeared in the paper next day—one of the best written by a stranger that has appeared in the course of the tour. As a rule I am afraid to read a newspaper report of a Christadelphian lecture, for it is usually so muddled and emasculated that it would be better for there to be no report at all. But this time a really sensible outline of the matters presented was given. Bro. H. Taylor presided.

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1896

MR. TINGEY, an influential tradesman in both Wanganui and Wellington, called on me in the morning to say he had for a long time been a reader of Christadelphian literature, and was "almost persuaded" to throw in his lot with us.

Indeed, he went further, and said that on his return from Wellington, to which he was to depart, he would arrange with the brethren for his obedience. He was at present connected with the Wesleyans, among whom however he was in bad odor on account of his sympathy with the Truth.

The day was a holiday. All were, therefore, at liberty to use the day as they might wish. In the afternoon bro. & sis. Dexter took bro. Gold and myself on a long drive up the opposite bank of the river. We passed some precipitous hills where the last struggle between the natives and the English took place.

At a place called Opokognara, the horse and vehicle crossed the river on a chain ferry—a big wooden float pulled across by an overhead chain. Very simple—quite effectual—the first of the kind I had seen.

Returning on the other side of the river we stopped at a native village, or "pah," as it is called. I wanted to talk with the natives. There seemed to be nobody about.

It was suggested the people had gone to "the sports"—which were being held somewhere or other in connection with the holiday. Not at all unlikely; the natives are fond of sports and races—a good indication of the true moral status of such things. Feathers, paint, and sports—for savages. What for angels, actual and in the germ?

Sinners make a wry face at the answer: and there are sinners who are called saints. There will be a proper assortment at the judgement seat.

Preferring not to be balked, I got off the conveyance and went in at a garden gate and up a garden walk to a house which I was told was occupied by a native. I knocked at the door. The door opened: it was a Maori woman. I asked where the village people were. She said contemptively, "Gone to the sports," but there were some left.

She then came out, and motioned us to follow her. I now noticed she was tattooed on her lips and chin. She crossed the road into the enclosure where the "pah" was situated, bro. Gold and I following. She went to one of the doors and thumped at it.

Presently there was a response, not at the door, but at the end of the house from the back. It was a very small house—only high enough to let a person in by stooping his head a little. There was a lane of the same sort of houses along the bank of the river.

Going round the end of the house, we entered by the back door, and found a man and 2 women seated. The man, with blinking, widened face, was smoking. The women were weaving bright-coloured threads upon a white fabric stretched across the room.

I sat down and examined the work, and tried to talk with the women—one very old. I asked questions in the simplest language I could employ, but only made myself a little understood. They smiled back my smiles, and tried to explain about the work they were making, but I could not follow their sounds.

The man was more intelligible, and became quite frank when he made up his mind we were to be trusted.

There was a small temple in the midst of the houses. I said I would like to see it. He took us to it, opened the door, and let us in. It had no windows except at one end. It had no furniture except central pillars dividing the area into two sections. There was no floor except the earth, and the sides were very dirty, and the odor of the place sickening. The outside was very ornamental (native workmanship).

I asked what they used the temple for. He motioned with his hands and feet to signify dancing.

"And sing?" said I.

"Yes."

"And pray?"

"Yes."

"Why do you pray?" I asked, "Whom do you pray to?"

"Oh, we never mind about that," said he, with a grin.

Bro. Gold told the man I had come 12,000 miles to see his country.

He said, "It is too far."

And so we said goodbye, with a sense of the utter poverty of human nature when left to its own resources.

Resuming our journey, we drove to a hillside in a picturesque corner where some of the brethren and their children had been spending the holiday afternoon. Here we were photographed on the hillside by bro. Challinor.

After this we drove to the house of bro. Taylor where, after tea, a pleasant evening was spent in conversation and singing.

Here I made the acquaintance of sis. Comrie, a real specimen of the rugged Scotch Covenanter stock—a stock mentally characterized by a curious combination of penetrating good sense and fervent devotion, but sometimes needing a bit of Abrahamic enlightenment to be serviceable for true Israelitish purposes.

Sis. Comrie was first attracted by the twilight of early Campbellism; then charmed with the fuller Scripture expositions of Dr. Thomas whose Glasgow lectures she heard about 40 years ago; then embarrassed by the fogs raised by half-friends of the Truth in the Dowie days; and now enjoying the tranquil light as of the evening sun, looking for tomorrow's long and everlasting day.

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 1896

DEVOTED first part of the day to writing. In the afternoon, rode out with sis. Dexter who, from a hilltop, showed me the beautiful environs of Whanganui.

In the evening I lectured on "The Future State Revealed." Again a large audience, and a good newspaper notice next day.

This was to have been the last lecture in Whanganui; but a change of program had been made admitting of another lecture on the Sunday morning. This was not the object of the change. I had expressed the wish that, in my state, I could stay a week in Whanganui.

The brethren, without my knowledge, chiefly at the inspiration of bro. Challinor, telegraphed to bro. Baker and obtained my discharge from Woodville, which would allow of my staying the week in question. I then volunteered to lecture on the Sunday.

But afterwards, the Woodville brethren, discovering that I was not seriously unwell, though in need of rest, made such strenuous demur that the matter was compromised by my departure to them for 2 out of the 3 days that had been originally arranged for.

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 1896

AFTER a forenoon spent in writing, had a long and beautiful ride to the south with sis. Dexter and family, returning on high table land in view of the distant sea.

(Continued next month, God Willing)

10 COPIES OF "VISIBLE HAND OF GOD" NEEDED

The Buffalo ecclesia would like to buy or borrow 10 new or used copies of Visible Hand of God. If you can help, please write: bro. Victor Gilbert, 199 Burbank Drive, Snyder, N.Y. 14226.

Thoughts for Today

This month we are introducing a series of articles that will appear under the above heading. If the Lord will, each successive magazine will contain a short article which will be based on the many things we see and do each day and yet may possibly overlook a more deep and spiritual lesson.

"The Body is not one member but many . . . The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee . . . God hath tempered the Body together"—1 Cor. 12

IT will be our intention to direct our remarks to the youth—those who have recently been baptized. But it is not our intention to exclude those who have developed, and are now able to partake of the more meaty things of the Spirit.

Many times youth may feel— yes, even **do** feel—that there is a great gap which exists between themselves and the older members. This gap may appear wide or narrow depending on the individual looking at it. Youth may feel that the older generation is not interested in their welfare, their ideas, their suggestions or ideals—that they are ignored or looked down on.

True it is, that in OUR youth we felt we had very good ideas; ideas as to beneficial changes we felt necessary for the ecclesia. Some, not all, of these ideas are, or were, worthy of consideration. But impetuous youth wants ALL changes to transpire; and if they fail to materialize, then that "sin which doth so easily beset us" begins to rage, and we feel "age is against us."

As world rushes to its destruction we see youth rebelling more and more. The "Current World Events" in the Berean clearly shows that this defiance is a fulfilment of prophecy. Ecclesial life should not and **must** not tolerate rebellion and those who choose to support it. Sensible youth will not follow in the increasing student uprisings.

Turning to the aged, we may forget that we were youthful at one time; that we were full of ideas—ideas we now realize were unprofitable.

Human nature is deceitful at ALL times, and age must not feel that because they can operate under the guise of wisdom, all of THEIR present ideas must be fulfilled and become law. Can we forget Elihu's words?—

"Great men are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgment."

As one increases in wisdom—**true** wisdom—they realize that there must be a spiritual understanding between each age group, that they must—

"Work together for good, and not evil."

In a true ecclesia, youth and age should and must work TOGETHER as a closely-knit Body; each listening to and exhorting the other in the true spirit of Christ.

It has been said that old age is a "dreadful thing"—we become ignored and shunned. But the same can be said of youth: it is a dreadful thing if ignored and shunned.

John left a perfect example for us when in his epistle he addressed the aged men, the young men, and the children (in the Truth). It was a unique message: and tho subdivided into 3 sections, each section blended perfectly with the other. Combined, the messages represented an overall exhortation to the WHOLE ecclesia.

In our proposed series, we will endeavour to reach out to all age groups: those who have borne the heat of the day; those who were hired at noon hour; but more especially to those who have just been employed.

Every day we can see objects which direct our minds to the things of the Spirit, if we would only look. There are things in nature which, if we but stop for a moment and ponder, our minds would be exercised to a higher level.

Our "Thoughts for Today" may develop into thoughts for the week, or even thoughts for the month, depending on our desire to enlarge upon them. One thought can very often unfold a multitude of thoughts, which in turn brings greater and higher operating minds.

We ask that our younger members not only read these Thoughts for Today, but endeavour to meditate on them and fill in the details, as it is our intention to supply the outline of the picture only.

—J.J.

Next month, if the Lord will, Number 1: "TREES"

Be Ye Therefore Perfect

"Ye are my friends, IF ye do whatsoever I command you"—John 15:14

MATTHEW CHAPTERS FIVE to SEVEN

I HAVE been always strongly impressed that these 3 chapters are the living and vital heart of the Truth. If we are familiar with these teachings and sincerely trying to obey them at all times, we are on the way of life. **If we are not, we have no chance of life.**

These 3 chapters, commonly known as the "Sermon on the Mount," contain 40 commands. They are presented in various ways, but are all actually commands of Christ, to which he refers when he says (John 15:14)—

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

He sums it all up in his final words. If we hear and do, we build on rock, and will stand forever. If we hear and do not, we build on sand—our house will collapse and fall.

