

# 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

WINNIPEG, Manitoba—3449 Assiniboine Grove, R3K 0H5—Bro. Joseph Jackson.

LOVING GREETINGS to the Household of Faith.

Our opposition to Papal and Protestant systems has been strong and vigorous over the years, and we must not now lower any of our barriers. We find great comfort and edification in the works of brethren who have come out of the papal-pagan system, and recommend a thorough study of their works.

An article (not Berean) published about 4 years ago (just recently come into our possession) causes concern. We notice reference to the Papacy, and the statement that it is a—

*"Church which does worship God, if only after a fashion."*

And again later in the article, in application of Daniel's words of a persecutor "speaking great words against the Most High," the assertion is made that the words applied to the Papacy by other writers—

*". . . is hardly self-evident, inasmuch as the Catholic Church is Christian, after a fashion."*

These statements do not have the same clear ring as those of the Apostle Paul on Mars Hill. "A Church which worships God"—the PAPACY!? We might ask, Which god?—for it has 3 of them, plus a goddess, plus a multitude of lesser gods and goddesses ("saints") which are but carry-overs from the mythologies of past ages. Articles like this are questionable, and we should keep in mind at all times the warning given to Israel of old when they were told "not to remove the ancient landmarks."

The world's ecumenical movement is a deceitful movement, and we must not to any degree be caught up in the return of others toward Rome. The statement of the front of this magazine should be read and re-read. Thanksgiving should rise to Yahweh in daily prayer for our deliverance from the present-day juggernaut system of ancient Mars Hill.

Some feel that we, as Bereans, wholeheartedly reject all recent books— that we have elevated bre. Thomas and Roberts to a point of near infallibility. Such is not the case, and these 2 brethren would assuredly object to such a condition developing. What we strongly disapprove of are flimsy, gray, enigmatical articles which condemn, and distract from, the Holy Word itself, and from the sound writings of brethren (alive or dead).

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We enjoyed a busy summer, and our visitors include: bro. & sis. A. Jones, bro. & sis. E. Truelove, bro. Gordon Jones, sisters Wanda Frazer, Annetta, Phyllis and Shirley Jones (Richard, Sask.); bro. Alton Stuchlik (Houston, Tx.); bro. & sis. D. Gwalchmai (London, Ont.); and sis. Doris Blacker (Lethbridge).

In addition to these, the following S.S. scholars visited us: Cathie & Mark Gwalchmai, Lori, Linda, Lisa, Stanley and Barbara Askew(London); & Debbie Truelove (Richard). These, we pray, will eventually join hands with us, that we may assist each other on the road that leads to Eternal Life, for our Sunday School members are but potential members of the Ecclesia.

Taking advantage of the Labour Day weekend, several young people joined us in a general get-together. Saturday afternoon we considered the subject, "Women of the Bible—Examples of Faith and Failure." In the evening bro. Truelove spoke on, "The Bride of Christ." Sunday's exhortation on "The Bridegroom" was delivered by bro. Jones. We hope to eventually share these addresses with you through the pages of the Berean.

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### DEATH OF BRO. LESLIE FISHER OF WHANGAREI

As we go to press, we have just received the sad news that our brother Fisher died unexpectedly during the night of November 18, though he had apparently been in good health. Further information will be in the Whangarei ecclesial news in the February issue, if the Lord will. We extend our deep sympathy and love to the brethren and sisters in Whangarei who are greatly saddened by the sudden loss. There is a letter from bro. Fisher in this issue, beginning on the inside back cover.

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## The Wonderful Works of God

*"O give thanks unto the Lord! Call upon His Name! Make known His deeds among the people. Sing unto Him: sing psalms unto Him! Talk ye of all His wondrous works!"—Psalm 105:1-2*

### EZEKIEL 22 LUKE 19

THE readings this morning have brought before us two of the greatest men that appeared in the nation of Israel—Ezekiel and Jesus. And they are the only men given the title, "Son of man"—except once to Daniel.

The prophet Ezekiel is first brought to our notice near the city of Babylon in the year 592 BC. He had been taken to Babylon 5 years previously, when Nebuchadnezzar carried away Jehoiachin and set up Zedekiah in his place. Daniel, taken to Babylon a little earlier, in the reign of Jehoiakim, is already well-known, and Jeremiah is prophesying before Zedekiah in Jerusalem.

From Ezek. 1:1, it would appear that he began his ministry at the age of 30, as did John the Baptist, and also the greater "Son of Man," whom Ezekiel typifies. Thirty was the age set by the Law to begin the Tabernacle service.

It would be interesting and instructive to follow him through his ministry, but this morning let us consider some of the things concerning the greater Son of Man. We have been listening to his voice this morning—a privilege and blessing for which we ought to be devoutly thankful. Let us always remember with awe, as we read or hear the Scriptures, that this Book is a direct message from the great Creator of the universe—the most marvellous, wonderful thing in the world today.

If we value Jesus as he deserves to be valued, if we realize the greatness of his mission of Life, we shall ever listen to him eagerly, and be profoundly thankful and attentive. These words can transform us into creatures of spiritual beauty, true offspring of God, if we will let them dwell in us richly.

When the Memorial was instituted, the Lord Jesus was present to speak living words of instruction and comfort. This was a glorious privilege that the apostles enjoyed, a privilege that we are unable to experience. Jesus is not here, nor has he appointed anyone in his place. But in God's great mercy, we do have his very words, and we can read them as we did this morning.

Our privilege in this respect is greater than it may seem. There are thousands who have his words—but how few understand them!

Although he is not here for us to look upon, and to hear his voice as the apostles heard it, yet what we do this morning is done by his authority. It comes to us through the apostle Paul, who, in writing to the Corinthians said (1 Cor. 11:23-24) —

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread:

"And when he had given thanks, he brake it and said, Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. "

Now Paul "praised" the Corinthian brethren that they kept the ordinances he had delivered unto them. Do you not think he would do the same to us if he were alive? If Paul would be pleased, who transmitted the command, then surely Christ also would also be pleased, who gave the command to thus remember him. But what if we for any reason fail to so remember him?

