

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

CHASKA, Minn. 55318—10 Janice Drive.

LOVING Greetings in the One Hope.

Having moved, I would like to notify the brethren and sisters of my address change: Bro. Roger Walker, 10 Janice Drive, Chaska, Minn. 55318. I have not heard much of any of the brethren except through the Berean.

I would appreciate hearing from any who have time to write.

Your brother in Christ, —Roger Walker

SAN ANGELO, Texas-English Room, Cactus Hotel (all except first Sundays)—SS 10 am; Memorial 11. Other Sundays at homes. Rec. bro. Gary Smith, Star Route, Sweetwater, Tex. 79556.

LOVING Greeting in Christ's Name.

We of the San Angelo ecclesia are happy to announce that two more of Adam's race have put on the Saving Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Mr. & Mrs. L. A. PATTERSON gave a good confession of their faith on Sept. 8, 1973. Bro. and sis. Patterson live in Coleman, Texas, and will be attending the San Angelo ecclesia. In the Bonds of our Hope, —bro. Gary Smith

Bible Questions

HOW MANY...

Write the number of each item in List 1 beside the correct amount in List 2.

LIST ONE—Questions

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Sealed? | 18. Degrees backward? | 35. Pieces Jesus sold for? |
| 2. Psalms? | 19. Ungrateful lepers? | 36. Swine drowned (about)? |
| 3. Fish in net? | 20. Evening-mornings? | 37. Killed by ass jawbone? |
| 4. In shipwreck? | 21. Not bowed to Baal? | 38. 5 loaves, 2 fishes fed? |
| 5. Smooth stones? | 22. Virgins of Jabesh? | 39. Cubits Haman's gallows? |
| 6. White baskets? | 23. Palm trees at Elim? | 40. Pieces Joseph sold for? |
| 7. Stars in crown? | 24. Goat hair curtains? | 41. Yrs. for Rachel & Leah? |
| 8. Rows of stones? | 25. Courses of priests? | 42. Cubits above mountains? |
| 9. Saved by water? | 26. Stripes five times? | 43. Korah followers burned? |
| 10. Silver trumpets? | 27. Baal prophets slain? | 44. Provinces of Ahasuerus? |
| 11. Killed by tower? | 28. Foxes Samson caught? | 45. Yrs. temple in building? |
| 12. Killed by bears? | 29. Years in wilderness? | 46. Days witnesses prophesy? |
| 13. Number of Beast? | 30. Kings with Benhadad? | 47. 7 loaves, few fishes fed? |
| 14. Ill-favoured kine? | 31. Assyrian host slain? | 48. Souls added at Pentecost? |
| 15. Cities of refuge? | 32. Days to rebuild wall? | 49. Abraham's armed servants? |
| 16. Levitical cities? | 33. Joseph age when sold? | 50. Cubits Nebuchadnezzar's Image? |
| 17. Songs of Solomon? | 34. Kings Joshua subdued? | |

LIST TWO — ANSWERS

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|------|------|---------|
| 2 | 7 | 12 | 20 | 39 | 50 | 150 | 318 | 1005 | 4000 |
| 3 | 8 | 14 | 24 | 40 | 52 | 153 | 400 | 1260 | 5000 |
| 4 | 9 | 15 | 30 | 42 | 60 | 250 | 450 | 2000 | 7000 |
| 5 | 10 | 17 | 31 | 46 | 70 | 276 | 666 | 2300 | 144,000 |
| 6 | 11 | 18 | 32 | 48 | 127 | 300 | 1000 | 3000 | 185,000 |

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The Joy of the Lord Is Your Strength

"And all the people went their way . . . to make great mirth because they had understood the words that were declared unto them"—Nehemiah 8:12

AMONG the many examples of faithful men and women, whose faith and works are recorded in the Bible, the name of Nehemiah stands high on the list. Although not a prophet, he was a prominent man of Israel, and left a record which has become a great source of instruction and comfort to many who know and love the Truth. His unusual character was of threefold formation:—

1. He adhered rigidly to his duties.
2. He was stern when opposing wrong.
3. Above all, he had an unwavering faith in God.

Nehemiah comes to our attention in the year 446 BC, which was the 20th year of the Persian king Artaxerxes, whom he was serving as cupbearer. The office was one of the most dignified in an Oriental kingdom, and it said much for the character of Nehemiah that he, a stranger and a foreigner, should have been appointed to such an office at the Persian court.

From his brother Hanani, he learned of the sad plight of his people in Jerusalem, and became sorely downcast when he was told that the walls of the city were broken down, and the gates were burned with fire. From a mere human point of view, there was no cause for his sorrow. He could have said,

"I have a high position in the service of the king, and am being well paid. It is almost 800 miles to Jerusalem, and there must be men there who can get busy and make the necessary repairs."

Consecrated service in the Truth alters the ways of the natural man. and causes him to seek the welfare of others. Therefore, when the sad news came to him, Nehemiah—

"Sat down and wept, and mourned, and fasted certain days, and prayed."

His fervent prayer appears in Neh. 1:5-11, and is a noble example for every one of us. Unlike the Pharisee in the parable of Jesus, he did not "thank God that he was not as other men." Nor was he unmindful of the majesty of God, for he opens his prayer in a most dignified manner—

"I beseech Thee, O Lord God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love Him and observe His commandments.

Nehemiah not only recognized the supremacy of God, but he realized his own position, for he not only confessed the sins of the people, but said—

"Both I and my father's house have sinned."

If a man of his high calibre could evaluate himself in the way just indicated, should not a little self-examination convince us that no matter how firmly we try to walk in the Truth, we still come far short of the standard set before us? is that not what we are to understand from the words of Jesus

"When ye shall have done ALL those things which are commanded you, say,

"We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."

Another severe lesson we learn from these words, is that there is no place in our lives for pride. It is one of the products of the flesh, and therefore one of the forms of sin that we are expected to overcome, for God hates it.

Pride has many forms. One can be proud of his achievements, of his social advantages, and many other things. It will be found to be synonymous with conceit, vanity and self-esteem and is, therefore, of the world, and extremely displeasing to our heavenly Father. Many are proud of their humility.

There are many examples in the Bible of how pride may be manifested, and there is much said about it. In Psa. 73:6 we read that—

"Pride compasseth them about as a chain."

Prov. 11:2 declares—

"When pride cometh, then cometh shame."

But one that should especially make us stop and consider is found in Prov. 13:10—

"Only by pride cometh contention."

Some time when we are meditating upon divine things, this would be a statement that we would do well to consider.

* * *

THE principal work of Nehemiah was the repairing of the city wall, which was accomplished in 52 days in spite of the opposition of those who sought to hinder the work. One of the outstanding features in the building of the wall is revealed in Neh. 4:13-18. In this section, he describes the manner in which all of the people worked together, and how they finished the job; for, said Nehemiah—

"The people had a mind to work."

This is all comprehended in the one word, "cooperation." The same idea is expressed by the apostles in such words as "like minded," "one mind" and "one accord." We should think seriously about it, because it is the only way possible for an ecclesia to succeed. If we do not work together, we will fail as Jesus said in Mark 3:25—

"And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."

One of the engrossing features in the book of Nehemiah is found in 8:8. It was the occasion when the people gathered together on one of the streets, and Ezra the scribe brought the Book of the Law before the whole assembly "both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding." Ezra was assisted by several of the Levites who caused the people to understand the Law—

"So they read in the Book in the Law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."

That must have been a wonderful experience for those people, but in this they had no advantage over us. Many of our brethren can read distinctly, and give the sense.

As to "causing to understand," no people on earth are more blessed than we are. The works of brethren Thomas and Roberts were designed for that very purpose. If we are truly desirous of knowing the Truth, then by all means let us read their writings, but if we think it does not matter what we believe, then we should read the writings of those who criticize Eureka.

* * *

ON the first day of each week, when we come together, should there not be great gladness among us as we assemble on the basis of knowledge and understanding? Is it not knowledge that causes us to appreciate the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus?

Let us remember, by all means, that the Truth, which we have learned to love, is the only real thing of any value in this life.

On every hand, we see men and women striving with all their power to become successful in the arts or business. They boast themselves in their accomplishments, but these things are only temporary, and when we become unconscious in death, our cares will cease, and our advantages will be gone. This truth is firmly set before us in Psa. 49:16-20—

"Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.

"Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself. He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.

"Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish."

Wherein then lies wisdom? It will be found in the words of Jesus in Matt. 6: 33—

"But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

If it is our ardent desire to meet with favour when the Lord Jesus returns, then let us keep continually before us such examples as that of Nehemiah, for surely few men, in any age of the world, have combined in themselves the qualifications that are essential for salvation more than he did.

—Editor

The Tree of the Lives

"And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree of the Lives, and eat, and LIVE FOR EVER—therefore Yahweh Elohim sent him forth from the Garden"—Gen. 3:22-23

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

THIS is the first hint of eternal life in relation to man. From this we learn that the fruit of this tree had the quality affixed to it of endlessly perpetuating the living existence of the eater. To have eaten of this would have changed Adam from a living into an ever-living soul. It would have cured him physically, and constituted him an incorruptible sinner—the ever-abiding subject of the present state of good and evil. This would have been a fearful consummation: an immortal sinner in a corruptible estate, so that the earth would have become the abode of immortal giants in crime, without any hope of restoration. But this was not according to the Divine plan.

Immortal saints in a state of unmixed good is the finality of Creation, Providence, and Redemption.

The sinner was first to be sanctified, then tried, and afterwards to be immortalized, if approved. Therefore, lest Adam should invert this order, and become immortal of body before he should be purified from sin and accounted worthy of acceptance, the Yahweh Elohim expelled him from the dangerous vicinity of the Tree of Lives. He drove him forth that he should not then become incorruptible and deathless.

The expulsion from Eden forcibly separated Adam and Eve from the means of present immortality; and whether they should attain to incorruptibility and life depended solely upon the will and philanthropy of God. But the Lord did not content Himself with their simple expulsion. Wayward as they had proved themselves, they would doubtless have conspired to regain Paradise that they might pluck from the Tree of Lives its immortalizing fruit, and so deliver themselves from the sentence of death to which they were consigned. They were expelled indeed; but to what will not the inconsiderate recklessness of man impel him!

Apprehending some new act of presumption, the Yahweh Elohim placed a destroying flame to keep, or defend, the Tree against their intrusion. Here, as in the Most Holy under the Law of Moses, He placed the emblems of His majesty, styled Cherubim, whose consuming fires enfolded the Faces of the Lord. The Tree was hid by these symbols of the Divine presence; and the incorruptibility it was originally provided to impart and shadow forth, became to them a thing of hope and of present desire.

Seeing that they could not eat of the Tree of Lives in the midst of Eden, how could they attain to that incorruptible life which it adumbrated? In what "Way" should they walk; or in what "Path" should they tread that would lead them to it? The answer is, in the words of Moses (Gen. 3:24), in—

"THE WAY OF THE TREE OF LIFE."