Let us consider some of these commands in order—

"Blessed are the poor in spirit"

Or, as a command—

"Be poor in spirit."

This is perhaps the most striking command of the whole address. The word "poor" here means the lowest degree of abject poverty and destitution. It means beggar.

"Spirit" is disposition. The "poor in spirit" are those who fully realize the true destitute status of perishing mortal man, as compared to glorious and eternal things. What is man?—dust, a vapour, a breath, a shadow, with an urgent, desperate, crying need for the help and strength of God.

Those who perceive this are blessed, happy; they have taken the first step toward immortality.

* * *

"Blessed are they that mourn"

Or, more simply—

"Be mourners."

The blessing does not include ALL mourners, any more than the first does all poor. It is those who mourn in the right way for the right things; those who have deep fellow-feeling for others' sorrows—for the burden of the sorrow of this sad world; those who realistically face the facts of life—

"It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting;

"For that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to heart" (Eccl. 7:2).

It does not conflict with the command to "Always rejoice!" Paul said (2 Cor. 6:10) that he was "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich."

* * *

"Be meek" (5:5).

Meek means yielding, gentle, mild, patient, calm and soothing; not aggressive or self-assertive or bossy; cheerfully putting up with wrong and present disadvantages for the sake of eternal good.

Meek people are self-controlled people and they have great power for good influence. It is a training in controlling the flesh. It is the attitude that can best help others.

* * *

"Hunger and thirst after righteousness" (5:6).

Hunger and thirst—the basic, most essential needs and desires. The blessing is for those whose whole hearts' desire is not for personal gain or advantage or pleasure, but for righteousness and holiness and godliness—in themselves and through-out the earth.

* * *

"Be merciful" (5:7).

In Nazareth Revisited, bro. Roberts strongly emphasizes the necessity of keeping all these teachings in balance. We may tend to over-emphasize those that naturally appeal to us, and give others insufficient weight.

An adamant, forceful stand for righteousness is essential, but equally so is mercy and compassion and patience and understanding. We are fighting sin—the common enemy. We are not fighting people. People we are trying to win and save.

We naturally tend to be very critical of the errors of others, and very compassionate to our own. Let us reverse the process. It is much more healthy and productive and scriptural.

* * *

"Be pure in heart" (5:8).

The saddest aspect of the perverted morality of these last dark days of human ignorance is that corruption and vulgarity are being glorified as reality and honesty, and deeper bondage to the flesh is heralded as emancipation and freedom. Decency and purity are condemned as prudery and hypocrisy.

Truly the world is full of hypocrisy, as the new generation of rebels says, but the problem is not solved but worsened by destroying the good things that the world is hypocritical about.

More than ever it is essential that we, as Christ's brethren, realize and emphasize that purity and cleanliness of heart and deed and word and thought are as vital and important and desirable and timely as ever.

The Bible—God's Word—is the ONLY standard of right and wrong, purity and impurity, cleanliness and filthiness, wisdom and folly. Without this standard, man steadily degenerates to the beast, though he glorifies his corruption with high sounding words.

* * *

"Be peacemakers" (5:9).

Peace can only be built on one foundation: **"First pure; then peaceable"**—

"The work of **righteousness** shall be peace" (Isa. 32:17).

"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

But the emphasis here is on the desire and effort for peace and harmony and reconciliation: the basic bent of the mind—developed through meditation on God's Word—to seek to harmonize conflicts, to reconcile estrangements, to remove barriers of misunderstanding and enmity. To accomplish these things, there must be complete renunciation of self and personal desire.

Christ, in perfect self-sacrifice, made peace by the blood of the cross, reconciling and uniting Jew and Gentile in one New Man in himself.

He is the great example of bringing reconciliation to others by personal holiness in himself. He reconciled men to each other, and mankind to God.

* * *

"Rejoice and be exceeding glad when you are privileged to suffer for righteousness' sake, for great is your reward in heaven."

Suffering is not to be rejoiced in for its own sake, or from self-pity. That, though common, is fleshly perversion. It is to be healthily and intelligently rejoiced in as a necessary means to a glorious end—as an assurance and evidence that God is working in us and through us to accomplish His divine purpose.

* * *

"Be ye the salt of the earth."

Our responsibility in all we do or say is to be an element of purity and soundness in an increasingly corrupt and degenerating world.

We are to be the element that keeps God from destroying the whole, as in the Flood, or Sodom and Gomorrah.

But if the salt has lost its freshness and tangy saltiness, what good is it? This is our zeal and dedication and fervent activity for good toward all, without which we are nothing.

* * *

"Be ye the light of the world."

A high commission indeed! Similar to the salt, but a different aspect. The salt is the preserving influence, the inner striving and prayer, the life of godliness and purity.

The light is the manifestation, the guidance, the enlightenment, the beacon pointing the way in the darkness of human night.

Let your light shine that men may glorify God. Our lives and testimonies must be a manifestation to lost and groping mankind of the reality and desirability and beauty of holiness.

* * *

"Think not that I am come to destroy the Law" (5:17).

The Law of Moses demanded perfect holiness. The Law drew a sharp line between clean and unclean. The Law, said Paul, was "holy, just and good."

The common idea is that Christ came to lower the requirements, so that man could get life with less effort and less inconvenience—to sweep away all the flesh-crucifying rules under a big, blind, blurred blanket of tolerance and indulgence, falsely described as "love."

Nothing could be further from the Truth—

"Whoso shall break one of the least of these commandments shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven" (5:19).

"Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of heaven" (5:20).

In the eyes of the people, the Scribes and Pharisees were the very pinnacle of righteousness, but it was a superficial and external fulfilling of the Law. Jesus is about to expound a deeper, infinitely more searching and piercing law. He is going to bring out the real spirit of the Mosaic Law, showing how much further it goes with its commands into the innermost heart of man.

* * *

"But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother (without a cause) shall be in danger of the judgment" (5:22).

The Law says, "Thou shalt not kill." I say, in expounding the Spirit of the Law, that **thou shalt not be angry at anyone**, for anger is simply murder locked up in the heart.

"Without a cause" is not in the best manuscripts. The RV & Diaglott and all modern versions omit it. It destroys the whole force of the command. The command is not—

"Thou shalt not be angry without a cause."

But—

"Thou shalt not be angry—Period."

Anger is the prerogative of God, and we are not God.

In man, anger is loss of control, loss of perspective, a victory for the mind of the flesh. We can accomplish nothing good when we are angry. We lose all influence for good. Anger is infantile immaturity—

"The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

* * *

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee;

"Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

If you are aware that your brother has anything against you; is in any way estranged or upset (regardless of whether it is justified or not); the command of Christ is, "BE RECONCILED."

Jesus does not discuss where the fault may lie. That is unimportant. The important part is— Seek reconciliation, continually, always. Not just go through the motions once or twice, like a technical Pharisee. He says— BE reconciled: keep at it: never give up the effort.

If these commands were obeyed, there could be no ecclesial problems. If they are NOT obeyed, says Christ, we are just building all of our life-long efforts on the sand of the flesh.

* * *

"If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out" (5:29-30).

In all these commands, we must get at the deep principles that underlie them. They are all far deeper and more broadly applicable than the specific form in which they are worded. But this does not lessen their power, but enforces it.

Christ here is clearly using the right eye and right hand to emphasize the extreme urgency of putting away ANYTHING, however precious to us, that might hinder us in the race for life.

This principle, faithfully carried out, would eliminate many, many things from our encumbered lives, and release much time and money and energy for the work of the Lord. Are we building on rock or sand?

* * *

"Swear not at all. Let your communication be Yea, yea and Nay, nay" (5:34-37).

Various reasons are given. One is the complete helplessness of weak, mortal man to control anything or make any certain determination for the future. But the deepest reason:

"For whatsoever is more than this—a simple affirmative—cometh of evil."

Speech is a very important aspect of godliness. Control of the tongue is essential to pleasing God. We must learn that EVERY word we utter is important and related to our salvation—

"For every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof at the judgment."

What a terrible volume of condemnation we are building up for ourselves with our idle and often malicious chatter!

If we hope for life, every word must be carefully checked and weighed.

* * *

"Resist not evil" (5:39).

This goes very, very deep. Of all the commands this is perhaps the most directly contrary to both the reactions and the wisdom of the flesh.

Why not resist evil? Why not rather fight evil with every possible means available?

First, because it is so commanded. We must obey rather than question. But still we must question to the extent of trying to get the fullest value and purpose of the command.

The present world is built on violence. All governments were established by violence. If we resort to any force, or even **threat** of force, we are identifying ourselves with the violent world, the "Kingdom of men."

We are making their violence our tool and ally. The threat of naked violence lies behind all the world's "legal" processes, and gives them power.

We are called out to be separate—harmless sheep in the midst of a world of wolves.