Therefore, no matter how frail we may be, we can at least enjoy the supreme satisfaction and happiness, as we meet each first day of the week in the darkness and silence of his absence, that what we do is well-pleasing to him, as we bring him into remembrance in the manner of his own appointment.

He is not here to speak to us, but through the power of the Holy Spirit the words that he did speak have been faithfully recorded, and preserved safely down to our time. Therefore we can read them both in our homes and when we are together, as we are this morning. Do we fully appreciate the value of this privilege? What would life be without the light and comfort of the Word?

His gracious words are full of instruction and encouragement. Just listen to Paul's advice in reference to them (Col. 3:16) —

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

What beautiful expressions! If we restricted our 'admonishing' of one another to the spirit and sentiments of psalms and hymns, how much sweeter would our converse be, and how much more effective in mutual brotherly love! Let us take Paul's Spirit-inspired advice, and look at one of the psalms (105:1-7)—

"O give thanks unto the Lord! Call upon His Name. Make known His deeds among the people. Sing unto Him: sing psalms unto Him! Talk ye of all His wondrous works.

"Glory ye in His holy Name! *Let the heart of them REJOICE that seek the Lord!* Seek the Lord and HIS strength: seek His face evermore.

"Remember His marvellous works that He hath done; His wonders & the judgments of His mouth; O ye seed of Abraham His servant, ye children of Jacob His chosen. He is the Lord our God. His judgments are in all the earth."

How could anyone be unhappy or discontented who truly lived in this radiant spiritual atmosphere, whatever their brief present circumstances! In these first 7 vs. we have an exhortation to rise to the glory of our calling, and ceaselessly praise God; and in the remainder of the psalm we have a brief history of the people of Israel from the calling of Abraham to the entering of the land. This shows how God cared for His people, and why they should praise Him in constant joyfulness.

But one might say, Those words were addressed to the people of Israel. That is true—but do they not apply to US? Have we not, through the belief and obedience of the Gospel, become the seed of Abraham, as it is written in Gal. 3:27-29—

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

So then this psalm does apply to us, and does appeal to us to lift up our hearts and voices in joyful praise. And what a wonderful exhortation, and what beautiful ideas are expressed in these few verses!—

"O GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD!"

Do we not do this? Yes, we do. Our hymns are songs of thanksgiving, and our prayers are always first in expression of our thanks as we gather together each first day of the week. In fact, our entire life, IF we truly seek after righteousness, is — and must be— a life of thanksgiving to God for His great goodness to us.

"MAKE KNOWN HIS DEEDS AMONG THE PEOPLE"

There are many ways in which we do, and must do, this. The work in our Sunday Schools is highly important, as also are our public lectures. But due to the growing apathy of people in general to divine things, it is difficult to get people to attend.

Our Fraternal Gatherings are also important. While they are, in the first place designed for the benefit of believers, there are many who attend who are not yet such. But in these difficult days, personal contact seems to stand at the top—and a personal manifestation, in all our dealings with all with whom we come in contact, that we "have been with Jesus."

"SING UNTO HIM, SING PSALMS UNTO HIM"

This is not only the appeal of the Psalmist of old, but was superbly expressed by Paul in the words quoted—

"Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing *with grace in your hearts* to the Lord."

We do this each time we gather here, and we also do it in our homes. But the flesh is weak and forgetful, and thoughtless habit grows on us. Let us always be sure that there IS "grace in our hearts" whenever we sing praise to God—that our minds are on the words and thoughts, and our hearts are in tune, and not concerned with the faults of others, or the quality of their singing. To sing with any spirit but grace is gross disrespect for God.

"TALK YE OF ALL HIS WONDROUS WORKS"

This is what we have gathered to do and to set our minds upon this morning. To talk and think about God and His works is to cleanse and purify the mind, to enlarge it, to raise it up from petty to eternal things, to warm and vivify

and stimulate it. What a difference between the ordinary natural mind and the mind that has been fed and nourished upon wholesome, spiritual things! Here is the essence and the process that must gradually transform us—

"Thou shalt teach them—*these words and commands and works of God*—diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deut. 6:7).

These are the solemn, parting words of Moses to Israel, as he addressed them for the last time, on the plains of Moab. Here is the single-minded dedication that God requires. Is it a burden—this constant application of the mind to the things of God? It should not be. It must not be. Rather it must be our delight. All are interested in something. A life without interest is a dread and dismal life. What greater interest than real, eternal, meaningful things—the perfecting of the divine character, and the marvellous unfolding and progress of the divine purpose, through all those fascinating and instructive scenes from the Garden of Eden to the faithful John of Patmos—and on into the endless future with the glorious visions he beheld. A burden? That is what fleshly, childish, wilful Israel said.

*"Teach them DILIGENTLY unto thy children."*

For those of us who are parents, this is our supreme test—for, said Jesus—

“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”

Let us therefore ask ourselves, What does the abundance of MY heart consist of? Can we say like the Psalmist—

"O how love I Thy Law! It is my meditation *all the day*.

"How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Psa. 119:97 &: 103).

If we love God's law—which is reflected in the law of Christ — the effect upon us will be as expressed in the same Psalm, v. 165:

"Great peace have they who love Thy law: & nothing shall offend them."

What a glorious assurance and guarantee! In this dark age of fret and sorrow and trouble, can we really conceive of this wonderful condition of mind?—insulated by the love of God from all worry and concern. It can be ours—if we truly desire it and seek it instead of the things of this life.

"GLORY YE IN HIS HOLY NAME"

This goes right to the point, and forces us soberly and thoughtfully to ask ourselves, In what DO we glory? Mankind glories in many things: beauty, strength, riches, honour, & its various forms of accomplishment and "wisdom." But none of these things are pleasing to our heavenly Father, for He says (Jer. 9:23-24)—

"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches.

"But let him that glorieth glory in this—that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth:

"For in THESE things I delight, saith the Lord."