In Gen. 6:12, this Way is styled "God's Way," from which all the Antediluvians, save Noah and his family, had apostatized by corrupting it, as it is written—

"All flesh had corrupted HIS WAY upon the earth."

But there was no Bible nor any priest in those days, from whom the exiles from Eden could learn "the Way leading unto Life." There were none to say to them—

"This is THE WAY: walk ye in it."

They knew the Tree of Life was situated in the midst of the Garden, and they knew the path which led to it. But the destroying flame which swept around it on every side, dared them to approach within its precincts. The Tree of Life was in "the East." They could look towards it wistfully; but the decree had gone forth, and they could never eat of that Tree, nor touch it and live.

With the way to the Tree in Eden, then, they were acquainted; but of the Way of God to the Tree of Life adumbrated by that Tree in the East of the Garden, they had no knowledge. They knew not where the New Tree of Life was planted: how could they therefore know the Way?

It remained, then, for the Yahweh Elohim to enlighten them, for He alone could reveal it. They were, consequently, "taught of God." He instructed them what to do in order that they might approach His Cherubim, and bow down before His "faces" without fear of the devouring flame, all the days of their lives. These instructions

revealed to them the Way of acceptance with Him, which then—as also through all subsequent ages—consisted in (Rev. 2:7; 22:14)—

"DOING HIS COMMANDMENTS, that they might have right to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

The "Way of Yah-Elohim" is synonymous with what is termed "Religion"—which may be defined as "the Way of acceptance with God." Adam and his wife SUPPOSED they could appear before God acceptably by devising a way of their own by which to conceal their nakedness from His sight. But He refused to sanction their invention, and stripped them of the foliage they had wrapped around them. The Way of the Lord teaches that no man can cover his own sin, but it must be covered for him: and none can appoint the investment but the Lord. Hence, it is written (Gen. 3:21)—

"Yahweh Elohim appointed coats of skin and clothed them."

The appointment plainly indicates the sacrifice of the animals with whose skins they were clothed. Blood was shed in their investiture; and their sin was covered by the skins of the sin-offerings in conformity with the principle that—

"Without the shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).

But, without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6). The mere sacrifice of animals, or offering of the fruits of the ground, will not gain man acceptance with God, for —

"It is not possible that the blood of bulls or of goats should take away sin" (Heb. 10:4).

Hence the association of something to be believed with the sacrifice of "the firstling of the flock and the fat thereof": or, in other words, of—

"The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

As the subject-matter of this faith, then, the Way of God directed the minds of Adam and Eve to the Seed, or descendant, of the woman, whose heel should be bruised on account of the sin of the world, and who should grow up as a tender plant out of a dry ground, and become the Tree of Life in the Paradise of God, in whom should be deposited the incorruptible life of the race of man. Eve's Son was to be the true Tree of Life, of which if a man shall eat he shall live forever! A Son who, as the Saviour of his people from their sins, must die for sin: for without the shedding of his blood he could not be a purification-sacrifice. And such a one was necessary, for the blood of animals was inefficient.

But, if the sacrifice without the faith was insufficient; so the faith that the woman's Seed should be a propitiation—unaccompanied by the appointed sacrifices—would leave the worshiper unaccepted. Or, if there were both faith in the promise and an oblation, yet if the offering were not of divine appointment, the subject was regarded an evil-doer, for (1 Sam. 15:22)—

"To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

This is obvious from the testimony that (Heb. 11:4)—

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained testimony that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts."

For (Gen. 4: 4)—

"The Lord had respect unto Abel and unto his offering."

From this we learn that Cain was faithless, and therefore unrighteous. He had no faith in typical sacrifice. He did not believe that without the shedding of blood there was no remission; or that a purification-sacrifice typified by "the firstling of the flock" would suffice for sin, and become a Tree of Life of the Lord's planting. Hence—

"He brought (only) of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord" (Gen. 4:3).

—while his brother, in addition to this, presented of the lambs of his flock. But God had no respect unto Cain's offering, for Cain evinced a wilful disposition—a waywardness which corrupted the Lord's Way.

When he perceived that his unbloody and faithless oblation was not accepted, "enmity" was kindled within him. His aspect became lowering and dark with destructive feelings; and he ceased to behold the faces of the Cherubim with an upright countenance. While in the presence of these, the Lord demanded of him why he was angry, and why he looked so downcast? Abel had done nothing to offend him. Abel had "done well," because he had kept the

Way appointed, and therefore his sacrifice was consumed. Had he (Cain) done likewise, his offering would have been accepted too—

"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door" (Gen. 4:7).

—by all which we are instructed that the OBEDIENCE OF FAITH was the condition upon which the family of Adam might obtain a right to that eternal life which should be procured for them by the Woman's Seed. The Lord's Way of righteousness and life, styled the "Way of the Tree of Life," consisted in faith and obedience. This faith, the apostle tells us, was—

"The substance of THINGS HOPED FOR; the evidence of THINGS UNSEEN" (Heb. 11:1).

By the belief of these things, Abel, Enoch and Noah pleased God, and became "HEIRS of the righteousness" on account of which life and incorruptibility are bestowed upon man. They hoped for the Woman's Seed who, they believed—on the testimony of God—should bruise the serpent's head. Their faith was a living faith, and therefore they kept the Way of the Lord, in offering—

"The firstlings of their flock, and the fat thereof" . . . "the fruit of the ground" . . . and in "walking with God" by being "just and perfect in their generations."

Such was the religion of the righteous among the Antediluvians. They were faithful AND obedient. And, as the earnest of what awaited them in the fulness of time—

"Enoch was translated, that he should not see death: and was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God" (Heb. 11:5).

Thus they were taught that the corruptible body should put on incorruption, and this mortal should put on immortality, and so—

"Death should be swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54).

Almost at the same time as the institution of religion, as we have seen, it was corrupted by Cain. He rejected from his system the principle of remission by sacrifice: hence he repudiated the promise, and constituted himself an evil-doer. Unbelief and disobedience became the characteristics of Cain and his associates, who dwelt eastward of the "presence of the Lord" (Gen. 4:16).

These were termed "Men," while those who "walked with God" were styled "the Sons of God." In the sentence pronounced upon Eve and her posterity, the former are indicated as the "Seed of the Serpent," and the latter as the "Seed of the Woman"—of whom One was to arise that should destroy the former. Between these 2 classes of Antediluvians there was "enmity" such as was evinced in the fratricidal Cain.

But the corruption first introduced by this arch-apostate undermined the principles, and overthrew the allegiance, of the "Sons of God": for, seeing that the "daughters of men" were fair, they intermarried with them; and the earth was replenished with a progeny fit only for capture and destruction. Their wickedness was great, and every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts only evil continually (Gen. 6:5). The antediluvian apostasy was complete, for—

"All flesh had corrupted the Way of the Lord upon the earth" which was "filled with violence through them"
(Gen. 6:11-13).

The Lord by His Spirit in Noah laboured patiently to reclaim them from their disobedience, but they disregarded His expostulations—

"Eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark" when "the Flood came and took them all away" (Matt. 24:38-39).

But Noah found favour in the eyes of the Lord—

"Being warned by God of things not seen as yet: and, moved with fear, he prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the (faithless) world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11:7).

Eternal Life has been the hope of all those who have walked with God in all past ages and generations, since the Fall. In walking with God they have trod the same path, and journeyed along the same road, which is the only "Way that leadeth unto Eternal Life."

The entrance upon this Way is strait, and its passage narrow, and there are few that find it (Matt. 7:14). BELIEF in the testimony of God, and OBEDIENCE to His commandments are the grand characteristics of "His Way" in its successive manifestations in all time. Dispensations have varied: but these leading principles have always remained the same—

"These are written that ye may BELIEVE" (John. 20:31), and . .

"Blessed are they that DO His commandments, that they may have a right to the Tree of Life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God" (Rev. 22:14; 2:7).

"I," says Jesus, "am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" . . "I am the Resurrection" . . "I am the Door: no man entereth but by me."

ANSWERS BY BROTHER ROBERTS

Emmanuel: "God With Us"

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself"—2 Cor. 5

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"—John 14:9

"God was manifest in the flesh"—1 Timothy 3:16

READING: PSALM 139

THE subject introduced to our notice in this psalm is a very great one. It is so great that David himself has acknowledged it was too wonderful for him—

"It is high: I cannot attain unto it" (v. 6).

If that is David's verdict, it would be presumptuous in US to profess to be able to grasp it. It is great because God is great, and it is above apprehension just as much as He is. "His ways are past finding out." He Himself says—

"As the heavens are high above the earth, so great and so high are My ways over yours" (Isa. 55:9).

Nevertheless, there are certain phases or features of the matter that are propounded for belief, and which are to a certain extent capable of being apprehended. The first is the one stated in this psalm: that God is everywhere present—

"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: If I make my bed in hell behold Thou art there" (vs. 7-8).

This is what God testifies of Himself through Jeremiah (23:24)—

"Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.

And this agrees with what Solomon declared in dedicating the Temple. You recollect it is quoted by Stephen before the Sanhedrim—

"But will God indeed dwell on earth? The heaven—even the heaven of heavens—cannot contain Him: much less this house that I have built" (1 Kings 8:27).

Now, the fact presented to our contemplation in these testimonies, though difficult to realize, is in harmony with what we can perceive must be. All things must be embraced in the Power from which they have sprung, and which sustains them in being. We must be in the presence of God.

Orthodox teaching is that God made all things out of "nothing." If this were so, there is no need for supposing that we are in the presence of God; because if nothing produced them, nothing can sustain them. And thus, logically enough, God and divine things are in orthodox theology assigned a sphere "beyond the bounds of time and space." But Paul tells us that all things are "out of Him" (Rom. 8:30); that—

"IN HIM, we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

—and that, as Daniel said to Belshazzar (Dan. 5:23)—

"In His hand our breath is, and His are all our ways."

With this in view, it follows that what David says is inevitable—that the Spirit of God is everywhere.

But then, in accepting that conclusion, we really assent to something that the intellect doesn't realize. David perceived this, and so will we when we have considered the matter. He says—

"Thou knowest my down sitting, and mine uprising: Thou understandest my thought afar off" (Psa. 139:2).

Yet he adds (v. 6)—

"It is too wonderful for me to understand. Such knowledge is too high: I cannot attain to it."

That is precisely the attitude that every mind rising to the greatness of the matter will be forced into. People of limited power of reflection think it easy to understand. They have certain terms before their minds: they assent to the terms—and think they comprehend the idea involved in them. In this they make a mistake which a little more power of intellect would enable them to see. It is a matter of which the surface only can be skimmed. It is high and deep: we cannot attain unto it.

Minds of another stamp may be tempted to emphasize on the absurdity of believing what cannot be understood; but if they will only range wide enough, they will meet with their own rebuke. We have all become familiar with the electric telegraph, in which is presented the extraordinary phenomenon that a principle, chemically developed, can be transmitted through 1000 miles of wire in a moment of time. Now, we BELIEVE the fact, because we are bound to believe it. We see it. No man can gainsay it.