The fact that this command to resist not evil is directly opposed to the strongest and most vicious motion of the flesh is one big, obvious reason for the command. The whole purpose of our present probation is to overcome the flesh and train the Spirit.

But there is a deeper and more constructive and positive reason. It is given in v. 45—

"That ye may be the children of your Father, for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good."

WHY does God send His rain on the just and on the unjust? Because His present loving purpose is to call men to life, to call sinners to repentance. And to be His children, this must be OUR whole purpose of life. Everything must be subordinated to this, for the present.

There are 2 ways of life—the way of self-assertion and self-advantage; and the way of manifesting love and goodness toward all with a view to awakening love and goodness.

We cannot be half-and-half. We must make our choice between them. Christ is the perfect example of the way of love. He went through life completely unselfish, completely unresisting, and he has had more influence for good than all other men put together.

The non-resistant, Christlike life is the ONLY pattern of life, if we desire to do eternal good. Truly a time of judgment upon evil will come, and if we are worthy, we shall be used with Christ to

carry out God's will at that time, and establish the universal triumph of righteousness, but our present duty is to try to win men to God by the Christlike way of good for evil.

* * *

"If any sue thee at the law, and take thy coat, let him have thy cloke also" (5:40).

Not just resist not evil, but give to the evil more than they demand. Is it folly? Or is it the highest and most beautiful spiritual wisdom, so far above the mind of the flesh that the flesh cannot even comprehend it?

Do we—in deed, word and thought—obey this command to yield to the evil more than they take from us? Or are we still foolishly building on the sand of worldly thinking?

* * *

"Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (5:41).

Some day, perhaps very soon, we must face the man who gave us these commands, and who said he would measure our love for him by them.

We know in our heart whether we are being obedient to them, or whether we are allowing the mind of the flesh to water them down and explain them away, or ignore them altogether.

* * *

"Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; pray for them that persecute you" (5:44).

These are very wonderful, powerful words. Many have been won from evil to the way of life by a Christlike example. Infinitely many more, of course, have not, but they do not count. They are just part of the perishing background of the glorious divine plan.

God is drawing a precious few out of the innumerable multitudes of the ages unto Himself, and the magnet is this free, glorious, unmerited, spiritual love of which we are called to be a part.

* * *

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect" (5:48).

Does he really expect us to be perfect? What he expects— what he DEMANDS—is that we strain every effort in that direction. He requires no more than the very best we can do, but he will accept no less.

The command leaves us absolutely no excuse for relaxing our efforts at any point short of perfection. The great example that is set before us in this verse is GOD HIMSELF, and as those who aspire and claim to be His children, we must always strive to be like Him.

* * *

"Take heed"—be very careful —"that ye do not your alms before men: let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

Some, in justification of parading their virtues, have tried to see a contradiction between this command and the one to—

"Let your light so shine that men may see your good works & glorify your Father."

But the wise will see no contradiction. The light must shine. We must manifest to men at every moment and in every contact the best example we can of the Christlike life.

But in the matter of doing individual good to others, every effort must be made at privacy and secrecy.

Why? The reason given is, "Otherwise ye have NO REWARD of your Father." Why not, if we are sincerely trying to do good to others, as commanded? Because (v. 2) such as do it openly have their reward already.

All who have studied the human heart—both their own and others—in the light of God's Word, will recognize that any avoidable publicity of good deeds has an element of self-glory which immediately makes it ugly and offensive to God.

* * *

"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and pray to thy Father in secret" (6:5).

The same with prayer. Personal prayer should be in utter privacy. The slightest trace of display or show is abomination.

* * *

"When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."

And public prayer especially should be simple, brief and unembellished. Mere repetition, he says, is vain and worldly. We must always remember with deep reverence that we are talking to God in reality and sincerity, and not giving a public performance to influence and impress others.

* * *

"Forgive men their trespasses."

We must forgive—freely and fully, from the heart. This is absolutely essential to a Christlike character. Ill-feeling and resentment and taking offence and unforgiveness and fleshly sourness make divine beauty of character utterly impossible.

And we must forgive EVERYTHING—whether forgiveness is sought or not. It is very self-gratifying to graciously forgive when forgiveness is asked in repentant humility. There's little virtue in forgiving under those conditions. But Christ prayed for forgiveness for those who were in the act of putting him to a cruel death, and Stephen did the same.

* * *

"Moreover, when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast.

"Verily I say unto you, They have their reward" (6:16).

Fasting comes under the same instruction of privacy, and this principle is all-inclusive. Any self-denial or sacrifice for the sake of service to Christ must be secret to have any value in God's sight.

* * *

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, for where your treasure is there will your heart be also" (6:19-23).

This is perhaps the most comprehensive and searching of the commands, as it deals with the whole direction and motive and purpose of life.

"Treasure on earth" is ANYTHING related to the present, passing, mortal life.

The natural way is to accumulate treasure of many different kinds. This is so universally taken for granted as the wise and profitable thing to do that to question it is heresy, and to violate it is considered the height of stupidity.

Christ completely cuts the foundation out from under the whole natural pattern of life.

Vs. 21-23 are an explanation of the importance of single-mindedness, as related to where our treasure in life is. The natural desire is to want treasure both in heaven AND on earth—to seek both salvation and present advantage. But Jesus says—

"If thine eye be single, thy body shall be full of light.

"But if thine eye be evil, or double, thy whole body shall be full of darkness."

Single-mindedness is the only true enlightenment and peace. We must decide whether we want heavenly things or earthly things: we cannot have both—

"A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. Let not that man think he shall receive ANYTHING of the Lord" (Jam. 1: 7-8).

* * *

The next command is even more specifically to the point—

"No man can serve two masters . . . ye cannot serve God and mammon" (6:24).

"Mammon" simply means riches, wealth, present gain, worldly things. We can be of no use or desirability to God unless we are entirely devoted to HIM to the exclusion of everything else.

Everything else—ALL natural things—must be very secondary and very unimportant to us, in order to please God. Therefore—

"Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, what ye shall drink, or what ye shall put on.

"For all these things the Gentiles—the people of the world—seek" (6:25-32).

God wants us to be very different from the world, with our minds on very different things.

It does not mean we need net work to provide these things. Paul is the best example of what Jesus means here. Paul laboured diligently to provide for necessary things, not only for himself but for others also; and he commanded that if a man refused work, he should not be given food.

But these daily things had no interest or importance to him except as basic necessities that had to be taken care of. And in his utter devotion to the work of God he says he was often hungry, thirsty, ill-clothed and sleepless.

* * *

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."

This must be the center of all our interest and desire. This is the pure and single eye, the body full of joy and light.

* * *

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow" (6:34).

We know that reasonable plans must be made, especially where other people's welfare and convenience are concerned. We find Paul planning where he will go and whom he will meet. But he manifests no concern about providing for his own future support or welfare. The basic principles are clear, and the more firmly we lay hold of them, the closer we are to life—

The future is entirely in God's hands.

He has guaranteed to take care of His children.

Today alone is our concern.

We must, today, use what He has given us in His work, having faith in Him to provide for the future. He guarantees care in the future ONLY if we properly use today.

* * *

"Judge not, that ye be not judged" (7:1).

Probably no command is more often broken than this. Much of our conversation is judgment, criticism or condemnation of others.

This is an evil condition, and displeasing to God. We must truly judge circumstances and conditions where our own conduct is affected, or where fellowship is involved; but unless it is necessary for us to judge others in order to know what we ourselves should do, we should very carefully refrain from forming any judgment of another, and especially we should not express judgment.

This is a very important first principle of the Truth. The warning is—

"With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged" (7:2).

Therefore it is always wisdom to judge with mercy and kindness and compassion and fellow-feeling, wherever we must judge at all.

When we indulge in the flesh-satisfying practice of judging and criticising others, we are not only directly disobedient to this command—we are also manifesting that we do not have the mind and spirit of Christ, and therefore are none of his.

* * *

"Give not that which is holy unto dogs" (7:6).

This seems to be a counter-balance to the command not to judge. It parallels another command elsewhere—

"Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

We are not being harmless, but very harmful and fleshy, when we talk about the faults of others.

But though we must view all with love and compassion and sympathy, still we must use care in exposing the things of God to the unholy and profane.

I believe the reference is more to the inner aspects of the Truth, the intimate aspects of association and fellowship, rather than to preaching the Truth. Paul's injunction to "Lay hands suddenly on no man" would be parallel.

This is a fitting and balancing warning in conjunction with the command to judge with compassion, lest out of misguided love we make the mistake of being too lenient in guarding the purity of the Truth. The Truth and the fellowship of the Spirit are holy and sacred and must be jealously guarded from the worldly and profane.

* * *

"Ask, and it SHALL be given you" (7:7).

This is certainly the most glorious of the commands. Let us note well that it is a COMMAND. We must believe it, and we must ask.

We can never hide behind a plea of weakness or inability to obey, for here we are commanded to ask for whatever strength and wisdom we need, and God guarantees it (Mark 11:24)—

"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, BELIEVE that ye receive them, and ye SHALL have them."

With that guarantee of success, there can be no excuse for failure.

* * *

"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets" (7:12).