Where can we find those who glory in His Name? Are they not among the seed of Abraham the faithful, who left all to follow God wherever He should lead him? If so, the question that comes before us is, Are we pleasing God in this respect? The seed of Abraham are a very special group, and they think and act and live in a very special way.

"LET THE HEART OF THEM REJOICE THAT SEEK THE LORD"

Paul, by the Spirit, gives us the following commands, which are the formula for the Spirit-guaranteed 'peace of God' –

"Rejoice evermore; and pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:16-17)

"Rejoice in the Lord: and again I say, REJOICE!" (Phil. 4:4)

What is the BASIS of our rejoicing? To rejoice without a good and dependable reason is just self-delusion. This is not something to be forced, but to be realized and comprehended in the heart. Is not our basis the knowledge of the glorious God, and the appreciation and thankfulness for the saving Truth which we have received, and the assured hope of the coming of the Lord Jesus; the hope of the resurrection; the hope of salvation?

If there is one people upon this earth who have a sound reason to rejoice, an insuppressible necessity to rejoice, surely it is we. This is manifested in the words of Psa. 89:15-16, and is reflected in our Anthem 29, which we are to sing this morning—

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance.  
"In Thy Name shall they REJOICE ALL THE DAY, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

"SEEK HIS FACE EVERMORE"

What are God's wishes in this respect? In His appearance to Solomon, He said (2 Chron 7:14)—

"If My people which are called by My Name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways;  
"Then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin."

The wonderful assurance is given in Psa. 34:10—

"They that seek the Lord shall not want any GOOD thing."

This is equivalent to the divine promise of Rom 8:28—

"All things work together for GOOD to them that love God."

Whatever happens to them is for good, and whatever is good they will eventually receive. Perhaps the most beautiful exhortation on this theme is found in Isa. 55:6-7—

"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call ye upon Him while He is near:  
"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

Truly He is a God of love, and of infinite compassion—to those who humbly submit themselves to Him in all things.

The final appeal in Psa. 105 is—

"REMEMBER HIS MARVELOUS WORKS THAT HE HATH DONE"

The Psalmist makes this appeal, and then enumerates many of God's marvellous works in connection with Israel. This exhortation to continually let the mind dwell upon the works of God is ever before us in the Scriptures. God has said—

*"REMEMBER, My people, WHAT I HAVE DONE!"*

Four times in Psa. 107 we have these words—

"O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men."

The works He has done are certainly wonderful. The reading of Psa. 105 alone is sufficient to open our eyes in astonishment, for who can do such colossal works, such marvels of power and wisdom? Surely, none but God. These contemplations are the divinely prescribed food for the mind, that it may be cleansed and purified, and that it may grow up to spiritual maturity, and not stay on the ordinary childish and fleshly level of the world.

In our recent readings from Luke, we have had brought before us some of the miracles of Jesus. But even these were the works of his Father, for in John 14:10 he said—

"The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works."

Jesus was unique, both as to the perfect completeness of his yielding and submission to the will of God, and as to the perfect fulness of God's manifestation in him. But all good is of God. The apostle Paul reveals the marvellous truth that—

"It is God that worketh in you, both to will & to do of His good pleasure."

He couples this directly with the balancing exhortation—

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

These are deep and wonderful things, incomprehensible to the natural mind, as Paul tells the Corinthians brethren.

In the feeding of the 5000, we have a work which alone should convince anyone that Jesus was the Son of God; but many, just because they cannot understand how it was done, do not receive the record as truth. But do they understand the ordinary and usual works of God, as how the rich and abundant head of grain springs at the proper time from the tiny and long dormant seed?

Concerning this, bro. Roberts very fittingly observes—

*"God has established the natural production of fish, and the materials of which bread is made; and if we consider these carefully, we surely must admit that they are miracles which we cannot comprehend.*

*"If we realize this, then why should it seem incredible if He hurry the process at any time? When we consider the planet on which we live, the sun, moon, and all the stars, how He has suspended them in space, and each follows its own orbit in perfect order—surely we will say that the feeding of 5000 people is a small matter for our God to perform."*

\* \* \*

In Luke 9 we have one of the greatest and most significant events in the life of Christ. Indeed, the transfiguration is one of the "wonderful works of God." If there had been any doubt in the minds of the 3 apostles who accompanied him on that day, this would show them more conclusively than anything could, that Jesus was the Christ, the Anointed, the long-promised Messiah to whom all the prophets had given witness. How powerfully the apostles' minds were affected is shown by the words of Peter in his second epistle many years later (1:16-17)—

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were *EYEWITNESSES OF HIS MAJESTY*.

"For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased . . .

"And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount."

When writing this, Peter would recall how he was overcome by the dazzling sight, and saw Moses and Elijah with Jesus, and how he said (though he was "sore afraid")—

"Master, it is GOOD for us to be here!"

Though afraid, as all humble and sincere people would be under such glorious and awe-inspiring circumstances, still Peter's heart and love was there, with his Master in his glory.

Well, brethren and sisters, is it not good for us to be here this morning, praising the Lord for His goodness, and His wonderful works to the children of men? We too are in awe-inspiring circumstances, for we have drawn nigh unto the presence of God. Let us ever bear that in mind in all our meetings and services.

We have been baptized INTO CHRIST (what a close and intimate relationship to such a glorious personage), and are therefore Abraham's seed, and heirs according to those precious promises God made to him. Let us, therefore, give attention to Paul's words—

"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in NEWNESS OF LIFE."

If we, in this brief day of testing and preparation, have the wisdom to follow Paul's sound advice, and do walk in that new way of living that is essential to salvation, then we can look forward in joyful and peaceful hope to be among those of whom David speaks in Psa. 24. First he asks the question—

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who shall stand in His holy place?"

Then he gives the searching but comforting answer—

"He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.  
"He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."

Let us therefore constantly examine our hands and our hearts—our deeds and our thoughts—by the pure Spirit-Word. Truly the standard IS high, but with God's help it is not impossible, for says Paul in 1 Cor. 10:13—

*"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."*

Having therefore this comforting assurance, beloved brethren, let us joyfully serve Him unto the end, with reverence and godly fear, ever fortifying and cleansing our minds with contemplation of the Wonderful Works of God.  
—G.A.G.