But, who UNDERSTANDS it? Nobody. It is impossible for the mind to realize the process that takes place, which involves the transmission of a principle, element, or affinity, or whatever else you like to call it, through 1000 miles of wire in a moment of time. We see it is so, and there our knowledge ends. It is scientifically demonstrated as a fact, and we believe it, though we have not the remotest conception of the nature of the "electric fluid," or the mode of transmission.

So with regard to the matter in hand, we have a something that is presented to our minds to receive. We see it must be so. We apprehend superficially what is meant. But we are as helpless as a newborn babe when we attempt to grasp the idea. Just try for a moment to realize the immensity of the universe, and then you will see the enormous size of the idea that we have presented to us—and which we cannot grasp so long as we are in this finite earth nature, whose faculties are limited to the purposes to which present existence has relation.

Why, we cannot deal with the magnitude of the earth! We are lost. 24,000 miles in circumference! A body of matter 8000 miles through from one side to the other! What an immense body! It baffles our imagination. We are familiar with the fact, but we fail to take it in.

One step higher, and our discomfiture is complete. If the earth—a microscopic speck in the vast economy of existence—overpowers our faculties, who shall describe our bewilderment when we seek to survey that economy itself, which, in the course of endless ages—for there has been no beginning to God—has been slowly developing in the channel of His purpose? We have to confess ourselves utterly lost in the surrounding greatness.

Now, if the mere mathematical bearings of the matter, so to speak, are beyond our grasp, what shall we say to the proposition that there is one indivisible element filling this measureless abyss of existence! Can you grasp the idea of one Spirit, one Presence, one principle of Power and Intelligence, embracing infinite space, and all that it contains? You cannot. It is simply impossible to grasp it. The task is beyond any faculty with which we are, at present, endowed.

Well, then, if THAT is beyond us, how inscrutable is the other point presented to our faith, though its truth is evident as a matter of reason: namely, that there is, in relation to that universal element of power or existence, a PERSONAL CONTROLLING CENTER, from which it is but an eternal emanation, and with which it is ONE indissoluble: the First Cause, the Eternal Antecedent of all things, the seat of Ineffable Wisdom and Power—the FATHER, Who is above all and through all by His diffusive Spirit, and yet personally resident at a point of the universe, variously described in the Scriptures as "light unapproachable," "heaven of heavens," "heaven Thy dwelling place."

You will remember the frequency with which that idea is expressed. Perhaps it is well to realize that frequency, so that the idea may be perceived in its importance as a feature of Bible teaching. For instance, Jesus says—

"Our Father Who are IN HEAVEN" (Matt. 6).

David says (Psa. 123:1)—

"Unto Thee I lift mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens."

Solomon, dedicating the Temple, frequently uses the phrase—

"Hear Thou in heaven, Thy DWELLING PLACE, and when Thou hearest, forgive."

These are illustrations of the statements that teach the localization of the Father in central light—the sustaining principle of creation in, as it were, what you may style focus, or intensity of development. They teach that

though that principle is universal, the Personal Intelligence from Whom it emanates dwells in local habitation: yet that He has conscious relation to infinitude. He fills all because He is The Spirit, and you cannot divide spirit from spirit. You cannot divide any one part of God from Himself.

And here I will refer to an illustration I have before made use of, which helps in some slight degree to make the difficult idea palpable to our understanding—and that is the phenomenon of a jet of gas in a room, and the light emanating from it filling the room.

You are well aware that to our perception, the jet of gas seems to be one thing, and the light in the room another thing. And yet they are both one. For the light—which we don't comprehend any more than philosophers and opticians and those who talk scientifically (that is to say, barbarically, for scientific nomenclature merely consists of superficial ideas in foreign dress, which make them profound to the ignorant)—the light, I say, is an effect of the flame. Stop the flame, & you extinguish the light. They are indissolubly one.

Looking at the unity subsisting between the jet of flame issuing from the gas burner, and the light pervading the room, we get in a simple form the notion of One Central Source of all power—a Father dwelling in light, from Whom emanates the Spirit of His Own substance filling all space and constituting the basis of all creative developments, and yet with which He is essentially ONE, and by it consequently fills heaven and earth in consciousness and power.

There is this very great difference between the illustration and the reality: that in the light there is no intelligence, but mere mechanical force, as it were, subject to mechanical and chemical law. There, therefore, the illustration fails.

But if we were to suppose intelligence and volition to reside in the flame, and then imagine the flame making use of the light proceeding from itself to impress an image of itself on the wall, or to work out any other result—we should have divine operations illustrated. Literally, it would be light irradiant from the gas jet that would accomplish the results. Yet since that irradiant light is but the diffusion of the gas jet and its instrumental agency, the gas jet would as a matter of fact be the operator.

Before applying this illustration to the most important of all God's works in relation to us—His interposition for our salvation—I should like to deal with another phase of the matter, which we may call an intermediate phase.

The Spirit of God fills the universe, and all things exist by means of it. Without it, there is no power of any kind. In a sense, all things are of spirit. Yet the principle upon which Bible language is constructed does not justify us in speaking of the Spirit as the agent of operations which are the result of natural constitution. For instance, flesh and blood exist abstractly by the Spirit; yet it would not do to refer the workings of flesh and blood to the Spirit. Paul, in all his epistles, presents the work of the flesh and the works of the Spirit in CONTRAST. He says (Gal. 5:17)—

"The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. These are contrary the one to the other."

The things contrasted are the results that come from the flesh AS SUCH, and the ideas and duties enjoined by the Spirit as a teacher. So with inspiration. In a natural sense, the Spirit is in all men as it is in all animals, and in everything that exists—for everything is upheld by divine power or spirit. But it would be a misuse of language to attribute directly to the Spirit, any function or power which is the result of natural constitution in man or animal.

Thus, a bee is constructive, a lion carnivorous, a swallow migratory, and a man intelligent—not because of the direct operation of the Spirit, but because of the fixed constitution bestowed in Creation, and maintained while being continues. To attribute the manifestation of any of them to inspiration would be simply absurd.

More, it would be mischievous, for it would confer on natural power an importance that attaches alone to the direct sayings and doings of the Almighty, and thus draw away from the fountain of living waters. Quakerism has erred here in its theory of "light within." The Spirit of God is in any natural man only in the same sense as it is in an animal, vegetable fibre, a piece of coal, rock, or any substance, living or inanimate.

And please observe this, that when we come to define this sense, the Spirit of God does not exist in any of these as the "Spirit of God." It is merely the material means of its nature. The will of God determines the constitution of a thing, and its constitution is as fixed, individual, and distinct as if the Spirit of God had nothing to do with it. For instance: take the rose, and put it side by side with a nettle. They are both the products of the same spirit and power, and yet how radically different. Why is the one a rose the other a nettle? Simply because of the will of the First Cause.

That is the nearest approximation we can make to a philosophical definition in the matter: the will of the First Cause has imparted a constitution to the one that doesn't belong to the other; and, therefore, there is a nettle nature and rose nature. Although abstractly both are of God and therefore of the Spirit, it would be a confusion of ideas and a stultification of language to talk of either of them as a spirit nature.

Now, apply this to mankind, and you have his relation to God made clear. We live in the Spirit in the same way as the rose and the nettle, but we have a nature peculiar to ourselves, and which precludes us from speaking of anything we do as being the doings of the Spirit. All things are of God, but let us recognize the relation of things He had established (1 Cor. 15:47,44)—

"The first man is of the earth, earthy..

"There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

—and our present nature is the natural which, left to itself, will develop from within itself—not that which is in accordance with the Spirit of God—but that which is in accordance with its own impulses as a flesh nature. A flesh nature, without instruction, is ignorant of God, and of God's requirements, and of God's purposes. And in this state of ignorance it will develop a character not at all divine, and having nothing to do with the Spirit of God.

But God has spoken for human instruction, and His speaking has been by means of the Spirit, in men selected for the purpose (2 Pet. 1:21)—

"Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

Hence originates a phraseology that exhibits the Spirit as the agent.

This deserves close consideration. It is indeed a key to many things. Subsequent to the establishment of things upon their present basis, or to put it more plainly, subsequent to the Creation of things sublunary, God has appeared on the scene as an Operator distinct from what He has created.

This appearance has been BY SPIRIT— in the person of angels sometimes, and as an abstract impulse in the prophets at other times. In such cases the operation has been independently of, or extra to, the order of things established in what we call "nature." Hence, God was the Speaker or Worker in a sense in which He is not the speaker or worker when a man speaks of his own volition. The prophet was a representative of God.

But the prophet was a representative of God only in this sense: that he was the INSTRUMENT of the Spirit. The Spirit took hold of him, and made him say things he didn't understand—

"The prophets have inquired and searched diligently. . . searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

"Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you." (1 Pet. 1:10-12).

And in that we shall see a great difference between the prophets and the man through whom the Father was vitally manifested. What the prophets said, however, constituted the mind of the Spirit, insofar as that was revealed in their words. The things they said, or at least some part of them, have been written and preserved, and we may read them. And understanding them, we get the ideas of the Spirit into our hearts, and then the Spirit by these ideas becomes a power in us: it is the power of the Spirit's ideas.

It is not that there dwells in us a direct spiritual energy, generating the power and idea within us. Having the Truth uttered by the Spirit, if we are controlled by it we are controlled by the Spirit.

But it would be a confusion of speech to characterize any of our sayings or doings as those of the Spirit of God. Our thoughts and our sayings are those of mortal erring organizations, which may or may not be in harmony with the Spirit. All depends upon whether the ideas of the Spirit have been photographed on our minds. If so, all is well. If not, it is a deception to attribute our mental workings to the action of the Spirit in any sense.

If we recognize the fact that the language which exhibits the Spirit as an actor in the arena of human affairs originates in the fact that a NEW VOLITION from the Deity has taken place since He established the present order of things, we shall find our task greatly simplified in considering that profounder aspect of the matter already hinted at: the manifestation of God in the flesh. This introduces to notice "the man Christ Jesus/" who caused no end of controversy among his contemporaries (John 7:43), and even among his own disciples (John 6:60), and who has been the theme of much disputation ever since—even to bloodshed—in accordance with his own statement—

"I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword: from henceforth there shall be division" (Matt. 10:34).

The secret of this discordant tendency is doubtless to be found in the inability of most men to grasp the mighty phenomenon of the Creator of all things manifesting Himself in a man, who (though inhabited by the Father through the Spirit) was yet a distinct person, sustaining the relation of Son to the Father, and having to develop character under trial, like those he was manifested to redeem. Speaking of the subject, Paul says—

"Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim. 3:16).

Critics have endeavoured to get rid of this verse, substituting "he who" for "God," which would make the verse read—

"He who was manifested in the flesh ..