The "Golden Rule"—best known and perhaps least obeyed command of all. It has a pleasing, soothing sound, and many pay it zealous lip-service, but how rarely it is practised!

Note that Jesus says this command is "all the Law and the Prophets"—this is the whole spirit of the Old Testament, as well as the New.

* * *

"Enter ye in at the strait (that is, narrow) gate, for few there be that find it " (7:13).

The Golden Rule has summed up the spirit of all the previous commands, of all the Word of God. Now comes the urgent exhortation to FOLLOW this heavenly way of wisdom, joy and life that he has outlined, though the vast majority are going the opposite way.

The information that few will ever find the way of life, though terribly saddening, is a tremendous revelation and emancipation.

It completely frees us from what would otherwise be the almost insurmountable barrier of finding ourselves going in the opposite direction from all the learned and powerful—

"Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes"
(Matt. 11:25).

The Scriptures teach us that the majority, and especially the wise and powerful, have ALWAYS been wrong concerning the real facts of life and eternity—blind guides of the blind, leading their pitiful victims only to the grave.

And thus the final command and urgent warning—

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

"Ye shall know them by their fruits" (7:15-20).

Here is a place where we **must** judge—not in condemnation, but in self-protective discernment—care concerning being misled into association with such as have all the appearances of zealous, harmless, hard-working sheep.

How are we to judge?—"By their fruits."

Now, many apparent "fruits" we may find the sheep and wolves have in common—

"Have we not prophesied in thy Name?

"And in thy Name done many wonderful works?"

We must search deeper to discern the wolves. We would perhaps prefer not to face this issue, but to leave all judging to Christ. But here is the last and crowning command—"Beware of false prophets."

It must be very urgent to be put as the closing warning. It would not be faithful to ignore it. It must be a real danger.

We must endeavour, whatever the present cost in friendship and association, to faithfully keep that which has been entrusted to us, and which previous generations of faithful brethren have preserved and defended. Where false teaching is tolerated, there can be no true fellowship, though many may themselves not follow the falsehood.

* * *

Jesus closes with the 2 builders; one on Rock, one on Sand. The builders on the Rock are those very few who hear these wonderful teachings of Christ and faithfully OBEY them, even to the end. —G.V.G.

Hath God Cast Away His People?

"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth"—Mark 9:23

ISAIAH CHAPTERS 48 TO 50

ISAIAH impresses us with the glorious purpose of God, the accuracy of His foreknowledge, the truth of His Word and, above all—His abounding love and mercy.

Recent world events in the Mideast have enlivened our awareness of the sureness of what has been prophesied; though perhaps we are not able to fit every event into the picture as we would desire. That God is in complete control of events has again been shown.

It is important that we keep all in proper perspective.

Humanly speaking, we rejoice with Israel against the obvious injustice and illogic of the present situation, because they are the Chosen Race through whom God is manifesting His principles of operation, and because we know their ultimate destiny. We must always keep in mind the divine prospect in our analysis of world events.

The closeness of Israel to their Creator is illustrated—

"Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee. Fear not, O Jacob My Servant, and thou Jeshurun whom I have chosen" (Isa. 44:2).

"Hearken unto Me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by Me from the belly, which are carried from the womb:

"And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you. I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and I will deliver you" (Isa. 46:3-4).

And once again the prophet declares (46:9-10)—

"Remember the former things of old, for I am God and there is none else; I am God and there is none like Me—

"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure."

And further (48:3-5)—

"I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of My mouth, and I showed them. I did them suddenly, and they came to pass.

"I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I showed it thee."

God's purpose is here expressed—to avoid pride of man or nation, in ascribing the honor and praise to themselves—

"Lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them" (v. 5).

* * *

Isa. 48 continues with the theme of God's mercy being extended for the honor and glory of His Name; to teach that God is a loving Father and pities His children who turn to Him.

The exhortation is to come out of the world and be associated with the directing hand of God. If this had been the case with Israel, they would have been spared the terrible centuries of persecution which have been their lot. But they refused the outstretched hand (v. 18)—

"O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments!

"Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea!"

But because Israel chose to reject righteousness, the terrible ages of servitude have followed:

"There is no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked" (v. 22).

Without righteousness, there can be no peace. One is the natural corollary of the other—

"When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

"Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness.

"Lord, when Thy hand is lifted up, they will not see. But they SHALL see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people" (Isa. 26:9-11).

The purpose of God is comprehended in righteousness and peace, and **in that order**. Thrice repeated is the expression—

"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

It is enclosed in the name of the King-Priest of the Age to Come: Melchizedek—

"First King of Righteousness, and after that also King of Peace" (Heb. 7:2).

This is also applicable to those who will be associated with Christ in the Divine purpose. James defines the wisdom these must exercise in the present age (3:17-18)—

"The wisdom that is from **above** is **first** pure, **then** peaceable; gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."

* * *

The record from Isaiah is designed to teach us of God, Whom we must know and love to have salvation. When we see the fulfilment before our eyes, we must realize that all things are for the sake of God's elect.

But it is not for each of us to sit back and be smug in the knowledge of the Divine purpose granted to us. It is not for us to sit back with folded hands to await the summons to appear before the Judge of all the earth. The command was—

"OCCUPY (labor) till I come."

Present events are to teach us once again, perhaps more emphatically than ever, that—

"I stand at the door and knock."

"It is high time to awake out of sleep."

"Gird up the loins of your mind."

The preservation of the record to our time, and the opening of its message to our understandings, can be a supreme blessing or a terrible curse.

It is ours to make the decision. God is not mocked.

That which happened to Israel—be it in the time of the Judges or in the time of Hezekiah (during whose reign Isaiah prophesied)—was recorded for our benefit upon whom the end of Gentile times have come—

"We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

"If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall WE escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

(Heb. 2:1-3).

The theme is Divine mercy. This is why we are allowed to read and see these things. But the same message teaches that there is an end to God's mercy for the obdurate and sinner. Look at Isa. 49: 13-16—

"The Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy upon His afflicted.

"But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me."

God answers this charge in clear, unmistakable terms. It should teach us in 2 ways—

That God is behind what is happening now in the Mid-east, and that God is working with us in the same manner, and cares for His elect—

"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?

"Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.

"Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands; thy walls are continually before Me."

These statements illustrate the closeness of national Israel to God, because of the fathers' sakes; that is, because of the righteousness of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The closeness to spiritual Israel is much more intimate.

These are not just words. They have feeling and emotion, mercy and love. They are true, and are vital with meaning and purpose—meaning and purpose yet to be revealed. All flesh shall see it, and be humbled, and praise the Name of God!

But what does this "engraving on the palms of His hands" imply? How can anything or anyone be engraven on the palms of the Increate Deity?

The word LORD, when printed in capitals throughout the Old Testament, is **Yahweh** in the original, and signifies, "I will be" or "He who will be." It reveals the purpose of God to manifest Himself first in Christ and then in his brethren and sisters who have become associated with Christ in faith and works.

The graving, or engraving, or scarring, of Yahweh was in Christ. The means of salvation was effected by crucifixion; which placed in the Master's hands an ineradicable identity of God's love for His people—

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

This graving on the palms of Yahweh associates God with His people indelibly, through Christ (Rom. 11:2)—

"God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew."

The means of engraving was actually the rejection by Israel of Christ Jesus, their only means of salvation. The marks signify God's exceeding love for His people Israel. God had caused them to be engraved by His determinate counsel and foreknowledge. They are the badge of His unalterable purpose of love and salvation.

All who will be saved must come to be identified with these marks. It is another means of being associated with the Name or Purpose of God. Paul said:

"I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

The Greek word here for "marks" is **stigma** and means, "A mark incised or punched (for recognition of ownership, as of a slave); a scar of service." Paul introduces his epistles with the salutation

*"Paul, a servant (**doulos**—slave) of Jesus Christ."*

We are further instructed in this regard by Israel's first personal law, in Deut. 15:16-17. Here we find the incident of a Hebrew being sold into servitude, and of the release commanded after 6 years service.

If during this period, through kindness and benevolence, the servant had come to love his master, and declare—

"I will not go away from thee; because I love thee and thine house, because I was well with thee . . .

"Then thou shalt take an awl and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant forever."

The same identity with Christ's sufferings that Paul so inspiringly manifests is required of us. Our lives, day by day, must illustrate the characteristics of Christ.

For us to be incorporated in the Yahweh Name, this identity must be discernable when we stand in the Master's presence.

Then openly, to the witness of all present, will personal engraving be shown—

"Upon him that overcometh will I write the Name of my God, the Name of the City of my God, and my new Name."

But there must be the recognition in his presence, or he will declare—

"Depart from me, for I never knew you."

The continual concern and love of God for His people are shown in Isa. 49:18-26. Here is assurance of deliverance—

"The destroyer shall go forth of thee" (v. 17).

"Thou shalt clothe thyself with all thy regathered children" (v. 18).

A new generation born out of dispersion and captivity, to the surprise and wonderment of the nation (vs. 19-20).

God's work is manifested in using Gentile kings and rulers to bring back Israel to the Land, and causing them to humble themselves before Israel" (vs. 22-23).