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## The Post-Millennial Revolt

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

*"And I saw an angel descending from the heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain upon his hand. And he laid hold of the Dragon, the old serpent, who is Devil and Satan, and he bound him a 1000 years, & cast him into the abyss, and shut him up, and set a mark over him, that he might deceive the nations no more, until the 1000 years had been finished: and after these it is necessary that he be loosed a short time . . .*

*"And when the 1000 years shall have been finished, the Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and he shall go forth to deceive the nations which are in the 4 quarters of the earth, the Gog and the Magog, to gather them together for war, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.*

*"And they ascended over the breadth of the earth, and encompassed the camp of the saints, and the city which had been beloved: and fire from the Deity descended out of the heaven, and devoured them.*

*"And the Devil who deceived them had been cast into the lake of fire & brimstone, where the Beast and the False Prophet, also, shall be tormented day and night unto the aeons of the aeons"—Rev. 20:1-3, 7-10.*

THE angel descending from the heaven with the key and chain is the same angel that descends, and illuminates the earth with his glory (18:1). In this place, he is said to have 'great power' which he exerts in causing Babylon to fall; and after this in laying hold of the 4th Beast of Daniel in his Dragon, Beast and False Prophet manifestation. The last 2 of these he destroys, so that similar political organizations never again appear upon the earth; while the Dragon (in consequence of flesh and blood nature being still the constitution of the subject nations) is only shut up and bound, waiting its opportunity to reassert its independence of the divine government of the Saints.

The Blessed and Only Potentate upon the white horse, with the hosts of heaven—marching at the head of his army from his capital against the kings of the earth and their forces—is the apocalyptic angel descending with key and chain to arrest, imprison, and destroy, the powers of the world.

He descends "out of the heaven" in which he opened the door when he set up the throne in Jerusalem. When potentates leave their capitals on warlike expeditions, they are said to "descend upon" the countries they invade. So with this angel: he descends from the heaven of his habitation and government upon the territories of "the Devil and Satan" to convert them into a lake of fire burning with the brimstone of torment and destruction, inflicted by his terrible and invincible hosts.

\* \* \*

*"Having the Key of the Abyss, and a Great Chain upon his hand."*

The Greek word "abyssos" is rendered in the English Version by the fancy phrase "bottomless pit." The Septuagint renders the Hebrew word "tzulah" (deep) by "abyssos" (abyss) in Isa. 44:27—the Great Sea, or aggregate of nations acknowledging the sovereignty of Babylon. For like reasons, "abyss" in the prophecy before us is representative of the aggregate of the nations occupying the Dragon-section of the inhabited earth..

A "key" is representative of power to open and shut. To have the key of the abyss is to possess the power of developing political organizations, after the example of the first Napoleonic Empire—and of suppressing them, as in the same instance. In 1815, this empire was laid hold of, and cast into the abyss, and shut up there and bound there for 37 years; but when those years were finished, it was loosed for a short time under Napoleon III. That this was

accomplished by mere human agents will illustrate what is meant by the descending angel laying hold of the Dragon-Power and keying him up, and chaining him in the abyss. The Allied Powers of Europe held the key and chain in the case of the first Napoleon; but in the case of the Dragon, the Saints to whom "judgment is given" will be the holders of the key and chain, and will do with him, and place him in the same abyss—but for a longer time, and with more terrible manifestations, than did the Allies the dominion of the Corsican.

This mere human power is to remain in the national abyss without dominion: Sin's flesh is to be turned out of office, and to exist only in subjection to Spirit as manifested in Jesus and his brethren—all the glorified sons of the Deity ruling the habitable in righteousness for a thousand years.

To keep Sin's flesh—so long accustomed to rule and revel in its own lusts and superstitions—in subjection will require a government strong as iron. The necessity is provided for, for it is written:

"He shall rule the nations with an iron rod" (Rev. 19:15)

—so that no deceivers will be permitted to ply mankind with their sorceries, causing them to err from the way of truth and righteousness. The clerical sorceries of the Great Harlot and her Daughters will be destroyed with the False Prophet by the judgments of the fiery lake. This signal destruction of all existing ecclesiastical establishments will effectually alienate the nations from their professional prophets who now deceive and bewitch them with sorceries and lies in the Name of the Lord so that (Zech. 13:3-4)

"When any (parson, priest or rabbi) shall yet prophesy, then his father and mother that begat him shall say unto him,

"Thou shalt not live, for thou speakest lies in the Name of Yahweh.

"And his father and mother that begat him shall thrust him through.

"And it shall come to pass in that day that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision when he hath prophesied (or preached); neither shall they wear a rough garment (clerical vestments) to deceive."

The time for all this hypocrisy and grimace will have passed, for "no one buyeth their merchandise any more!" At present their sorcery and lies are in considerable repute, and to be a "prophet" or clergyman is to be regarded by the deceived & strongly-deluded populations of 'Christendom' as a highly respectable profession.

But when Daniel's 4th Beast shall have been slain and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame, and the other 3 beasts have their dominion taken away, then the Descending Angel will have bound the Dragon, the vocation of the false prophets will be abolished. There will be no hypocrites to keep the people in ignorance for the support of the church and state and to subserve the interests of political adventurers & political factions. All this soul and truth-destroying machinery will have been broken up, & the nations shall be deceived by it no more for a 1000 years.

But after the 1000 years are passed, the restraint—represented by the great chain in the Angel's hand—will be relaxed. A generation of flesh and blood will then be living whose men & women will have been born in times of peace and great prosperity. They will know nothing personally and practically of war, for (to use an expression of Homer) Mars will have been bound with a strong chain for 1000 years.

It is very different with us. The governments are wasting their revenues on standing armies: but then the government of the world will not have a single soldier in its pay! Its subjects will remember the binding or suppression of the Dragon-power 1000 years before, as our generation remembers the overthrow of Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea. But this remembrance will have as little moral influence upon them as Pharaoh's overthrow has on the Pope and the kings of the earth in our time.