There are some grounds for this emendation, but they are not conclusive. The 3 most ancient Greek manuscripts extant (Vatican, Sinaitic and Alexandrine) all have "os" instead of "Theos" (that is, "he who" instead of "God"). The suggestion is that the introduction of "The" before "os" has been the blunder of a transcriber, or a wilful corruption of the text to support Trinitarianism.

This, however, does not follow. The 3 manuscripts may themselves be but the perpetuation in the text in question of a previous corruption by which "The" was dropped. This is the more likely from the circumstance that the Latin Vulgate, on which the English Version of the Scriptures is chiefly based, is a translation made from earlier manuscripts than the date assigned to the above 3, made at a time when the translator (Jerome) had a wide range of choice, so far as what would now be very ancient copies of the New Testament are concerned. And this (Vulgate) contains the reading given in the English Version—

"Deus conspicuus factus est in carne."

The conflict is between 3 old manuscripts and the version of a man who had opportunity of choosing from a multitude of manuscripts contemporary with these, and who must have had a reason for declining the "he who" reading (which, by the way, is unsuited to the context). The correct reading is as likely to be on one side as the other.

However, it does not much effect the argument on the main question, because although the words—as they stand in the common version—give a concise definition of the mystery of godliness, and a good starting point for the consideration of the subject, still they are not essential for the demonstration of the subject itself, because the fact that God was manifested in Christ is testified in too many ways to leave it dependent upon a single text. Thus John, in his first epistle, defines the matter in the following words (1:1-2)—

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life . .

"For the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that Eternal Life WHICH WAS WITH THE FATHER AND WAS MANIFESTED UNTO US" (1 John 1:1-2).

This is only, in another form, what John says in the first chapter of his Gospel (1:1, 14)—

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . .

"And the Word was MADE FLESH, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

(Continued next month, if the Lord will)

Father, Forgive Them

"And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him . . Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

THIS intercessory prayer for his betrayers and murderers, Jesus uttered on the cross when he was crucified. It is found only in Luke, and there are some who claim the passage is not genuine because it is not found in some manuscripts. But that this prayer of Jesus is genuine, and does belong in the Gospel record, there should be no doubt, for several reasons—

1. *Was it not written of him in Isa. 53:12 that he would do just that: intercede for his transgressors?—"He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."*

2. *Jesus taught his disciples to "Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Surely he would be a faithful example of his own teachings.*

3. *And such forgiveness would be in harmony with what he said in Matt. 12:31-32—"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men. Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him."*

4. *Did Jesus do less than the first of his martyrs, Stephen?—who, when he was unjustly stoned to death, prayed for his executioners: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."*

5. *Finally and certainly: Jesus' intercessory prayer for his betrayers and murderers would be the forgiving spirit of God's Anointed One, the Saviour, whose very purpose in dying on the cross was to bring men forgiveness and life.*

Surely, then, we cannot doubt that Jesus prayed as Luke records. Why then the omission of this prayer from some manuscripts? We do not know. Many omissions occur in various manuscripts, both by error and by design.

It has been suggested that this omission is the work of anti-Semitism—that it may be due to the difficulty which many "Christians" had in believing that Jesus could have prayed for the Jews. We know anti-Semitism has been a characteristic of apostate "Christendom."

Further, it is a basic fact of the flesh that it is not natural or easy or to be expected that men should pray for their enemies and persecutors, let alone for their murderers. Most professed "Christians" reject both Christ's teachings and example on this point, and would clearly be happy to see this prayer omitted from Scripture.

But thus DID Jesus pray for his murderers, even though he knew the suffering and the agony that they, in their ignorance, were bringing upon him—a suffering on the cross that was to last 6 hours before he was released from it by death. For we are told that Jesus hung on the tree from the third to the ninth hour—from 9 am to 3 pm: and 3 of those 6 hours were hours of darkness—

"And it was the third hour, and they crucified him" (Mark 15:25).

"And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land till the ninth hour" (noon to 3 pm)—v. 33.

Jesus knew the will of his Father that he drink of this cup, and with the full possession of his senses at every moment, and alert and aware of everything that was transpiring, he endured unto the end. In fact, he was the ONLY ONE who did know the significance of all that was happening (though the crucified thief showed great faith and comprehension).

Jesus' flesh was crucified and his life blood poured out—an offering for sin. He would consciously drink of this cup to the dregs. So when he was offered "vinegar to drink, mingled with gall," this was NOT the cup he would drink (though he would be given vinegar at his very end). He declined to accept the sense-deadening drink which would have de-intensified the cup of the physical sufferings which he endured while he waited in agony to say, "I thirst," that he might further say, "It is finished," so that in the faithful ending of the drama of his life, he could finally say—

"Father, into Thy hand I commend my spirit."

No, he would not drink of THAT cup which would relieve his suffering on the cross. In Nazareth Revisited, bro. Roberts comments on this event in the crucifixion of Christ—

"There was, first of all, a mitigating touch of humanity. They offered their noble victim a mixture to drink, which it is said would have had the effect of dulling sensibility to pain.

"Was this the result of softened feelings, inspired by the spectacle of his broken-heartedness? (for it is written in the Psalms, 'Reproach hath broken my heart'—we may know that such would be his aspect).

"Whatever feeling prompted their kindness, it was in vain. Jesus refused to drink. He would not assuage, by a mechanical stupefaction, the sufferings which the Father had called upon him to go through by the power of faith."

Jesus would bear the mental and physical pain with no relief. He would consciously endure the agonizing 6 hours until it was indeed "finished." But this did not mean that his intense and prolonged suffering would cause him to

lose his senses or become unconscious before he expired on the cross. He would suffer the agony AND retain his reason and his senses right up to the end. It must be said that the only begotten Son of God would remain steadfast in a fully conscious faith that works by love; possessed with his full, active mental capacity to his last breath on the cross, when he exclaimed—

"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

The seven utterances of Jesus on the cross all testify to his full awareness of His Father's will and purpose that he die a sacrificial death by being uplifted on the cross: which is to say, that Jesus would remain conscious and faithful while enduring suffering and pain until death ended it all, for had he been stupefied by the drink of gall, and then fallen into unconsciousness, his sufferings would have been limited. The 7 things he said on the cross are—

1. *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"* (Luke 23:34).
2. *"Verily I say to thee today, Thou shalt be with me in paradise"* (Luke 23:43).
3. *"Woman, behold thy son! .. Behold thy mother!"* (John 19:26-27).
4. *"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"*(Matt 27:46).
5. *"I thirst"* (John 19:28).
6. *"It is finished"* (John 19:30).
7. *"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit"* (Luke 23:46)

Of these 7 sayings, 3 are prayers and 4 are statements. This division of 7 into 3 and 4 is characteristic of God's Word. Where 7 of anything appears, the 3 & 4 division is often quite evident. The 3 prayers are the first, middle and last of the 7. The first prayer (and first saying) was—

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

This is quite contrary to the natural feelings and reactions of human nature—sinful flesh—which was crucified on the cross, and which is the natural flesh of all men by birth and by descent from Adam and Eve. Who would utter such a prayer for his murderers, unless it be the Saviour and those who would follow in his steps! We are told concerning those who were condemned to death by crucifixion, that when the sentence was carried out—

"It was usual for the victims of that dreaded doom, frenzied with pain, to shriek, entreat, curse, and spit upon spectators."

Surely this would be the usual reaction of those suffering such a death, especially if they were, or considered themselves, innocent or treated unjustly. The Romans and other heathen worshiped "revenge" as a god, and also worshiped gods of war—so belligerency and revenge were part of their vindictive spirit, according to the natural thoughts and works of the flesh.

In the face of death, even for the guilty, whether by crucifixion or stoning or any other condemnation to death, it was not the usual reaction for the victim to be silent and resigned. Yet in Jesus it was more than mere resignation. It was the positive frame of his mind, and the outpouring of his heartfelt feelings, when he prayed—

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Of course they knew what they were doing—in one sense. That is, certainly all who were there—Jews and Romans and rulers—knew that Jesus of Nazareth was being crucified. But none of them knew Jesus AS THE MESSIAH, the Anointed One of the Only True God, who was to suffer death first, before he would reign in glory on the earth, and—besides—with a long interval of time between his suffering death and the glory of his reign.

The words of Jesus, "for they know not what they do," mean simply, "ignorance." Since the Jews read the Old Testament Scriptures, which prophesied that their Messiah was to be rejected by the nation and to die a sacrificial death, and which foreshowed that he would be lifted up on the stake, and that after 3 days he would rise again to die no more, not seeing corruption—it might be supposed that the Jews as a whole, or at least some of them, were not "ignorant" of what they were doing.

But they WERE in ignorance, as Jesus expressed it in his opening prayer on the cross, and as Peter and Paul also testify. And even his own chosen apostles were "ignorant" of what was going on. So, even though the Jews read the Old Testament Scriptures, and many of them were well-versed in it, being their profession and their life study, nevertheless they were in ignorance—wanting perception. They were unable to see, and thereby learn of the sacrificial work of the Messiah foretold in their Scriptures. Paul, preaching in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, said—

"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they KNEW HIM NOT, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him" (Acts 13:27).

Paul is saying, "The people living in Jerusalem, the very city where Jesus was crucified, along with their rulers—chief priests, scribes, elders—did not realize that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, nor did they realize the prophets taught that Messiah would suffer a sacrificial death, a message read every Sabbath, and they have fulfilled the very prophecies that say they would reject and condemn Jesus."

And Peter similarly informed the Jews on the day of Pentecost of the ignorance in which they committed their crime against Jesus—

"Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised from the dead: whereof we are witnesses . .

"And now, brethren, I know that THROUGH IGNORANCE ye did it, as did also your rulers" (Acts 3:14-17).

It was against the flesh, even contrary to the natural mind and heart and the lusts of the flesh and pride and national self-esteem, for ANYONE to perceive and receive in faith the truth of the rejection and suffering and death for sin that was to precede the glory (with the one exception, of course, of the One who was to bear the suffering).

And we also, like the Jews, or like the apostles and other disciples of Christ, would not have been able to perceive the sacrificial work of God's Anointed by reading and studying the Old Testament, of which salvation even the prophets have enquired diligently, which things the angels desire to look into (1 Pet. 1:10-12). Its meaning would have been withheld from us, as it was from all of Jesus' followers. They were at that time "not able to bear it"; so in the wisdom of a gracious God it was withheld from their understanding, that they should see it not.

And again we find the same "ignorance" spoken of when Paul wrote his first letter to Corinth, saying of Christ's sacrificial death—

"Which none of the princes (Jewish and Roman rulers) of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory" (1 Cor. 2:8).

Because of their ignorance, then, Jesus prayed—

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

—a prayer for all: Jews, Romans, other Gentiles, peoples and their rulers—remission of sins and salvation would be extended in invitation to all. But it was not, however, a pardon for sin which would have entitled the forgiven to eternal life, that Jesus prayed for—a forgiveness they were neither aware that they were in need of, nor that they were getting.