How shall the prey (Israel) be taken from those that are stronger than he (v. 24)? Humanly speaking it is not possible. But DIVINELY speaking:

"One shall chase a thousand."

Who shall say that "God hath cast away His people"? the deliverance being wrought in the land* before our very eyes is Divine deliverance, and it is wondrous in the sight of all who have eyes to see.

*Referring to 1967 Arab-Israel War.

But it is not for the glory of national Israel, but to bring God honor and praise (49:26)—

"I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh: they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine.

"And all flesh shall know that I the Lord (**Yahweh**—He who shall be) am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."

* * *

THUS we continue with God's love for His people in Isa. 50. It is an answer to those who charge God with casting away Israel. It is also an assurance for spiritual Israel that though God is correcting and chastening them, repentance will bring salvation.

It is the heart and message of God's purpose with national Jewish stock: to teach the surety of mercy and love in all God's ways.

God is not hard-hearted or capricious. There is purpose and reason in all His ways. God chastens His children for their profit, that they may be partakers of His holiness. The whole process of Divine operations is to this end.

* * *

Isa. 50:1—"*Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away?*"

This refers back to the Law of Moses (Deut. 24:1). Here we read that if a man's wife found no favor in his eyes, he could give her a writing of divorcement, or cutting-off, and send her away. Christ answered his disciples relative to this law, and indicated that it was granted to national Israel—

"Because of the hardness of their hearts, but from the beginning it was not so."

God operates on much higher principles than hardness of heart; so must His children—

"What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6).

This law was to make men think very deeply, to ponder the outcome of their actions. That man under Moses' Law could never take his wife again, if she had gone to another man. Let him think well upon this matter: severance was forever.

He forever closed the door on reconciliation.

It was designed to assure that the original covenant undergone by man and wife was a sincere and honest agreement. Let your yea be yea. And from the beginning the beautiful picture was and still is as expressed by Christ—

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

The beauty of Isaiah's reference to Israel's marriage law was to teach the love and mercy of God for His people: that HIS covenant of selection and marriage to the nation would never be broken. It teaches the beauty of reconciliation—that the door was never shut, that God had not in "hardness of heart" given them a bill of divorcement which precluded their return. Though they as a nation had sold themselves to another, God's position remained the same—

"Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement?"

There was none to be found—for there was never one given. The separation was not caused by God's hard-heartedness. It was caused by the nation's wickedness and unfaithfulness. Israel had turned from her husband to another man—the Man of Sin, the idols of the world—

"For your iniquities ye have sold yourselves; and for your transgressions in your mother put away" (v. 1).

The depth of God's love is further portrayed in this respect by Hosea, who is commanded (Hos. 3) to take an adulterous woman (signifying apostate Israel) as his wife, and to love her as God's love toward His children who had gone after strange idols. The prophetic interpretation follows (vs. 4-5)—

"The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, without an image, without an ephod, and without teraphim:

"Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days."

God had said (Isa. 41: 8-9)—

"Thou Israel art My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham My friend.

"Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof;

"And said unto thee, Thou art My servant: I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away."

The prophet therefore has shown that the condition from which Israel had to be redeemed was brought about by themselves, and that receiving them back was a supreme evidence of Divine love.

And this working before our very eyes is marvellous. All the love of God, so clearly outlined in the prophets, is finding its culmination in our days. Do we not hear Paul's words?—

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come" (I Cor. 10:11).

Do these things not teach us that the same love is pervading our lives, and that God is extending mercy unto us day by day? The extension of Divine mercy unto us is the only possible avenue of our salvation.

The startling thing should be that we stand so close to these events, and can see them taking such sharp focus. Are we mesmerized by them? Or have we comprehended the seriousness of our position (Rev. 3:20)?—

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock:

"If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and him with me."

The warning through Isaiah is clear (50:1)—

"Wherefore, when I came, was there no man?"

"When I called was there none to answer?"

God came to national Israel through Christ. His own received him not. It was a culmination of their natural waywardness. Isaiah had declared:

"I have spread out My hands all the day unto a rebellious people: which walketh in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts."

God was beseeching them, pleading with them. And Paul uses this passage and builds thereon the grand theme of salvation extended to the ends of the earth (Rom. 11:1)—

"Hath God cast away His people? It shall never be! God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew."

Paul speaks of their waywardness (v. 11), of their stumbling at the Messiah: but indicates that through their false steps salvation has come to the Gentiles, that it has been the opening up of the door to us, the knock at the doors of our hearts. Now follows the thrilling thought in v. 15—

"For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?"

Here we see the importance of Israel's resurrection, and the events of recent months.

It is startling to our senses that the receiving of them back is the harbinger of the day of the resurrection of the dead. The resurrection of the dead speaks of the return of Christ. The coming of Christ is a portend of the day of judgment being at hand. Paul had advised the Corinthians (2:5:10)—

"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ:

"That every one may receive the things in body according to that he hath done, whether good or bad."

Here is the importance of the message to us. Are we prepared to receive this summons—

"The Master is come, and calleth for thee."

Again Paul's words illustrate the unchangeable intention of God with His people (v. 29):

"The gifts and calling of God are without repentance (irrevocable, unchangeable)."

God's purpose cannot fail. His Word shall not return unto Him void.

Based on these things—the surety of what is happening, the unchangeable character of the Divine purpose, the imminence of their fulfilment, Paul continues with exhortation for us in Rom. 12 & 13. Thus 12:1-2—

"I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice—holy, acceptable unto God—which is your reasonable service.

"And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Do we fear that we shall not have strength to survive this evil age? Do we WANT to survive this evil age?

The strength is waiting for us, if we want it and avail ourselves of it. We must feel the need, the urge for salvation. The doubting mind would ask—

"Lord, IF Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us!" (Mark 9:22).

To which the only possible answer is (v. 23)—

"If THOU canst BELIEVE, all things are possible to him that believeth."

God therefore asks the question (Isa. 50:2)—

"Is My hand shortened, that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver?"

He goes on to illustrate the wonderful deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and it has its counterpart today (vs. 2-3)—

"I dry up the sea; I make the rivers a wilderness. Their fish stinketh because there is no water, and dieth for thirst.

"I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering."

The Egyptians' waters have dried up and become a wilderness. Their heavens have been darkened.

The events have served a dual purpose. First, the scene of world events and center of world's troubles have been brought into sharp focus. The basic division of the world into two camps has been emphasized. The contestants of the final struggle are more clearly positioned in their respective camps.

And the baseness of Egypt as a world power has been underlined. How could Israel do this so quickly, so completely, and so successfully? The rapidity has left the Great Powers aghast, as all the Arabs' armaments lie in ruins, or in Israel's hands.

Israel's confidence knows no bounds: they see not God's hand.

There yet remains the "time of Jacob's trouble," but he shall be saved out of it (Jer. 30). In the process, all flesh must be humbled. Yet once more He will shake, not the earth only, but the heavens also—

"Wherefore we, receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

"For our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:28-29).

—E.F.H.

Current World Events

TERRIBLE POWER in Evil Hands

Human scientists now have it in their power to redesign the face of the earth, & to decide what kind of species shall survive to inherit it. How they actually use this terrible potentiality must depend on moral judgments, not on reason.

But who shall decide, & how shall we judge? The answer to these questions seem to be repugnant but quite plain: There can be no source for these moral judgments except the scientist himself. (StEvPst 11:18)

What a deadly combination! Man has pried into powers that he has no competence to use wisely, & he recognizes no Guidance or Authority but his own dark, evil mind!

NIGERIA IS RUSSIAN TARGET

Nigeria's fast becoming chief Soviet target in Africa. Following up shipments of MIG fighters, jeeps & trucks for the war Soviets last wk. had a high-powered trade mission touring Nigeria. Soviet-Nigerian friendship societies are springing up around country. (Nwk 11:25)

MACHINE GUNS in BETHLEHEM

Surely one of the least tranquil Christmases ever celebrated in Bethlehem! Atop every high building, including Church of Nativity, were Israel soldiers with machine guns.

All around the village—even in Shepherd's Field where an angel once appeared to tell of birth of Prince of Peace—Israel sentries frisked pilgrims for land mines, grenades, bombs. (Nwk 1:6)

A sad commentary on the failure of human civilization, but the long and evil night is nearly over. Soon there will be 'Peace on earth.'

A Catholic Doubts "Infallibility"

Since First Vatican Council of 1870, it has been a Roman Catholic dogma that Pope, when he speaks "ex cathedra" on matters of faith or morals, is infallible.

In the most provocative religious book of the yr., "Infallibility & the Evidence," Catholic bishop Simons of India argues there's no scriptural evidence for the doctrine. He suggests it be abandoned. (Tm 11:1)

RUSSIA INCITING ARABS

Tho Russia almost certainly doesn't want Arab-Israel war, it's perfectly content to make the most of the tension. Playing on Arabs' hatred of Israel—& almost equal distrust of US—Russia has built up a formidable presence in Mediterranean.

Not only have they penetrated the armies of most of the Arab states with their advisers; they're also using Arab bases to fuel & maintain their Mediterranean fleet.

For weighty reasons, political & moral, no US Pres. is likely to back away from unwritten but well understood US commitment to Israel.