Some ambitious men, who would "rather reign in hell than serve in heaven," will think the season favourable to the recovery of the lost independence of Sin's Flesh, or the Devil. They will conspire against the best government the sun ever shone upon, for they are styled "the Satan," which signifies "adversary." They commence to agitate and plot in the national abyss; &: at length their secret society—emboldened by numbers constantly increasing—proceeds more openly to preach revolt.

Multitudes will be deceived with false hopes of glory, honour & power in the proposed new dominion of the Devil & Satan. Sin's Flesh under the rule of the Saints is ineligible for office. Under their iron rod and chain, men and women are only permitted to serve. This is a yoke too galling for the pride of human nature, & hence there is a determination to destroy the existing government—not doubting the enterprise might easily succeed.

Their emissaries go forth among the nations of the old Dragon territory which—before the Dragon was bound, & in the time of his binding—was occupied by "Gog of the land of Magog, Rosh prince of Mesech & Tubal," & therefore styled 'the Gog & the Magog.'

These agents of insurrection will be marvellously successful in deceiving the Gog and Magog nations. They call them to arms, and in response they forsake the plow, seize their weapons, and gather together for war. The rebellion is widespread, and the insurgents numerous as the sand of the sea. Their numbers make them bold and confident. Their commander-in-chief and his council of war, whoever they may be, do not wait to be attacked but assume the offensive, and order the invasion of the Holy Land, which is the Camp of the Saints.

Their aim is to possess themselves of Jerusalem, the city that had been beloved, but now hated. To capture the "joy of the whole earth" and to dethrone the government, and to destroy or imprison the Saints in the abyss—as they had served the Dragon-Power a 1000 years before—would be the crowning success of the rebellion.

But the reasoning of the carnal mind deceives them. They forget or choose to disbelieve that Jerusalem is Yahweh's furnace, and that He is unto her a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of her (Zech. 2:5). They approach the place of devouring fire with reckless infatuation.

The King of kings, who could have crushed the rebels as the moth in their own lands, permits them—as a trial of faith & loyalty—to have great success to a certain point. They are in sight of the Holy City, & as confident and defiant as Sennacherib of old; or as Gog when the city was wrested from him 1000 years before.

But, like the Beast and False Prophet then, the ground they occupy becomes the arena of a fiery destruction; and—although the locality and time of their judgment are not the same—yet in coming to their end similarly, the postmillennial Devil and Satan combination of nations is said to be "cast into the lake of fire & brimstone" by fiery judgment descending from the Deity out of heaven, and devouring them.

This is the epoch of the consummation of the mission of the Son of the Deity. In 1 Cor. 15:24 Paul styles it—

"The end, when Christ shall have delivered up the Kingdom to the Deity, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power.

"For he must reign until He (the Father) hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death. For He hath put all things under his feet (Psa. 8:6).

"But when He (the Father) saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest He (the Father) is excepted Who did put all things under him.

"And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him (the Father) that put all things under him, that the Deity may be the all things in all."

The mission of the Lord Jesus Christ was to "destroy that having the power of death, which is the devil"—or Sin's Flesh. In other words, to "take away the Sin of the world, and "destroy the works of the devil," or of Sin—Heb. 2:14; John 1:29; 1 John 3:8. In consummating this, "the Woman's Seed bruises the Serpent's head."

The 'short time' at the end of the 1000 years is the epoch when the work is finished. It hath been divinely purposed that the earth shall be inhabited by flesh and blood for 7000, but beyond that period its presence will not be tolerated. The post-millennial rebellion against the benign government of the Saints is the consummation of its iniquity, and the crisis of its fate.

Symbolically speaking, the Devil is devoured by the fire of the Deity in the lake of fire and brimstone into which he is cast.

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## **When the 1000 Years Are Expired**

*"When the 1000 years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog & Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them" —Rev. 20:7-9*

**BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS**

IT SEEMS strange at first sight that a divine reign of 1000 years' duration should end in this manner. Fancy would suggest that the power and purity and beneficence of the government of Christ and his brethren would have so affected mankind everywhere for good that it would be morally impossible for rebellion to be conceived, still more that it should enlist the sympathy and support of nations and multitudes.

That such a result should be foretold is one of a 1000 evidences of the divine character of the Scriptures. Imagination would have drawn a very different picture. We should have had human nature—basking in the sunshine of divine government—represented as rising in the majesty of an unsullied and ever-soaring progress, towards the perfection of which the germ is supposed by every human philosophy to exist in every human breast, and which only requires the necessary conditions to ripen into a gorgeous flower.

Instead of that, we have the whole world in arms against a government that will have blessed them with a 1000 years of justice, righteousness, beneficence, plenty, and peace. How is it to be explained? The explanation is furnished in the opening sentence of the verses above—

“Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.”

You recollect who Satan is—not the fiction of a Romanized & Paganized theology—not the immortal devil of pulpit discourse, who has no existence, except in the light literature & lighter talk of the people. Satan (a Hebrew word signifying 'adversary') is the name applied to the Dragon, and the Dragon we have indisputably identified as the heraldic symbol of human hostility to God, officially incorporate in the kings and governments in which that hostility is headed up.

The seizing and binding of this Dragon is the subjugation and suppression of the governments that oppose Christ at his coming, and the establishment of an iron rule throughout the earth, which effectually prevents their resuscitation.

What can the unloosing be but the removal of those repressions and restraints which keep rebellion down for 1000 years? It is a matter of no importance to know the particular way in which these restraints will be removed. A suspension of acts of rigor on the part of the saints in their several stations throughout the world, such as letting disobedience go unpunished and unnoticed, & allowing assemblies for political discussion, would be enough to give the native wilfulness of human nature scope for revival, especially if, as is possible, the saints were everywhere withdrawn to the imperial centre at Jerusalem.