His betrayers and murderers must repent and be baptized to find forgiveness unto life eternal, and then walk the rest of their life in obedience and faithfulness, as we will quote below. (But the betrayer Judas, being the "son of perdition," would not seek forgiveness, but went and hanged himself).

So Jesus is not saying of those who crucified him, "You are forgiven and will be given life eternal by my sacrifice." The Greek word (aphieemi) here translated "forgive" is also rendered "suffer, let go, leave alone, let pass, permit," as in Matt. 3:15 ("suffer it to be so"); Matt. 15:14 ("Let them alone"); Mark 11:6 ("Let them go"), etc. That is—

"Father, suffer them now. let them alone, for they know not what they do."

—for surely God could have struck them all dead there on the spot; or Jesus could call down upon them "12 legions" of avenging angels; or their sin could have been deemed an unforgivable sin.

But Jesus is also praying for his Father's forbearance upon his betrayers and murderers; because God's forbearance to overlook their sin and suffer them now—at the time of His Only Begotten Son's cruel death at their hands—was needed to give those who condemned him both the time and the opportunity to repent and obey whatever God required of them.

On the day of Pentecost (50 days later), Peter explained to the people of Jerusalem (and there must have been many of them who were at the crucifixion) that Jesus, whom they had taken and delivered up to be crucified in the place of a murderer, had been raised from the dead, and is Lord and Christ! He said (Acts 2:36)—

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both LORD AND CHRIST!"

The effect of Peter's revelation to them, and his answer to their critical problem, was (vs 37-38)—

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

"Then Peter said unto them: Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

Yes, Jesus truly prayed—

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

—but "they" still would have to obey from the heart the divine command to repent, and to be baptized into the Saving Name of the One they had betrayed, condemned and put to death—and thereafter to walk in newness of life.

They were guilty of putting the Son of God to death, and only their ignorance (necessitated by the need for Jesus to die on the cross for them) permitted the forbearance of God to be exercised that they might be freely given opportunity to not only make amends for their terrible mistake, but to receive life eternal by God's Plan of Salvation for sinful men—the Plan of the Ages being fulfilled in Christ.

But the time would come—because of the Gospel being preached to all the world—when they could no longer be considered "ignorant," for God was revealing what was formerly kept secret. So all who would hear the Gospel of the Kingdom in the Name of Jesus would not be considered "ignorant." And all who heard could not plead ignorance of the suffering and the glory—

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at (overlooked, closed His eyes to), but now commandeth ALL MEN EVERYWHERE—Jews, Romans, other Gentiles—TO REPENT" (Acts 17:30).

Within 40 years the divine "overlooking" and forbearance ended, and terrible judgments began to be poured out upon Israel, which are still continuing through our own days, nearly 2000 years later. Said they, in defiant blasphemy—

"His blood be on us, and on our children!" (Matt. 27:25).

And Jesus said, as they wept at his crucifixion (Luke 23:28-31)—

"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children: for, behold, the days are coming . . ."

—and what dreadful days he foretold!—and so indeed it has been! The times of "winking at ignorance" and "suffering them" (while the Gospel was graciously preached to them in the Name of him whom they had slain) came to an end with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (AD 68-70), and the scattering of the people ever since.

But it was the will of Jesus that God "forgive" and "suffer" them, because they did not know what they were doing. Certainly Jesus, as Saviour of the world, and being of one mind with His merciful Father, was to be of a long-suffering and forgiving frame of mind. We can be sure of this forgiving spirit in Jesus, as we can of many things written in Scriptures on which we have guidelines, without going into detail. In this case, introducing Jesus' prayer for them, we have the words (Luke 23:34)—

"Then Jesus SAID, Father, forgive them . . ."

The more literal meaning is, "Jesus KEPT SAYING," because the verb is imperfect, indicating continuous action. Other translations bear this out, as Rotherham, "Then Jesus kept saying"; and Robertson, "Then Jesus was saying." How true, then, that Jesus' prayer was not a momentary, passing, self-forced petition of reluctant duty, but rather it was the continual, consistent spiritual mind: the mind of Christ—

"Jesus kept saying. Father, forgive them . . ."

He kept saying this, even as they mocked and abused him, and cruelly put him to an agonizing death—an out-flowing manifestation of the forgiving spirit with which his whole mind and being was saturated, bringing salvation within the reach of all men by his obedient, loving submission to death, and his glorious resurrection to life for evermore!

—N.M.

The Smitten Rock

“ALL OUR fathers were under the cloud, and ALL passed through the sea . . . and were ALL baptised . . . and did all eat . . . and did ALL drink” (1 Cor. 10:1-4).

In these five things, the Israelites all partook of God’s intimate favor and fellowship, but still He finally rejected them and scattered their carcasses in the wilderness. The Israelites had every reason to believe that they were a specially selected and favored group, but they had the bitter lesson to learn that as regards eternal salvation, God has no favorites. He is no respecter of persons. His ways are rigidly just and equal. As a man sows, so shall he reap.

“All our fathers were under the cloud.”

That is, the miraculous and specially provided cloud of God’s protection and guidance was spread over them all. Surely they could feel, “We are the chosen people.”

“And all passed through the sea.”

Here again a great miracle was openly performed on their behalf. Every one of them had the impressive personal experience of passing through that divinely provided channel of deliverance from bondage to freedom. This passage through the sea, with the water standing on both sides and the shielding cloud enveloping them above, Paul likens to baptism. And in this act Egypt—the world of sin—was left behind, and their former masters, the Egyptians—the old man of the flesh—were drowned in the cleansing baptismal waters.

Let us bear in mind what Paul is driving at. He is saying that though all the Israelites partook of these things, yet the great majority were finally rejected and destroyed in the wilderness simply because—with special divine blessing and manifestations showered on them from every angle—they would not make the effort to rise above their natural, animal desires and way of life.

“And did all eat the same spiritual meat.”

Paul is drawing the parallel between THEIR spiritual food and drink, and the bread and wine of the Lord’s supper. The manna, we are told (Num. 11:8) was GROUND or BEATEN to make bread, just as the Passover lamb was SLAIN to provide the protecting blood, and the rock had to be SMITTEN to provide the life-giving water. In all these things we are reminded that in the great battle against the evil consequences of sin, our Leader had to give up his life under the most cruel and agonizing conditions. This is to teach and impress on us that the struggle for holiness and life is not a pleasant, easy pastime but a vitally serious thing which only a few have the wisdom to apply themselves to and follow through to the end.

“And did all drink the same spiritual drink.”

The manna and the water from the rock are called “spiritual” because they were specially provided by the Spirit of God and not by natural, human effort; and also because they typified the true spiritual meat and drink of the Word, and of the Word-made-flesh, by regular partaking of which we may (and must) be spiritually transformed, and finally reborn of Spirit-power.

SMITTEN BY THE ROD OF MOSES

Paul tells us here that the rock struck by Moses to provide water represented Christ. He was smitten by the rod, or Law, of Moses, in order to provide a way of life. He came under the curse of the Law and broke it open to free those held in bondage by the Law. And it was the Levites, the tribe of Moses the custodians of the Law, who smote him. They were the divinely-appointed “*rod of Moses*,” for they were the administrators of Moses’ Law, confirmed in this office by the ROD of the tribe of Levi being caused to blossom (Num. 17:8).

The incident of smiting the rock occurred at Rephidim, which was the last stop before reaching Mt. Sinai. Maps usually place it in the immediate Mt. Sinai region. The point is this. Paul says here that this rock *“followed them.”* What did he mean? The most reasonable meaning seems to be that the stream caused by the smiting of the rock followed them from Rephidim to Sinai, where they stayed a whole year. The smiting of the rock was a very significant and important event. It is reasonable that it is associated with their whole stay at Sinai, which was the most important year in their entire history.

THE BROOK FROM THE MOUNT

If this be the case, it gives added harmony and meaning to Moses’ action of grinding up the golden calf and casting the dust of it into the *“brook that descended out of the mount,”* and making the people drink it (Ex. 32:20; Deut. 9:21). The water of life from the Rock, defiled by the sin of the people, would have the same significance as the brazen serpent—sin’s flesh—lifted up to typify the nailing of the body of sin to the cross. In the one case the people had to drink, in the other to look with faith.

“He that believeth in me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water” (Jn. 7:38).

John immediately explains that Jesus referred to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, which was dependent upon Jesus’ crucifixion and ascension. He says the Spirit was not given because Christ was not yet glorified. Jesus himself said—

“If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.” (Jn. 16:7),

The Spirit-streams could not be poured forth until the Rock was smitten, just as the seals of the apocalyptic scroll could not be loosed until the Lamb was found worthy to loose them. The sacrificial death of Jesus, his glorious victory over, and destruction of, the sin-flesh-devil, was the great key that unlocked the treasures of spiritual blessing bound up in the Rock.

“He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men” (Eph. 4:8).

There is another interesting aspect to the water-supplying rock. We are familiar with Jesus’ identification as the foundation-rock of the spiritual Temple—the rejected and smitten stone that was made head of the corner. Now the smitten rock, we are told was *“in Horeb”* (Ex. 17:6). The first time Horeb is mentioned it is called the *“Mountain of God”* (Ex. 3:1). Horeb is another name for Sinai.

LIVING WATERS FROM THE HOUSE OF GOD

So we can trace a parallel here between the old and new covenants—Sinai and Jerusalem. The rock was smitten in Mt. Horeb or Sinai, and the water of life came forth and sustained the people while the Law was being given to them and the FIRST Tabernacle was being built. This was the typical Mosaic shadow enacted at Sinai—the founding and organization of the NATURAL Israelitish Kingdom of God.

Similarly, the TRUE, anti-typical Rock was smitten at Mt. Moriah at Jerusalem. From this mountain—*“beginning at Jerusalem”* (Luke 24:47)—the Spirit poured forth carrying the Gospel to the ends of the world. Furthermore, we are told that when the new Kingdom is set up, living waters—both literal and spiritual—will issue forth from here. At this mountain in the future, as at Sinai in the past, the Tabernacle of God—both literal and spiritual—will be built. Joel (3:18), Zechariah (14:8), and Ezekiel (47:1) all speak of the LITERAL streams that will come from the foundations of the Temple, and the river of water of life of the last chapter of Revelation gives the SPIRITUAL counterpart. And finally, through the Prophet like unto Moses, the new Law will go forth from this mountain to all the earth. —G.V.G.

RESURRECTION OF REJECTERS

The Gospel condemns its rejecters to a resurrection to punishment. The alternatives of the Bible are: (1) Possession of the kingdom with all its appurtenances by a resurrection to eternal life; (2) Resurrection to punishment, consequent on rejection of the Gospel and unworthiness of the kingdom; or (3) A return to original dust and sojourn therein forever, consequent on unavoidable ignorance of the whole matter—J. T., Herald, 1852.