Viet war's on way out. Mideast gets more & more dangerous. We haven't any troops there; & we're standing face-to-face with Russia. (Nk 12:16)

We have the inestimable privilege of the prophetic revelation that Russia, when she thinks the time is ripe, WILL suddenly strike in the Mideast for the reins of world power, & sweep down like a storm. If only the blind leaders of the West could see this, how differently they would arrange their plans!

POPE MANIFESTS ARAB BIAS

Catholic Bishop of Beirut petitioned Lebanon Parliament for "full cooperation with (Arab) people of Palestine." (Tm 1:17)

* * *

Pope sent sympathetic message to Lebanon (after Israel raid), evoking bitter Israel response:

"Pope was silent when Jewish worshipers were attacked at Tomb of Patriarchs in Hebron" (referring to an Oct. attack that injured 48). "Pius XII was silent when millions of Jews were murdered in WW II."

Israel rejected UN censure as hopelessly one-sided, since Arab nations are regularly protected from similar blame by Soviet veto. Israel's UN Ambassador said censure proved "UN's moral, political & juridical bankruptcy on Mideast." (Tm 1:10)

The consistent position of the Papacy has been just as it should—antagonism to Zion & alliance with her enemies.

RIPE FOR NEW MONEY CRISIS

Conditions ripening for another big money crisis, barely a mo. after last one. More & more, people & govts. live beyond means, undermining confidence in paper money. Monetary cloud hanging over horizon's bigger every yr. One day whole system may collapse. (USN 12:30)

In this supposedly clever, accomplished 20th century, the world money system staggers along in imminent danger of collapse & chaos! How strikingly proud man keeps proving the Bible's picture of him to be true!

Biafra, with French arms, has consolidated position: war's stalemated. (Tm 1:3)

Armed robbery up 37% first 9 mos. of '68. All crime up 19%. '68 had largest rise in history. (USN 12:33)

USSR PUSHES MIDEAST PACT

Russia's increasing its diplomatic offensive for 4-power pact (US, Russia, Britain, France) on Mideast peace. Israel sees ominous threat in very idea of Big Power settlement: it would make permanent & legitimate Russia's Mideast presence, & they're sure it would be at expense of hard-won Israel security.

Arab non-belligerency declarations haven't protected Israel in past. Nor did UN's guarantee of free passage in Tiran Strait when Israel withdrew after '56 war. UN didn't stop Egypt blockading Strait.

Ever since De Gaulle stopped delivery of 50 jet fighters during '67 war, Israel's been building own arms plants. It's now self-sufficient in virtually everything but aircraft; & exports arms to 50 countries. Self-sufficiency drive has created high level of expertise. (Tm 1:17)

* * *

Mideast, teetering on brink of war, suddenly is focus of Big-Power manoeuvres, each rushing in with own objectives & plan. Stakes high—geography, oil, politics. Only settlement Russia's likely to accept is Israel concessions.

Even assuming US & Russia could agree on solution, few in Mideast would buy it. Israel rejects idea of imposed settlement. Arab guerrillas—most of them refugees seeking reestablishment of Arab Palestine—oppose it. So do some Arab countries. Only hope lies in a settlement forced by Big Powers. (USN 1:12)

It is a strange game that nations play, with treaties & pacts & promises & guarantees, all participants knowing full well that no one intends to live up to anything that does not suit them.

RUSSIA: SUPERSONIC PLANE

World's first supersonic airliner flew at Moscow last wk. Can whisk 135 passengers 1550 mph for 4000 mls. Starts regular service Mar., '70. US's supersonic won't fly before '71 at earliest. (Tm 1:10)

Russia may not be able to feed & clothe & house her people beyond crude sustenance levels, but she can single-handedly beat the combined efforts of the West in the disciplined accomplishments that lead to world power.

"YEAR OF REVOLUTIONARIES"

A yr. of revolutionaries: students & militants, black & white, radicals & New Left raised fists & hurled stones at old order. "Destroy the System! Establishment must be laid low!" Few programs for future; only rage against present.

It's easier for man to go to moon than wipe out a ghetto; to travel thru space than clean up own polluted atmosphere; to establish cooperation in vast technological enterprise than establish brotherhood on a city block. (Tm 1:3)

Even just a brief 10 yrs. ago we could have no comprehension of what 'Sea & waves roaring' really meant!

69 OUTLOOK: Deeper Problems

'69 outlook in Europe, Mideast, Asia, Africa clouded by many problems. Great danger of explosive Mideast conflict. Race war threatens Africa. British & French economic ills could cause full-blown monetary crisis. Russia, tightening grip on satellites, can create new tensions. Unrest seethes in S. America.

Britain almost totally preoccupied with how to pay way in world after living continually on borrowed money. France enters '69 suffering from crisis of confidence in De-Gaulle policies. For first time since WW II, door's open for Germany to take over W. Europe leadership.

Soviet E. Europe grip tighter in '69: they learned relaxation means trouble.

In S. Asia, new troubles in many areas. Communist movements growing in Philippines. Indonesia can't solve problems which led to '65 Communist take-over try. India plagued by runaway birth-rate, student unrest, rising China-backed guerrilla war on N. frontier. Pakistan's Govt. tottering; may collapse into anarchy.

Japan rapidly becoming world's #3 industrial power. US-Jap alliance, already deteriorating, could weaken further in '69.

In Egypt, growing discontent—unprecedented since Nasser began—could bring his fall. In Jordan, increasingly aggressive commandos may dethrone Hussein. Lid could blow off unstable Syria.

In Iraq, new Govt.-Kurd war. Smouldering unrest in Persian Gulf Sheikdoms which could burst in flame. Yemen civil war continues.

Explosive quality of whole area helps Russia spread its influence. If any of pro-West rulers—Hussein or Gulf sheiks, etc.—should fall, Russia will try to establish selves as new regimes' protectors.

Africa's '69 danger spot is line dividing white-controlled south from Black Africa. Tension, already high, sure to increase. Big question: full-fledged race war? White-run S. Africa, Rhodesia, Angola & Mozambique are well-armed. Black-ruled Zambia is buying guns & missiles.

Mexico's biggest problem: population explosion. Needs of people (up from 20 to 48 million since '40) are overwhelming existing institutions & straining economy.

'69 won't be tranquil for Canada: national unity to be strongly tested again. Escalation of Quebec independence drive expected. It's feared '69 will see tactics of militant US Negroes imported into Quebec by separatists. (USN 1:6)

* * *

Europe—US's allies divided, money system in danger.
Mideast—More violence & conflict an increasing danger.
Asia—Viet war at crucial stage.
Africa—Tension rising along border between black & white Africa.
Latin America—Widespread suspicion of US.

Only if France rejoins NATO as active ally, & admits Britain to Europe, will there be any hope of mobilizing Europe resources to take bigger share of own defence. W. Europe pulling apart. (USN 1:27)

What a frightful, pitiful catalogue of human wickedness and failure!

CAMBODIA IS RED SANCTUARY

More & more, Hanoi's using Cambodia as sanctuary. Infiltration of arms, ammunition & supplies thru Cambodia has become more vital. Five divisions, plus smaller units, based in Cambodia. Bases exist within 45 mi. of Saigon, immune from attack, difficult to watch without causing border incidents.

There's evidence Cambodia collaborates with Communists. While Cambodian rice feeds Communist troops, Cambodian Reds are laying groundwork for takeover of Cambodia itself.

There's always possibility US will have to move into Cambodia to eliminate threat. (USN 1:20)

ANGLO-US ACCORD DECLINES

New British ambassador's arrival in Washington illumines decay & dissolution of ancient Anglo-US alliance. He differs from all his predecessors in this: on the record & in print, he has savagely attacked Nixon.

Choice of a British ambassador who has written as Freeman has written has great symbolic significance. Till now, Britain gave absolute overriding priority to what Churchill called the "special relationship" between Britain & US. Freeman's arrival marks death & burial of "special relationship."

At Fulton, Mo., in '46, Churchill said: "If English-speaking commonwealths cooperate with US in air, on sea, in science & industry, there'll be no quivering, precarious balance of power, but overwhelming assurance of security. The highroads of future will be clear, not only for US but for all; not only for now but a century to come."

In early post-war yrs, thru such crises as Berlin blockade & Korean War, Britain & US were close allies. Decay of relationship started with ill-advised Suez adventure by Britain in '56, & US's angry, ungenerous reaction. Suez shook Britain's confidence—in US, & in self.

Dissolution of alliance is bad news for US, for since the Monroe Doctrine, the bedrock assumption of US foreign policy has been that Britain would be a great power & a US ally in time of trouble.

Death of Anglo-US alliance bad news for Britain, too, & rest of world. In Fulton speech, Churchill warned: If there were no "special British-US relationship," then—

"The Dark Ages may return on the gleaming wings of science, & what could now shower immeasurable material blessings upon mankind, may bring about its total destruction." (Nwk 1:6)

Churchill could see the handwriting on the wall: the triumph of Gog unless Tarshish had the wisdom to be united & strong. But God has decreed that Gog MUST rise supreme.

US LOSING WAR for OCEANS

Soviet sea forces, after yrs. of steady build-up, are moving to challenge US in one after another of world's oceans. These aggressive moves by a fast-expanding Russian fleet are causing serious concern.