The men of that generation will know nothing experimentally of the evils of human government. They will have known nothing but the order and prosperity and peace of the rule of the saints, accustomed to which, they will probably lose all perception of the connection between that rule and the blessedness of the age. They will suppose the blessedness a matter of course—a something that would be enjoyed under any government strong enough to take the reins of power.

They may get tired of these reins being in the hands of one class all the time. They will know that a 1000 years' previously, self-government was a power—exercised by mankind in various forms—all the world over. They may begin to question the right of any power to set this "natural birthright" aside.

Human longevity will be common in those days, and therefore the immortality of the rulers will be a matter of faith with the subject populations. Doubt may at last come to be cast upon it. There will be much specious sophistry employed, we may be sure, before the nations surrender themselves to the leadership of Satan let loose. Stirring orations, self-important conferences of delegates, the circulation of eloquent documents, will doubtless enter largely into the machinery of seduction.

At last the poison takes effect. The people lend themselves to the demagogues. They listen to the flattering doctrines to which they have been unaccustomed for centuries. They subscribe to the movement. They enrol themselves in the battalions: secret drillings go on everywhere.

As government takes no notice, the drillings lose their secrecy. The people take courage. The movement becomes an open one. From certain centres it spreads, until it commands the adhesion of entire communities, and lastly, of nations. It finally attains the proportions and power of an international armament.

The armies take the field. An expedition against headquarters—"the camp of the saints, the beloved city"—is projected. Christ, who could nip the whole conspiracy in the bud with a single act of power, allows the rebels a clear field. They come up in their unchallenged hosts "on the breadth of the earth." They arrive on the confines of the Holy

Land, with which their annual journeys have made them familiar. They carry all before them. Flushed with complete success, they come within sight of the Holy City itself.

This is the "hitherto-and-no-farther" of their Korah-Dathan-& Abiram enterprise. While they are contemplating measures of siege, the devouring fire & crashing artillery of heaven burst suddenly upon their affrighted eyes and ears. The scenes of the pre-Millennial Armageddon are re-enacted on an enlarged scale. The earth opens her terrific jaws to receive the stunned and blaspheming multitudes, who are engulfed in a catastrophe that wipes the last trace of rebellion from the history of the earth—

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and False Prophet . . . "

—here there is an ellipsis in the original. It is supplied in the Common Version by the word "are"; but as the allusion is historic pointing to what happened at the BEGINNING of the 1000 years—it seems more rational to make the ellipsis historic, and to read, instead of "where the Beast and False Prophet ARE," "where the Beast and False Prophet WERE CAST," intimating that the fate that consumed the leaders of the Armageddon pre-millennial war now befalls those of the post-millennial insurrection—

". . . and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

This is the symbolic intimation of the fact that the divine affliction that overtakes the official heads and leaders of the post-millennial revolt against the camp of the saints will prevail over them without remedy. Sodom and Gomorrah are pointed to as examples of what we are to understand by a scriptural—

". . . *suffering* the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

The fire of God's judgment consumed them without remedy (Lam. 4:6). The leaders of post-millennial diabolism will be secured, and made the subjects of a formal and awful consignment to their well-merited fate.

It will be found a pleasant exercise to consider how appropriate a finish to the history of sin upon earth is this great appointed post-millennial revolt of nations. Sin is allowed the opportunity of coming to a great head, so to speak. It gathers up its power, comes into the presence of its destroyer, provokes mortal combat, and is finished at one terrible blow. There is a dramatic completeness about such an arrangement, which is in harmony with the beautiful wisdom that is manifest in all the works of God.

It involves certain details which will readily occur to us. While all the world is nationally implicated in this rebellion, there will, of course, be thousands, nay, millions, who take no part in it. We are not told in so many words, but it follows from certain things testified. For example, the saints accepted & glorified at the coming of Christ are styled the "firstfruits" (Rev. 14:4). This designation is borrowed from the Mosaic shadow of these "good things to come." Israel were required to offer the first ripe fruits of the field in thanksgiving and joy before God. This was afterwards followed by the full harvest, when there was again a feast of gladness coinciding with the Feast of Tabernacles.

These Mosaic arrangements were of divine appointment & foreshadowed the ultimate purpose of Jehovah in Christ. Now as the glorification of 'the ecclesia of the firstborn' at the return of Christ is the antitype of the "firstfruits" there must be a counterpart to the feast of ingathering. There must be a great harvest of human life to glory, honour and immortality at the close of the 1000 years.

What else could come of an age when "the glory of the Lord" prevails on the earth like the spread of the mighty ocean in its bed? It is testified that the reign of Christ is to this end—that he put all enemies under his feet (1 Cor. 15:25). And (v. 26)—

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

It consequently follows that at the close of his reign, there will be a vast multitude who have learned to walk in Jehovah's ways (Isa. 2:3), from whom the veil and the darkness of these gloomy times will have been removed, with the effect of making them turn to Jehovah with a fervent and joyful & faithful obedience (Isa. 25:7), in readiness for investiture with the glorious attribute of immortality.

These will not be found in the rebellious ranks of the Satanic multitude. Their refusal to join them may bring upon them evil consequences, permitted as a closing proof of their obedience. The unchecked success of the revolt up to a certain point, which may involve the preparation of years, will certainly be a sore trial to the mortal faithful. But the end will justify their refusal to be compromised. The sudden destruction of the presumptuous host will be followed by the recognition, praise and immortalization of the faithful multitude everywhere who have stood aloof from the popular conspiracy against the Lord's Anointed.

But will there be no dead waiting to stand in the same category of approbation? Will death have made no havoc in the populations under the reign of Christ and the saints? This question is answered (supposing there were no other answer) by the statement that:

"The LAST enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

If death is the last enemy to be destroyed, it follows that death is not destroyed until after the destruction of the Gog & Magog multitude of the post-millennial revolt. Consequently death is at work up to that point, though greatly weakened in its power, like every other evil at that time when the blessing of Israel's God sheds a healing beneficence on land and ocean.

There is direct evidence of the soundness of this conclusion in the directions given to the mortal Levitical priests of that age, to:

". . . come at no DEAD PERSON to defile themselves" (Ezek. 44:25).