Current Events Fulfilling Prophecy

"Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, blasphemies"—Matt. 15:19

RUSSIAN MOTIVES: US STUPIDITY. An appropriate time to take hard look at US-Russian relations. Where are they heading? Nixon-Brezhnev summit euphoria could be costly to US.

True, Russia at moment looking to US for way out of its troubles. Kremlin needs & wants US knowhow to solve industrial backwardness & technological lag. Need assurance of US grain to cover failure of their abysmally inefficient agricultural system. Want US support in neutralizing China & stabilizing E. Europe. All this puts Russia on good behaviour—for now. But that does not mean Russia has abandoned its long term objective.

Brezhnev's present strategy is a 2-edged sword: on one side, Russia sees aura of good will as best opportunity of solving Russia's domestic problems. On other side, atmosphere of warmth promises opportunity of tilting political balance among US allies to Russia. Subtle persuasion will be used to persuade US & Europe to lose any sense of urgency about their own & their mutual defence. As result of detente, domestic pressures already mount in West to shift resources to other fields—welfare, housing, employment, etc.

Russia, with its totalitarian govt., does not face same problem. No citizen or group of citizens is going to tell Kremlin what to do about defence or anything else. But in democratic US, when US & Russia talk amicably, people decide they can forget about defence & danger of war.

Past has demonstrated that there can be changes in Moscow's tactics & theatrics, but goal of pre-eminent world power never changes. Warming trend poses many risks for US. (USN 6:18).

NOTE: This should be so elementarily obvious. This is what Russia and China are assuring their own people—that they are just using US to their advantage. But if it is God's will that US build up the power of Russia in a blind euphoria of detente and commercial greed, then that is the way it will be.

WHY JOHNNY CAN'T ADD. For over 10 yrs., US children have been subjected to waves of curriculum "reform"—new physics, new chemistry, new geography, even new English & new history. But of all these programs, none so widely praised & widely accepted as "new math". By now, new math is taught in 85 pet. of US schools.

Results are—to put it mildly—disappointing. In Calif., new math adopted state-wide in '69. Within 2 yrs., average scores of 6th graders on standard math tests dropped 20 pet. Most kids had reasonably good skills when they entered the program, & got worse as they progressed. From outset, creators of new math openly disdained such mundane skills as addition & subtraction.

After years of complaints, backlash has begun. In San Francisco, 87 pet. of elementary-school teachers report they've abandoned new math textbooks. Some educators still believe children ought to know how to add, subtract, multiply & divide. (Nwk 6:25).

NOTE: The Athenians, who considered themselves the "intellectuals" of the ancient world, were always seeking "some new thing" (Acts 17:21). It is the same today: there must always be a running after a new fad: "All past generations knew nothing; we know everything." Surely this mania for fad and change in the US school system must be providential, as a punishment for folly and to weaken the nation before the advance of Russia—for to a generation who cannot read they are now adding a generation who cannot add. Meanwhile, single-minded Russia presses ahead its educational program wholly geared to advancing the scientific and military power of the Russian State.

SHIPBUILDING BOOM. US shipyards deluged with orders as never before in peacetime. Several reasons: costs abroad rising; advanced US technology; demands for new-type ships; federal subsidies. On June 30, largest ship ever built in US was launched—1094-ft., 225,000-ton tanker Brooklyn: can carry 1½ million barrels of oil.

In '63, 600,000 tons of ships under construction, value \$370 million; in 73, 3 million tons, value \$3 billion. Day of nuclear ship coming: may sign first atomic-power tanker contract this year. (USN 7:23)

NOTE: The latter-day Tarshish must be a dominant sea-power and merchant-power. At the same time, it must be so weakened at the end (in relation to Russia and her allies) that it is obvious to Israel and all the world that Israel's deliverance from Gog is of God and not of man. So there is an apparent (though not real) conflict between the prophecies. Present trends dovetail both elements beautifully.

RUSSIA'S ARMED MIGHT. Rising concern that easing of US-Soviet tensions may bring greater dangers for West. Fears that unbalanced withdrawal of US troops could lead to premature liquidation of NATO forces. Signs of growing apathy in Europe that could destroy alliances that have preserved non-Communist world against Communist advance since WW II. Goodpaster, Supreme NATO Commander, says Russia now has "strongest military power world has ever seen." (USN 7:23)

NOTE: Is it not a wonderful Sign?—weakness and apathy in Europe; Russia the "greatest military power the world has ever seen." US is weakened and isolated; Britain amounts to nothing; Russia grows and grows.

PETER & THE PAPACY. "You are Peter, & on this rock I will build my church" (Matt 16:18). Does that long-contested verse mean that Roman Catholics traditionally take it to mean? Was Peter first Pope?

An officially-sanctioned joint committee of 11 Catholic, Lutheran & other Protestant scholars agree that it makes Peter one of most prominent apostles, but it does not make him Pope. (Tm 8:6)

NOTE: Theologians, within and without the Catholic Church, are trying to cut the Pope down to size. It is one of today's very interesting interplays of power and struggle. Some way must be found to make Catholicism palatable to the returning Protestant Harlot Daughters of Mother Rome. But the Pope still has his part to play in the cementing of Europe and Russia, and the world will be deluded by the wonder-working of the Image of the Beast.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS. Nations of world still sprinting ahead in atom race. France to detonate its 44th explosion near Tahiti this week, just days after an underground Russian blast & a Chinese atmospheric explosion. Of the 5 nuclear powers, only Britain is not racing to update its weapons.

At great expense of time & effort, Russia has achieved quantitative equality with US, but continuing global rivalry leads both US & Russia to emphasize staggeringly expensive qualitative improvements, & development of new technology. Looking beyond the MIRV competition, US & Russian planners already envision whole new generation of weapons that include such devices as counter-satellite satellites.

Nearly dozen nations possess capacity of going nuclear soon. Closest to threshold is Israel. In 15 years we shall see dozens of countries capable of utilizing nuclear energy. It would be putting considerable faith in human nature to expect this achievement won't be misdirected. (Nwk 7:23)

NOTE: The last sentence sums up the hopelessness of the outlook, naturally speaking. Man has always used—and will always use—any weapon he has, to gain power. The only restraint is fear of retaliation. US used the atom bomb because Japan had none to strike back with. When the set time comes, Russia will strike with lightning speed, coming "as a cloud to cover the land."

DROUGHT & STARVATION. With West & Central Africa in worst drought in memory, 20 million people in a 2000-mile belt of arid land are fighting to stay alive. Gravest danger now is disease. Very young & very old are dying from diseases they'd normally be able to resist, because they're so weakened & dehydrated. The tragedy can't be undone. Drought has permanently scarred land & allowed Sahara to creep further south. The economies have suffered blows from which they'll take years to recover. Huge numbers of cattle have died, so large numbers of nomads must alter their ways & crowd into towns looking for work. Future looks bleak in sub-Sahara: land & people have lost too much to recover. (Nwk 7:23)

NOTE: With all man's vaunted scientific "progress," the great majority of the world's inhabitants live in grinding misery, on the borderline of starvation. Used unselfishly and for the common good, the world is a treasure-house that could be made a paradise. But this would not solve the basic problems. Look at the richest nations: their people are no happier or nobler, as they pursue their selfish and insatiable lusts for luxury and pleasure. The most wealthy nations are the most violent.

THE GREAT RUSSIAN GRAIN DEAL. Grain companies & ship operators collected needless federal subsidies. Shippers are just recovering from a nationwide transportation tie-up that resulted from the scrambling for freight cars to transport the grain. The deal contributed to a grain shortage in US, driving up prices of bread, meat, poultry & dairy products. Russia dickered separately with US grain companies, & Agriculture Dept. did almost nothing to monitor the purchases. Thus Russia was able to keep US businessmen & farmers in dark about how much grain they were buying at bargain prices kept low by Govt. export subsidies. (Tm 8:6)

NOTE: The advantages of efficient, single minded dictatorship over a "democracy" divided by a multitude of petty greeds and conflicts. Russia bought the grain at artificially low and US-taxpayer-subsidized prices, and could (and apparently did) resell it at huge profits. The whole transaction forced up US domestic prices, to the benefit of the rich at the expense of the poor.

SOME IN CHURCHES STILL BELIEVE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD! In a bitter convention in New Orleans, representatives of Lutheran Missouri Synod, US's 2nd largest Lutheran body, gave its president constitutional

power to dismiss any pastor, theologian, or any teacher in US's largest Protestant parochial-school system, who questions belief that every statement of fact in Bible is literally true.

Thus it is absolute dogma that all miracles in Bible occurred precisely as reported, & Adam & Eve were real people created by God, (which means evolution theory is fantasy.) Victory for Bible fundamentalism was complete: churchmen loyal to it took control over every facet of church.

Founded 125 years ago by descendants of pious German immigrants, the Missouri Synod—unlike most other Lutherans—adopted the central premise that Bible is inerrant in whatever it says. (Nwk 7:23)

NOTE: In the general destruction of the evil and godless population of the world that is to come at Christ's return (like Israel's destruction of the filthy abominations of Canaan), there must be a small remnant worth preserving for the Kingdom of God. It is interesting to see, therefore, that some fairly large sections of the religious population still cling to the basic foundation—the wholly inspired Word of God. With this, there is hope: without it, men are hopeless. It is the general destruction of this foundation in the churches of the world that has opened the flood gates of violence, corruption and immorality. Note that the writer clearly recognizes what some who call themselves brethren fail to recognize: that if Adam and Eve were realities, then "Evolution" is fantasy. It would be much healthier for the Body if this were more clearly perceived.

WEST EUROPE DRIFTS TO NEUTRALISM. 2 wks. ago NATO released a study of Soviet military strength in E. Europe: details were startling. In 5 yrs., they've added 6000 more tanks, increasing their advantage to 4 to 1. Number of Russian aircraft poised against W. Europe is up 50 pct.

When NATO foreign ministers gathered last week, they faced 2-fold threat: Russian build up that cannot be ignored, & W. Europe public that couldn't care less. Attitude is: "Don't bother us with news that disturbs our vision of a new era in which defence is obsolete." W. Europe sliding toward neutralism. Key officials in 6 capitals say they're powerless to reverse drift.

Inclination to let down guard has been encouraged by mistaken notion spread by Soviet diplomats on cocktail circuit—that detente-minded doves in Kremlin have won showdown against expansion-minded hawks.

Moscow has already achieved 2 of its 4 main objectives: conventional military superiority in Europe over US & allies, & recognition of Moscow's hold on E. Europe. Third on list is withdrawal of US forces from Europe & collapse of NATO. Fourth goal—to put productive capacity of West to work for Russia—is also very much on track.

Biggest obstacle to real W. Europe union is France, whose concept of a united Europe is Paris thumbing its nose at US.

US disengagement from Europe would be open invitation to Russia to become military supervisory power on Continent—an intolerable shift in world balance of power. (Nwk 6:25)

NOTE: Three key points to note: (1) great Russian military power, constantly increasing; (2) Europe's people don't care; and (3) France is the major obstacle to a strong, US-oriented European union. How wonderfully the prophetic picture shapes up!