Russia's Mediterranean force is approaching size of US fleet there. Soviet naval vessels operate regularly in Indian Ocean. In North Sea Soviet warships patrol regularly just offshore from US nuclear-sub base in Scotland, & track all Allied warships in area.

Baltic Sea is recognized "Russian lake" with 800 vessels to Allies' 100. Russian navy is operating aggressively in Sea of Japan, China Sea, Philippine Sea, & Bering Sea. On all major W. Pacific sea routes, Soviet ships are common sight.

No sea free from Russia's rising challenge: their ocean operations unmistakably more aggressive. Russia's surface fleet 2nd only to US. It's world's newest & fastest-growing—virtually all built in past 20 yrs.

Almost as dangerous are Russia's intelligence ships, scattered worldwide, pinpointing location of all Allied warships. 100's of fishing & research ships—world's largest fleets of each—perform this with elaborate electronic gear.

But it's in Mediterranean that Soviet sea power's making biggest challenge to US. It's a brand-new phase of cold war, obviously aimed at controlling world's seaways.

An elaborate, computerized headquarters in Moscow keeps detailed control of all Soviet shipping—naval, merchant, fishing & scientific. No other nation has such control.

Emergence of Russia as major sea power, for first time in history, is one of most dramatic changes of last 20 yrs.

US falling behind in real, undeclared "war" at sea: a war of design, construction, manpower, national resources, money, planning, organization—and we're losing it.

Russia's navy is extremely modern & powerful, especially sub force—over 350 (Hitler had 55 at start of WW II). It's highly probable Russia will match or surpass US in Polaris-type subs. Their missiles are excellent. They could lie off US coasts & reach cities far inland. There's no absolute defence against missiles.

A very great deficiency in US total sea power is deterioration of merchant marine. Russia's rapidly building a very strong, modern merchant marine which probably will be larger & much more modern than US's in 3 to 5 yrs. (USN 1:20)

As Russia's might on the sea continues to mushroom at an increasingly phenomenal rate, US is beginning to panic. Tarshish has arrogantly ruled the seas almost unchallenged for centuries, but in last days Gog has 'many ships.'

Communists hard at work stirring trouble in Africa. Tanzania swarms with Chinese "advisers." Russia's financing black nationalists there & elsewhere. (USN 12:30)

RUSSIA'S AIM: WORLD RULE

Russia's long-term aim unchanged: world dominance. It's ready to step into any power vacuum. It prefers victory without war, but accepts war if superiority's assured.

Type & mentality of today's Soviet rulers will remain unchanged for some time—all present leaders & potential successors formed in Stalin's school of tyranny. (USN 1:12)

* * *

Russia's determined to extend power into Mideast—politically, militarily, psychologically. Mediterranean's one of world's most strategic areas—the means of communication between all different peoples & nations. It's a bridge between Europe & Asia & Africa. It's Soviets' highway to Africa & Indian Ocean.

Mideast & N Africa's oil is of tremendous economic significance. Soviet objective is world domination. One of great prizes now is Libya with all its oil.

Soviet presence in Egypt, Yemen, Sudan & Somalia grows stronger daily. Availability of military bases in these countries, plus naval force in Red Sea, make it—in effect—a Russian Lake. Suez could be denied to US & allies.

Soviets in excellent position to control Mideast oil shipments, & cargoes between Europe & Asia.

Already Soviets have solid base. Sudan's army equipped with Soviet tanks & planes. Russian's building Somalia naval bases on Gulf of Aden & Indian Ocean; arming Yemen. Russia wants dominance over Arab countries in area, because of oil & strategic positions. (USN 1:20)

This is so obviously true that it should form the cornerstone of US & British policy, but God deludes nations that they may fulfil His will. They are living the blindness of Munich all over again.

Note the exciting reference to Libya, suddenly become very, very rich in oil & at present West-oriented, but which must according to prophecy be with Gog at end.

PHILIPPINES LOOK EASTWARD

Asia's most durable E-W partnership—Philippines & US—is falling apart. They say US must give up air & naval bases vital to US military operations in Asia since '45. US being told its pledges to defend Philippines have little value.

More & more Filipinos discontented with "special relationship" that has tied them to US in war & peace over 70 yrs. Nationalism & ultra-nationalism rising. Anti-US demonstrations frequent, sometimes violent.

100's of millions of \$s have been poured into facilities. Pullback would undercut US Pacific defences.

Philippines considering diplomatic & trade relations with Russia, China, & other Red countries. (USN 1:27)

As Russia grows in power & influence, US finds itself more & more unwelcome in the many strategic lands where it has built its military world powerbase.

YOUTH REBELLION: RED TIES

Many youth rebellions in past—but this is first to attack national security & national will. No question New Left's allied with US enemies. Some leaders want to eliminate everything handed down by older generations, with no idea what will replace old order.

Some seek total anarchy:—"Laugh at professors; disobey parents; all your institutions are man-made illusions. What's needed is people who are freaky, crazy, irrational, angry, irreligious; who lure youth with pot & acid."

There are enough to close down Columbia U., & create havoc & wring concessions on almost any campus. There are enough to inspire students in US & Europe, in alliance with workers & unions (as in France) to bring entire nation to halt.

New Left makes common cause with Communists against West. Its ideology is to Left of Soviet doctrine; it's kin to China's cultural revolution. Violence is keystone, plus anarchy, nihilism, defiance of all authority.

The uniformity of action, similarity of objectives campus-to-campus. & country-to-country, rapport among chapters (including transfer of leaders), ability to mount massive protests as march on Pentagon—all these point to organized international conspiracy directed from a center, as Moscow, Peking or Havana. To them, God is dead. Mao Tsetung is Robin Hood. (USN 1:20)

The ever-snowballing trend of mindless & senseless violence just for violence's sake is fascinating & terrifying. The Bible tells us that apart from divine control & guidance man is a vicious, raging beast, & that in the last days of human rule the beast will come to the surface & violence fill the earth.

WASHINGTON: CRIME & RIOTS

102 Washington bank robberies in '68—3 times '67. Washington's in deep trouble: crime-ridden & riot-racked. Welfare, school, revenue problems mount.

Armed robberies up 90%: 2400 in '67; 4600 in '68. Over 10,000 robberies for yr. Injuries & killings during robberies 3 times '67.

People afraid to go downtown. Tourists frightened away. Rioting a major problem: one of US's biggest riots there last Apr. took 15,000 troops several days to quell: 9 killed, 1200 injured, 6300 arrested, 900 business places, 300 housing units destroyed or damaged. Most riot-wrecked bldgs. still in ruins.

Several racial flare-ups since threatened to become riots. City's a racial powder keg needing only spark for new explosion. Public schools, 94% Negro, centres of violence & vandalism. (USN 1:29)

We live in such terrible times our senses become blunted to their horror. And in large cities we get daily reminders of how very real these conditions are. How much longer can it last before all order breaks down and the jungle prevails? "Come quickly, Lord Jesus!"

CZECH RELIGIOUS REVIVAL

Christmas was rehabilitated in Czechoslovakia this yr. For first time since '48 Communist takeover, a brightly decorated Christmas tree was set up in Prague Town Square. (Nwk 12:30)

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Czechs thronged Christmas services in numbers unmatched since Red take-over 30 yrs. ago. Despite Soviet invasion, Czech Christians determined to hold hard-won freedom.

Churches owe renaissance to Dubcek's reforms. He gave them back control of ½ of nation's 12 dioceses. High Mass on Christmas was broadcast on state-owned TV. Prague's ancient churches are in a renovation program aided by govt. grants.

In pre-Dubcek days, parents risked harassment if they asked permission to send children to religious instruction. Today, clergymen can teach religion in Grades 2 to 9 of state schools. Baptisms & church marriages rising rapidly.

70% of Czechs are Catholic. Vatican's trying to solidify Church gains & has appointed a papal diplomat to negotiate with govt.

Most encouraging—& unexpected— by-product of Communist persecution is rapport between Catholics & Protestants. Martyrdom of great Czech reformer Jan Hus by Catholic Church long stood between Catholics & Protestants. But in past 20 yrs. they learned to lean on one another. Bishop of Prague paid 2 unprecedented visits to Czech's main Protestant seminary.

In a bold statement, "Assn. of Protestant Clergy" recently demanded withdrawal of Soviet troops & continuation of reforms. (Nwk 1:13)

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Christmas turning out to be show of independence by Czechs. Religious Xmas cards making strong comeback.

Stores decorated with Christmas carols & angels. Huge trees going up. "Father Frost," approved by Communism, giving way to "Father Christmas." (USN 12:23)

70% of the Czechs are Catholics. Russia will never be able to suppress or stamp out the Apostasy. She will have to make alliance with it in her drive to rule the world.

IRAN'S ECONOMY IS BOOMING

Biggest boom in Mideast is transforming Iran into area's most prosperous major country. Manufacture, oil, agriculture growing at record rates. Industrial production up 21% in yr.

Relations with Russia (with which it has 1690-mi. border) chilly till 5 yrs. ago. Then Iran decided on closer ties.