—and in the permission to them to (v. 22)--

". . . take for their wives a *widow* . . . that had a priest before."

Likewise in the statement of Isaiah (65:20) that—

"The child shall die an hundred years old."

—that is, a man dying at 100 years old in those days will be considered a child. Human life will be much prolonged. Still, death reigns till abolished at the crisis brought on at the end of the thousand years by the revolt of the nations.

Now the aggregate of those who die during the reign of Christ must be very great, and as these will be times of great light, they will be times of great responsibility. Consequently when, at the suppression of the post-millennial revolt, the time arrives for the great antitypical harvest into life eternal, something like a general resurrection must take place, differing very much in its extent from that which takes place at the pre-millennial coming of Christ, on account of the great difference in the dispensation preceding it. This seems to be the teaching of the scene John next describes:

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was no place found for them.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; & the books were opened, and another book was opened which is the book of life.

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS.

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).

The import of the leading feature of this scene must be evident enough. A GREAT WHITE THRONE: the symbol of righteousness in judgment: the occupant of it, the Mighty One before Whose face the whole fabric reared by the post-millennial politicians had crumbled into nothing. THE DEAD: those who had died but were now raised. THE OPENED BOOKS: symbols of the law by which they will be judged. THE BOOK OF LIFE: the divine record (preserved on something more enduring than parchment) of those who are chosen for life eternal because of obedience.

THE CASTING OF DEATH AND HELL INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE: the obliteration of death and the grave from the earth by the giving over to the destroying judgment of God, of all who are divinely decreed worthy of death, leaving in the land of the living those only who by the same prerogative are adjudged worthy of the unspeakable gift of immortality.

When this mighty result has been reached, a new state of things upon the earth must result from the altered conditions. Till then sin and death will always more or less have prevailed, necessitating arrangements and institutions suitable thereto. But now the population will be without exception immortal, and socially and racially fused into ONE, as the result of assimilation to a common perfection of nature and harmony with God. What must come out of such a change but the alteration of constitution symbolically described in the next succeeding words of John (21:1-4)—

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no more sea.

"And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband.

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. And God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, FOR THE FORMER THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY!"

## The Love of Every One Aboundeth

*"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth."*

### SECOND THESSALONIANS CHAPTER ONE

NEARLY 2000 years ago the apostles of Christ, by following a man bearing a pitcher of water, were brought to a room wherein was inaugurated this memorial. Likewise we have been led to this room by him who has the water of eternal life that we, in drinking from this cup of symbol, may be refreshed as we enter another week of probation.

Perhaps to some degree, the close intimacy of the Master and the apostles at that first memorial is missing this morning, yet surely the difference should be no more than that of actual physical sight on our part. Can we doubt the presence of our Lord, in the light of his glorious and comforting assurance—

"Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20)

Or that he looks upon us and sees even into the heart of each? Could he speak to us with any more clarity and purpose if we were beholding him, than his recorded words do—

"This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me."

In view of this request by our Lord and Master, how appropriate and imperative that each first day of the week finds us doing just this—remembering our Lord in the way of his appointing. Surely there is no hour of our weekly pilgrimage that we look forward to with such desire, joy, comfort and anticipation, and which brings to each heart such a humble gratefulness that we have had this privilege offered to us: brethren and sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ, children of the Living God!

How essential then that we should be faithfully and obediently gathered so, on this first day of the week: to be reminded that we are NOT OUR OWN, that we have been bought with a price, the shed blood of our Lord and Master; to be spiritually refreshed and comforted for the trials and testings of another week of probation. Surely none can doubt the wisdom—the vital NECESSITY—of this gathering every first day of the week. Surely none who love him can close their ears to the request of Jesus—

*"DO THIS—in remembrance of me!"*

If the weak and beggarly elements of the world take precedence on this solemn first day of the week, then their influence will be as great or greater on the other six days.

"For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death *till he come*."

We are assembled for this purpose, but ere we carry out this command, let us bear in mind and carry out that instruction—

"But let a man examine himself."

As we look into our own hearts, our own walk of the past week—let us do it against the background of Paul's words to the Thessalonian ecclesia. Dare we think Paul would have included us?—

"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth" (verse 3).

Does our faith 'grow exceedingly'? Remember James' test of faith:

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man SAY he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? . . . Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (2:14-17)

What answer do we get, as we review our walk of the past week? Have we done our daily work 'as unto the Lord'? Have we manifested ourselves different from other people by striving to follow in the Master's footsteps? Do we rejoice to sit down each day and hear God talk to us?—for this is what He does in our daily readings? Where has our heart been in the past six days?

The answer to this last question must come from: what has given us pleasure; where and on what do we like to spend most of our time; perhaps most important—just how hard have we tried to live by the Word of God, how well have we remembered?

"And the love of every one of you all toward each other *aboundeth*."

Does it? In self-examination, the answer may come promptly—

"*Yes; I certainly do not have bitter feelings, or hate my brethren and sisters, or criticize them.*"

But is that enough to qualify as **ABOUNDING** in love toward them? Perhaps our feelings are lukewarm. Perhaps we do not concern ourselves with our brethren and sisters beyond our own ecclesia—or only just with some of them. Does Paul's commendation apply in truth to us—

"The love of every one of you all toward each other **ABOUNDETH**."

We can determine the answer by applying the same rule that determines the aliveness and reality of faith, and that is works. So we ask ourselves: By what actions—by what works — do we show our "abundant" love for our brethren and sisters? Our eternal salvation can be bound up in our response to this aspect of the Truth. The fact that scriptural love transcends far beyond sentimental feelings is vividly portrayed in the significance of this bread and wine—

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

In the whole life of Christ, in all the teachings of the Bible, scriptural love embraces a positive **DOING** of things—individually and collectively; as a Body; as a Fellowship; for the good of the Body and the glory of God. It is manifested by a deep concern for **ALL** members of the Body, passing beyond the immediate bounds of our own ecclesia. There must be a constant prayerful remembrance of all, encouraging and being encouraged by an enthusiasm radiating through the whole Body.