"A PROVERB & A BYWORD." For 35 yrs., Britain's Jewry has tried to persuade lexicographers to change certain definitions in dictionaries. It has had scant luck with Oxford Dictionary, most complete & authoritative record in existence of what English is & has been.

Now Marcus Shloimovitz will take argument to Britain's Supreme Court, asking that this definition of a Jew be deleted: "A name of opprobrium or reprobation: a grasping or extortionate money-lender or usurer; a trader who deals craftily."

Oxford's chief editor says: "We are concerned with the accurate recording of language, not what people think it should be." (Tm 6:25)

NOTE: A vivid exemplification of that age-old prophecy by Moses to Israel because of their foreseen disobedience: "Thou shalt become a proverb and a by word among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee" (Deut. 28:37). Rightly or wrongly, the term "Jew" has been for ages an expression of contempt, engrafted into many languages of the Gentiles, especially among those nations which blasphemously describe themselves as "Christian" nations.

COMPUTER CRIME. Computer has become major crime problem for business & govt. Believed to be fastest-growing type of white-collar crime. Difficult to detect, more profitable, less dangerous, & easier to commit than most kinds of criminal activity.

Computer criminals have stolen trade secrets, valuable equipment & millions of \$s from banks, industry & govt. Virtually no limit in amount of money that can be taken once an opening is built into system. As computer use spreads, danger of crime grows apace. A dishonest employee with access to a computer can pull off a sizable theft in few seconds. (USN 6:18)

NOTE: Computers—now an integral aspect of US's increasingly complicated and artificial lifestyle—obviously open up a wide range of possibility of crime and embezzlement very hard to detect and control. The more complicated man makes life (in his greed and self-indulgence), the more scope is given to the forces of evil.

THE PENTECOSTAL TIDE. Fastest growing force in Catholic Church is Pentecostals. Originating early in '67, the movement only attracted 90 persons to its first meeting that year. Number multiplied rapidly each year. This year's meeting of 25,000 represented only a fraction of over 200,000 Pentecostal Catholics in US. Movement has taken root in foreign countries, & is growing even faster.

Catholic Pentecostals form third major group of Pentecostals. The original Pentecostals grew up around 1900: now 2½ million in US alone. A new Pentecostal movement developed in past 20 years within mainstream Protestant churches, & is still spreading.

All 3 groups believe necessity of personal "Baptism of Holy Spirit" to lead fully Christian life. The initiate undergoes this "Spirit Baptism" by visiting a Pentecostal meeting at which others join in laying on of hands. Then the initiate acquires one of "gifts" Paul describes in 1 Corinthians, as prophesying, healing, speaking with tongues. (Tm 6:18)

NEW PENTECOSTAL PHENOMENON has spread with surprising speed thru all of world's major churches during past 5 years. In both style & fervour, they're not much different from traditional Pentecostals, but they come from a more restrained tradition: Catholics & mainline Protestants.

To some, the sudden surge of Pentecostalism among Catholics is due to same forces at work in encounter groups: people who have grown up afraid of their own emotions & whose feelings have been repressed by the structure of the Church. Now they're coming together in an atmosphere that suddenly makes it legitimate to freely express those emotions.

Regardless of denominational background, all Pentecostals believe no Christian's life is complete till he has received power of Holy Ghost thru "baptism of the Spirit." Chief sign baptism has occurred is ability to speak in tongues. (Nwk 6:25)

NOTE: A deeply interesting phenomenon. The age-old interplay between cold, mechanical, fossilized institutionalized "religion," and man's deep, blind, hidden striving for that which is real and living and spiritual. But so few seek and find the Divine Light—most of the great tide of self-searching is blindly expended in animal emotion and self-invented disciplines. Man wants "religion" and "experiences," but he does not want plain, simple submissive OBEDIENCE to God's commands. That cuts the flesh too deeply.

FOOD SCARE IN LAND OF PLENTY. For first time in memory: food shortage in country that has long fed much of world. Shortages may become so serious as to require rationing.

How did US, long a land of plenty, get into this predicament? A combination of factors, including freak weather & huge grain exports to Russia. As supplies dwindle, prices soar & seem certain to go even higher.

World food reserves are dangerously low: level of reserves far below any time in modern history. For first time, world is without either of 2 important safety valves: stocks of surplus grain, & large reserve of US cropland that could quickly be brought into production. A few years ago there was great optimism that the world's supply of food was increasing.

Till past year, Russians tried to make up for food shortages by belt tightening. This time they decided on importing, & they've had enormous impact on world supplies & prices. In year ended June 30, they imported far more food than any country in history—28 million tons, nearly ⅓ from US.

If US should ever have 2 or 3 poor crop years together, world would be in very precarious situation. (USN 7:16)

NOTE: The picture is closing in. The slow food production rise, and the accelerating world population rise, have been for many years racing toward a climax of worldwide famine. This is not mere theory. Much of the world even at present is pitifully underfed.

SLAUGHTER IN AFRICA. In terms of sheer brutality, few events in recent history can equal massacre that took place last yr. in central African republic of Burundi. At that time, members of Bahutu tribe, which makes up 85 pet. of the population, rose up against towering Watutsi overlords who have dominated them for centuries. The insurrection failed, & Watutsi govt. exacted frightful vengeance, slaughtering 250,000 men, women & children.

Last month, Watutsis resumed the pogrom with a ferocity that smacks of outright genocide. They've been roaming countryside, burning villages & murdering Bahutus wherever found. The savage repression is in one way even worse than last year's. Then the govt. appeared to be selective in its campaign of murder, killing only educated or influential Bahutus. This year, killing is indiscriminate. And once again the international community including the major powers, UN, & Organization of African States—appear helpless or indifferent to the tragedy. (Nwk 7:2)

NOTE: What solution is there to the terrible wickedness of man? What hope for a manmade Paradise—as the evangelists expect from their labours, or the Communists from theirs? Clearly none. The Bible verdict is confirmed: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked . . . It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." The only solution is the Divine solution: the righteous iron-rod reign of Christ, for which we fervently pray.

US ISOLATION OF CUBA IN TROUBLE. A keystone of US foreign policy showing signs of quickening erosion. Cuba's trade with rest of world, including US friends & allies, steadily growing. Diplomatic isolation melting: 68 nations recognize Cuba. In S. America, despite US pressure, sentiment rising to take Cuba back into fold. US increasingly alone on Cuba issue: more & more at odds with neighbours to south.

Kremlin grip on Cuba tightens. Russians officers in all units down to battalion level in Cuban army. Thru economic pressures, Russia has forced Castro into obedience. In '69, Russia began to re-equip Cuban armed forces with advanced weapons. Ever since, has been story of increased control over most important aspects of Cuban policy. Castro has allowed Cuba to become a Russian dependency.

Benefits to Russia: establishment of a useful showcase base for trade, propaganda & revolution throughout Latin America; construction of a nuclear sub base; & inclusion of a Latin-American country in Russian-dominated COMECON (Russia's "Common Market")—USN 6:18

NOTE: Two key points: US isolation and out-of-stepness—and Russia's increasing power and advantage and popularity. With brazen Russian dominance of so-close Cuba, the once proudly-defended "Monroe Doctrine" (no foreign influence and power in the American hemisphere) went down to ignominious defeat.

HOUSE OF BAAL. New York's Episcopal Cathedral of St. John was founded 100 yrs. ago; grew to be world's largest Gothic church. It sponsors a consortium of Catholic, Protestant & Jewish seminaries. It has played host this year to workshops in Sufism, ancient mystical offspring of Islam.

"The Cathedral is Christian," explains its Dean, "but there are other religious experiences we can make available, spiritual disciplines that at the moment are difficult to find in Christianity." (Tm 7:16)

NOTE The Scriptures lay great emphasis on the importance of pure TRUTH as declared by God, as against ERROR as formulated by the dark animal speculations of the natural ignorant mind of man—the "mind of the flesh." The churches of the world ignore this Divine principle, running greedily after the abominations of the heathen (like apostate Israel of old), and elevating pagan "religious experience" and "spiritual disciplines" to the confusion and exclusion of the One True Revealed Gospel of Salvation in the wholly inspired Word of God.

WARNING FROM ROME. One of important obstacles to ecumenical movement is dogma that Pope is infallible. Actually, doctrine only invoked once since established in 1870: when Pius XII declared in 1950 that Mary went bodily to heaven.

Last week, however, Vatican issued sharp warning that doctrine stands. Vatican singled out Hans Kung as principal challenger of infallibility. Kung has steadfastly refused to go to Rome for examination. When asked if new warning was a "turn of the screw," Vatican bluntly said, "Yes." (Tm 7:16)

* * *

To Vatican authorities, Hans Kung seems greatest threat to Catholic unity since Luther. For 5 yrs. they've been trying to find a quiet way to pin heresy charges on him. His efforts to reconcile Catholic & Protestant theology have made him increasingly critical of such concepts as Pope's infallibility.

Last week Vatican issued extraordinary declaration ordering world Catholics to reject Kung's teaching. The document was mainly a reaffirmation of uniqueness of Catholic Church within worldwide Christianity. It reaffirmed dogma that Catholic Church has "shared infallibility" from God.

Kung uses scriptural & historical arguments to reject infallibility, pointing out that Popes & Councils have erred in past. In a singularly unconvincing defence against Kung's charges of past Church error, Vatican says "concepts" in expressing dogmas may change, but "meaning" cannot. It did not explain how the faithful were to separate "meanings" of dogmas from the "concepts" by which they are taught.

Unless Kung subscribes to new Vatican declaration, he'll be summoned to Rome for "examination" by the Doctrinal Congregation—originally called "Holy Office of the Holy Inquisition" when it condemned Galileo (for saying earth rotates on its axis & revolves around sun), & when it burned Giordano Bruno at stake. It has changed its name, but not its methods. (Nwk. 7:16)

NOTE: The Papacy once again shows its ancient teeth, which once put fear into the hearts of "heretics" throughout the earth. But now they are just pitiful worn-down stumps. It is just 100 years since this blasphemous "infallibility" doctrine was promulgated, during the dying throes of the Papal temporal power. There is much about it in the Christadelphian magazines of the time. There was great objection to it from within the Catholic Church itself (as well as universal scorn and ridicule from the other State and Established Churches). In July, 1870, after 7 months bitter controversy in the Church, the Bishops voted about 450 to 90 to pronounce the Pope infallible. Two months

later (Sept.), the Italian army seized Rome from the Pope, and made it the capital of Italy, and the last vestiges of the Papal temporal power were extinguished, and the Pope retired a sulking self-made prisoner in the Vatican, where he stayed until he made a league with dictator Mussolini in 1929. (In 1867 the Papal army, supported by France, had defeated and captured Garibaldi, but in 1870 the French had to withdraw from Rome because of the disastrous Franco-Prussian war.)