Literacy rates up: 18% 10 yrs. ago, 35% today. Per capita income under \$100-a-yr. 25 yrs. ago; \$300 now—well above most of Mideast. (USN 1:27)

Iran, like Libya, is suddenly prospering. Iran, like Libya, must be an ally of Gog when he comes like a cloud against Israel. We rejoice to see that Iran is forming "closer ties" with Russia.

US: HUGE SUCCESS & FAILURE

US once roused world hopes; now torn by tension & dissension, its vast treasure squandered, its fabulous beauty pockmarked by hideous urban scars. Has US dream become US damnation?

British historian Brogan says: "This won't be US century: very few like US way of life/" Arthur Kronk fears US tenure as first world power may be one of history's briefest.

Verging on national nervous breakdown, US in '68 erupted in ghastly events: assassinations, Black riots, student protests, rising crime.

Decade that began with quest for moral grandeur ending on defensive, mired in effort to prevent society exploding. Why has can-do country become country that can't? Why can't US, with ½ of world's wealth, wipe out social problems?

Religion fell away; faith in industrial progress became a religion—now itself eroded by creeping pessimism. Less than ever is man sure of his own nature. Road to wealth now more like gilded treadmill.

Time has been telescoped as never before. In past 3 generations, everyday life of Western man changed more than previous 2000 yrs.

So swift is pace of modern change that, in terms of common experience, US has new generation every 5 yrs. Now, unable to go to school in nature, man must rapidly learn & unlearn technical ways unknown to his father, & which may be useless to his children.

90% of all scientists who've ever lived are still alive, & much of what they know has been modified in their lifetimes. In 2 seconds, machines do mathematical problems that would take a man 38 yrs. Yet fewer & fewer feel capable of understanding world they live in.

Never before has man transmuted energy & raw materials into wealth at such a fantastic rate. With 7% of land & 6% of population, US produces $\frac{1}{3}$ of world's goods & services. Every 5 yrs. US economy grows by equivalent of W Germany's, 3rd largest industrial nation.

US wealth rests not only on a huge industrial base but greatest inventory of scientific knowledge ever accumulated. In physics, chemistry, medicine & physiology, US won 31 of 63 Nobel prizes.

One of US's most impressive resources: skill in managing great enterprises: Manhattan Project, which built atom bomb; Marshall Plan, which rebuilt shattered Europe after WW II; Apollo moon program.

Why can't same skills be used on same scale to end poverty & traffic congestion, clean up pollution, save cities? How can so prodigious & inventive a society have failed so conspicuously in so many areas?

What complicates task is US's political institutions. Diffusion of authority & proliferation of municipal govts. makes disarray bordering on chaos. Chicago has 1113 different & competing local authorities.

Shackled by its own archaic rules (filibuster; seniority system that makes aged conservatives rulers of powerful committees), Congress is too responsive to local interests at expense of national interests—highly inefficient way of govt.

Any meaningful integration of Blacks must involve moving more & more of them into White suburbs, training them for skilled crafts, opening union membership. But these are very steps that meet most stubborn resistance from Whites.

In no aspect, not even race, has US failed so spectacularly as in abuse of environment. Americans daily destroy landscape, & poison air they breathe & water they drink.

Nuclear balance of terror must be preserved, but if both sides build ABM systems (as now appears likely), neither will have gained an iota in security & costs will be up astronomically. Army wants full-scale \$50-billion system. (Tm 1:24)

PERSIAN GULF: REDS MOVE IN

In the worsening Mideast crisis, Persian Gulf's neglected. Yet it's tremendously important & could quickly turn into a flash point.

Persian Gulf exported 500 million tons of oil in '67— $\frac{1}{3}$ of world total. $\frac{2}{3}$ of world's proven oil reserves are in or around Gulf. It's world's cheapest oil because of enormous output per well. US or Venezuela oil costs 5 times as much to make.

Russian influence steadily increasing around Gulf, as elsewhere in Mideast. Moscow provides economic & technical aid to Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, Pakistan & Afghanistan. (USN 12:30)

The Gulf may be neglected—but not by Russia, for they are probing every opening & pressing every advantage, & neglecting nothing.

MIDEAST TENSION DEEPENS

In perhaps most audacious exploit in their spectacular history, Israelis swept down in helicopters on Beirut's busy international airport, did \$100 million damage. Dozen planes destroyed or heavily damaged; hangars & fuel dumps set afire. Mideast stakes were raised again, edging closer to full-scale war.

So deep are Mideast wells of hate that perhaps no political leader could withstand consequences of a compromise settlement

So initiative can only come from outside. That would be a significant departure from US policy, which till now has been that Arabs & Israel should settle own affairs.

Events in Athens & Beirut last wk. underscored increasing gravity of threat of new war with each passing day in tense Mideast. (Tm 1:3)

The current Mideast trend seems to be toward some sort of Big- Power imposed "peace." Eze. 38:11 seems to require some period (however brief) of Israel living in a condition of relaxed and undefended "security." How will it come?

RUSSIA AHEAD IN NEAR-SPACE

For 10 yrs. US has devoted its resources to moon landing, but Russia's more interested in spaceships operating within 100 mi. of earth. Soviet space activities—controlled from start by army—are of growing concern to US.

New evidence of Soviet military ace progress accumulates: In Jan.-Sept., '68, they orbited 30 military vehicles to US's 16.

Since Oct. '67, Russia has sent up one after another manoeuvrable spacecraft in a program that mystifies US. It's thought they're developing a new vehicle to inspect & destroy US satellites. A similar US program was pigeonholed yrs. ago.

Russia's testing in space several powerful engines & manoeuvring techniques needed to assemble giant manned stations in earth orbit.

They've been perfecting an H-bomb carrier which can be brought down to any target on earth by radio signals; US is building nothing comparable. One orbital bomb could render useless entire N. American air-defence network.

Russia's aiming for long-duration orbital platforms to take command of space near earth. As military men look ahead, they see bombardment platforms, military space stations; fleets of aerospace planes—to intercept & destroy. (USN 1:16)

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Russia soon to orbit large space station core. Other ships plug into core, cosmonauts move from one to another. 'Future lies with multi-unit orbital stations,' they say. It will give Russia flexibility for wide variety of targets: earth-orbit operations, base on moon, manned flights to planets.

US has shot for moon & appears to have nowhere else to go—'69 budget shows space program still declining, might even go out of business in early '70s. (Nwk 1:27)

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Russia less interested in moon race than space stations in earth orbit. She'll try to use space as a military operating arena. If her experiment leads to a permanent space platform soon, she'll be far ahead of US. (USN 1:27)

There seems to be a sudden shocked realization that Near-Space is one more arena in & thru which Russia intends to rule the world.

RUSSIA DEEPENS ALGERIA GRIP

Soviet influence in Algeria is most pervasive in Arab world. Soviet technicians advise the Soviet-equipped army. There are Soviet advisers at most levels of rural administration & farm organizations. (Nwk 12:2)

SUEZ CANAL LOSES ITS VALUE

When Nasser closed Canal in '56 war, impact on W. Europe was enormous. Shipping costs spiralled; they had to ration oil. Situation so critical that West, including Israel's French & British allies, had to pressure Israel to withdraw.

But since '67 war it's clear Canal's no longer effective weapon against West & Israel. With oil from new Libya & Algeria fields, sources are far more diverse.

Britain got 60% of oil by Canal in '56; 25% in '66. Iraq & Iran send much to Europe by rail. Super tankers now carry bulk of Persian Gulf oil round Africa. Suez closing hurts Nasser's friends more than his foes. India & Pakistan, who back Egypt, seriously hurt by higher shipping costs of US wheat & fertilizer.

Russia frustrated in many ways. Closing Canal made it impossible to supply naval base in Yemen & impeded Moscow's efforts to establish a strong naval presence in Indian Ocean. Arms for N Vietnam must go round Africa or by train.

Hardest hit is Egypt itself; 1000's jobless. Tho Arabia, Kuwait & Libya give Egypt \$266 million a yr. to compensate, there are strings. Nasser had to pull out of Yemen, silence anti-royalist "Voice of Cairo," & look on helplessly as Iran & Arabia freeze Egypt out of Persian Gulf.

Canal closing finished Nasser as Pan-Arab leader; may have finished Canal as world's most important waterway. Shippers, twice bitten by closings, putting major emphasis on super tankers & dry-bulk super carriers—mammoth ships Suez can't handle. (Nwk 1:27)

It is a strange twist of history that once land-locked Russia is now the expanding sea-power most anxious to open & use the old "lifeline of the British Empire."

CATHOLICS CHALLENGE POPE

Last wk., 38 leading theologians, some of Catholicism's most respected minds, answered Pope, demanding Magna Carta of intellectual freedom.

They said, "Freedom of theologians, regained by Vatican Council, must not again be jeopardized." They said doctrinal error today can't be rooted out by force, only by debate & dialogue:—

"Any form of Inquisition, however subtle, harms development of sound theology & irreparably damages Church's credibility." (Tm 12:27)

There is always bitter in-fighting in any dictatorship, and the Beast of the Earth is no exception, but dissent must be crushed, as in Czechoslovakia, so in Rome.

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