STUPIDITY. In US, personal debt rose by a record \$84 billion in '72, compared with \$55 billion rise in '71. Heavy borrowing in first 4 months of '73 has boosted outstanding debt another \$35 billion to over \$750 billion. Debt has grown faster than incomes. Altogether, people paid a record \$182 billion on debt in '72, of which over \$50 billion was interest. (USN 6:18)

NOTE: The utter impossibility of human contentment and happiness: the drive of lust and greed and pride. Real income—what wages will actually buy—is very high in US; higher than ever before. The vast majority receive enough to live on current income in what in any other age would have been considered outrageous luxury. But still they must stupidly saddle themselves with \$750 billion in personal debt. Every year, over \$50 billion in usury flows from the pockets of scrabbling fools into the pockets of scheming knaves. Yet Solomon made the futility of this mad race so clear 3000 years ago for all with wisdom to see: "I tried it all—every luxury— every indulgence: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit."

MEDITERRANEAN DYING FROM POLLUTION. At present pace, whole Mediterranean will be dead of marine life in 25 years. It's much more fragile ecologically than most realize. If all pollution were stopped right now, would take 100 years before Med would be clean again. Off coast of Nice, bacterial pollution extended ¼-mile 20 years ago; now 20 miles.

Huge petrochemical-&-steel complex at Marseilles, & Montedison's chemical plant on north coast of Corsica, were located because Med offered a cheap way to dispose of wastes. The Sea was a handy garbage dump.

Fish are declining rapidly. Anchovies have practically disappeared. Sardines getting hard to find. In 10 years there won't be a single tuna in the Med because pollution along coast is killing off spawning grounds: 25 years ago, 1 egg in 100,000 hatched; today only 1 in 5 million.

Aswan Dam is death sentence for Egypt. In past, Nile floods every year left a layer of silt which fertilized soil. Now fly over Egypt & you see that band of arable land on both sides the river is contracting because silt is no longer distributed. Egyptians have electricity & TV, thanks to Dam, but they run risk of not enough to eat because of it.

Silt formerly flushed into Med provided fish food. Each year, 300,000 tons of sardines were harvested at mouth of Nile; now it's under 100,000 tons. Other sea foods, as famous Nile shrimps, have completely disappeared. Aswan Dam was ecological error of enormous proportions. (USN 6:11)

NOTE: His wickedness and violence and war destructions are bad enough, but even in his vaunted "progress" and "improvement," poor, blind, stumbling man is desecrating and desolating his once-beautiful God-given habitation. But we thank God that He has testified that He will soon bring this terrible folly to an end.

SOURING RELATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA. Growing chill in US-Australia relations threatening to turn into deep freeze. Disagreements aggravating into full-blown crisis that would weaken Australia-NZ-US mutual defence treaty. New Labour Govt. has established relations with N. Vietnam & N. Korea.

Distrust of US strong because of US role in Vietnam. Some elements of Labour Party demand ouster of US military bases. Australian Far East forces being cut back. Things have never been worse between Australia & US, & they're going downhill fast. (USN 6:11)

NOTE: Australia, in WW II, came very close to becoming a subjugated colony of a cruel and imperial Japan. Only the heroic and almost superhuman efforts of US (for its own ends, of course) turned the tide that was lapping at Australia's shores. Australia would have made a wonderful New World for 50 million crowded, land-hungry Japanese colonists. But memories are short, and when God's purpose requires it, He can easily send an evil spirit between evil Abimelech and the evil men of Shechem, to their mutual destruction. ..

IN EAST GERMANY, Iron Curtain as formidable as ever. Along its border is Europe's most menacing barrier: mine fields, automatic shrapnel throwers, watchtowers, searchlights, & multiple barricades of steel & cement, designed, not to keep foreigners out, but E. Germans in. (USN 7:2)

NOTE: Again and again in today's news we seem to be reading some records from the darkest ages of the past, but this is really the enlightened, modern, civilized 20th century. What a dreadful assembly of deadly barriers to keep the faithful from running away from the Communist Paradise!

RELIGION IN CHINA. China showing small but significant signs of reviving religion, officially downgraded since '49 Red takeover. (Nwk 5:28)

NOTE: Interesting. Catholicism once had a fairly strong foothold in China. The move has the smell of politics. "Religion," when state-controlled, is a useful "opium of the people."

MODERN SODOM & GOMORRAH. "Is homosexuality sin?" Christian Education staff of United Presbyterian Church says a resounding No. It dismisses Old Testament texts against homosexuality as part of Levitical "Holiness Code" that kept Hebrews different from their idolatrous neighbours. As for St. Paul's strictures, it notes that he believed ALL mankind was sinful. It proposes Presbyterian Church ordain homosexual ministers & bless "permanent & faithful" homosexual unions. (Tm6:25)

NOTE: What an incredible development in what was till recently an (outwardly, at least) bastion of decency and morality—the Presbyterian Church! Clearly the lessons of Canaan and Sodom mean nothing to them— doubtless brushed off as stuffy, out-dated, moralizing myths. And what foolish arguments!—Paul says all mankind is sinful (which is true), so therefore (presumably) no sin is to be considered sin, or condemned, or put away. Or perhaps they mean that Paul was just an ignorant and pessimistic misanthrope, unworthy of the attention of this all-wise generation of Sodomites. What perversion! What blasphemy! What terrible retribution must lie in store for these institutions who profess to speak in the Name of God, for God is not so mocked with impunity.

GENTLE, MODERN, CIVILIZED MAN. Atrocity stories flow into the London headquarters of Amnesty International from all over world: political prisoners beaten, shocked, drugged or maimed for crime of criticizing govt. Rulers of past often openly institutionalized torture to better defend their power & privilege. Today they solemnly deny it publicly while they're busy refining the technology of torture.

Political torture spreading. Russia's habit of putting dissenters into mental institutions being copied in Argentina. Behaviour-altering techniques—like torturing a prisoner while showing him slides of his family—are showing up in Brazil. In Greece, favourite technique is beating soles of feet into pulp with sticks. (Tm 7:9)

NOTE: Mankind pretends to be civilized, and to look back with pious horror on the atrocities of the past, but he is no whit better than the most vicious of the ancient barbarians. Surely there has been no age like this age for "man's inhumanity to man." Could earlier, less hardened, less sophisticated ages have dropped the atom bomb—condemning 100s of 1000s to mutilation, and a long, lingering period of hopeless dying and a host of other horrible results?

September Answers

WHO WAS . . .

1. Tanner—Simon
2. Ethiopian—Ebedmelech
3. Cupbearer—Nehemiah
4. Areopagite—Dionysius
5. Silversmith—Demetrius
6. Coppersmith—Alexander
7. King of Moab—Eglon
8. Priest of On—Potipherah
9. King of Gath—Achish
10. Mighty hunter—Nimrod
11. Priest of Baal—Mattan
12. Jehu's captain—Bidkar
13. Prince of Rosh—Gog
14. Deputy of Achaia—Gallio
15. Deputy of Cyprus—Sergius Paulus
16. Master of Israel—Nicodemus
17. Prince of Midian—Oreb
18. King of Zidonians—Ethbaal
19. Abraham's servant—Eliezer
20. Governor of Syria—Cyrenius
21. Tetrarch of Iturea—Philip
22. Ruler of synagogue—Jairus
23. Tetrarch of Galilee—Herod
24. Chief man of Melita—Publius
25. Tetrarch of Abilene—Lysanias
26. Queen of Ethiopians—Candace
27. Captain Saul's host—Abner
28. Herod's chamberlain—Blastus
29. Captain Jabin's host—Sisera
30. Chancellor—Rehum
31. Hezekiah's treasurer—Shebna
32. Captain David's host—Joab
33. Honourable counsellor—Joseph
34. Chief cpt. (Roman)—Claudius Lysias
35. King of Damascus (NT)—Aretas
36. Captain of host of Syria—Naaman
37. High Priest's servant—Malchus
38. Governor Ahab's house—Obadiah
39. Governor beyond River—Tatnai
40. Chamberlain of Corinth—Erastus
41. Ahasuerus chamberlain—Hege
42. Governor of Judea (NT)—Pilate
43. Captain Solomon's host—Benaiah
44. Captain Absalom's host—Amasa
45. Chief of Saul's herdmen—Doeg
46. Centurion Augustus band—Julius
47. Centurion Italian band—Cornelius
48. Captain guard (Egypt)—Potipher
49. Cpt. guard (Babylon)—Nebuzaradan
50. Cpt. host (Philistine)—Phichol

The Berean is covered financially through the December issue.

Going to Law Against Another

The following quotations contain the only statements on the matter of suing another at law for divorce that anyone has (to our knowledge) ever produced from the pen of either bro. Thomas or bro. Roberts. These statements, which are by bro. Roberts, were written—it will be noticed—in the last year of his life.

The suggestion that some have put forth that he was "sick" at the time (with a reflection on his mental alertness and spiritual discernment) are too unworthy to be noticed. He was strenuously engaged in lecturing, he was just completing the LAW OF MOSES, and his several writings of this very time in the magazine (including the article quoted from) clearly refute any such charge against his judgment.

These statements were written just after the matter had had to be gone into in a practical and heart-rending way. Bro. Roberts was faced with, and dealing with, actual facts. He leaves no doubt as to the firmness of HIS viewpoint regarding the scriptural principles bearing on the case.

Christadelphian, August, 1898, p. 363 (Melbourne Intelligence):

"We regret that we have had occasion to withdraw from bro. Middleton, on account of his maintaining the principle that he was justified in petitioning before a Gentile court of law for divorce from his wife . . . Bro. & sis. Roberts sailed for New Zealand on May 25th."

It will be noted from the above that bro. Roberts was in Melbourne at the time. He was living there and was a member of the ecclesia. The circumstances could not possibly be more convincing or conclusive. The following month bro. Roberts himself wrote—

Christadelphian, September, 1898, p. 377:

"We returned to Melbourne on Fri., May 6. The Melbourne meetings are well maintained. Some pain has been caused by the shocking misbehaviour of one brother and the HIGHLY UNSCRIPTURAL action of another in connection with it, in SEEKING REDRESS IN THE DIVORCE COURT. The incident had discouraged the brethren somewhat. They have not, however, the CAUSE FOR SHAME that they would have if they tolerated or countenanced such INFRACTIONS OF THE DIVINE LAW. When brethren confess their SINS and forsake them, they are entitled to forgiveness; but when they DEFEND and vindicate them, they STAND IN THE WAY OF THEIR OWN MERCY."

Please carefully note from the above Melbourne ecclesial news that what bro. Roberts so strongly condemned was "maintaining the principle that he was justified in petitioning before a Gentile court of law for divorce from his wife." Some try to confuse and weaken this evidence by suggesting that the offense condemned was not simply divorce but the seeking of some material compensation. In the light of the clear facts above, this suggestion is ruled out. We stand firmly with bro. Roberts in this question, and believe him to be far sounder and more qualified than his modern rejecters.

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