Let us not drift into a lukewarm state of feeling concerning others in the Body—we know the Lord's feeling toward lukewarmness—but remembering always that the whole scriptural teaching of the Gospel revolves around love for others—

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son."

If we do not abundantly manifest scriptural love in our lives &: in all our relationships, then though we speak with the tongues of men and angels, we are as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

Does our contemplation of the Marriage-Supper of the Lamb embrace with joy the vision of our brethren & sisters assembled with us as essential to the joy of that time? Surely that millennial happiness will be richer by the knowledge that some word, some act of love and remembrance on our part, has helped a brother or sister to eternal companionship with the King of kings.

Will not the bonds of eternal fellowship be more fully & deeply appreciated by having experienced the encouragement and the helping hand of a brother and sister? And should we not therefore devote ourselves largely to the building of these bonds at the present time? Truly no one can work out another's salvation; truly there must be individual effort—but we can and **MUST** be concerned for the Body, all striving to function for the good of all.

May the rich enthusiasm of health—spiritual health—prevail all through the Body! This can only be by **ALL** members of the Body seeking the welfare of **ALL**. May we all rise unitedly & build—by speech, by action, by correspondence, by tape recordings, and by contributing to—and reading—that link that circulates & connects us all, the Berean Magazine, and most importantly, by prayer. Then may we thankfully take Paul's words to ourselves—

"The love of every one of you all toward each other *aboundeth*."

Let us not lose sight of the fact that knowledge and zeal of doctrine are vain—if not mixed with that vital ingredient, scriptural love. Paul goes on to say in vs. 4-5—

"So that we ourselves glory in you in the ecclesias of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations ye endure.

"Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer."

We are yet in the days of our probation, wherein by trials & tribulations our faith and patience are manifested. We acknowledge these trials and tribulations as a token of God's righteous judgment and God's fatherly love, for we realize only too well that in this mortal flesh dwelleth no good thing—that as sinners the wages of death is our due. But God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked: in love and mercy He has offered eternal life, in conformity with righteous judgment.

In Adam we see disobedience, the wages of sin, bringing death. In him who is symbolized on the table we perceive perfect obedience rewarded and resurrected to life eternal. By one man's disobedience, death came upon all mankind. By the obedience of 1 man—Christ—life eternal is offered to mankind. And so in faith we endeavour to follow the pattern and footsteps left by Christ, that we may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God.

*"The days are quickly flying, and Christ will come again,  
With all his saints attending triumphant in his train:  
When every eye shall see him, and every tongue confess  
The glory of the Father, in Christ our righteousness."*

Those words quicken our hopes, and turn our thoughts to the eternal glories and beauties of the Kingdom of God—glories, beauties and joys which we are only able to comprehend in a very limited degree. But the picture of the rejected at the judgment is more vivid, more easily comprehended. The rejected will be those lukewarm in the days of probation, and those who relegated God & Christ to second place in their time & lives, preferring—more interested in—the things of the present world. No imagination is required to picture how the rejected will then rant against and hate the things they valued and preferred and spent their time on in this life. The temporal daily vanities and interests of this present, preferred before the Truth and service of God will become the equivalent of thirty pieces of blood-stained silver, which bring forth the words of the righteous Judge: "Depart! I know thee not."

How bitter the remorse; how akin will the feelings be with those of Judas Iscariot; how unavailing if we are found beating clenched fists on the closed door, and crying, "Lord, open to us!"

My brethren and sisters, we behold in these emblems on the table, the OPEN door to eternal glories in the Kingdom of God. In love our Lord gave his life to open this door. He does not close it to us. But we can close it to ourselves—with a slam of rejection, or little by little through trying to serve 2 masters, or by failing to manifest that abundant love of which Paul has spoken to us.

True wisdom will find us gathered each first day of the week with grateful humbleness and deep joy, remembering him who is the Way and the Life. So with a deep sense of privilege we come to this memorial table, grateful for this first day of the week that allows us to take our stand with Christ and fulfil his request, and to absorb the spiritual food that will strengthen us to go forth into another week wherein our faith may GROW EXCEEDINGLY, and the love of every one of us toward each other abound.

Let us conclude our thoughts with joyful and thankful, yet reverently fearful meditation on Paul's closing words (vs. 7-12)—

*"And to you who are troubled (God will recompense) rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .*

*"Wherefore we PRAY ALWAYS FOR YOU that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power.*

*"That the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ might be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

—R.H.

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## Full Assurance of Faith

*"But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom."*

THESE words, recorded by Luke (23:40-42), came from the repentant thief on the cross. Some say the repentant thief had nothing to lose by believing—that for him to believe, while his doom on the cross was certain, was the best thing he could do for himself. Such reasoning makes it sound as though he HAD to believe—that belief was easy and natural—and that his repentance was not freely and sincerely from the heart, but self-interest. It is also contended that his repentance was based on very little knowledge of God's plan of salvation.

But such was not the case, as a fair consideration of all the facts shows. The other thief did not believe, nor repent, even after Jesus had promised salvation to the first, and even after the first appealed to the second to consider his position before God. There were 2 thieves crucified with Christ, one on his right, and one on his left. One repented; the other did not.

Both thieves on their crosses understood that this Jesus might be "Lord" and "King" and "Messiah." They knew of his claims, and of the charges against him. But only one of them eventually did believe these things. And he, believing, rebuked the other—

"Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?"

And he showed his faith and made his confession by saying—

"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom!"

At the beginning of this triple crucifixion, we are given to understand (by Matthew & Mark) that these 2 thieves had the same mocking spirit as did the people, rulers, priests and soldiers—

"The THIEVES also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth" . . . "And they that were crucified with him reviled him."

What were the allegations of the mocking and reviling of Jesus as he hung on the cross? A composite of parts of Luke 23, Matt. 27 & Mark 15 (John gives no details on this) tells us of the things charged in these revilings by the people and the thieves—

"And THEY THAT PASSED BY reviled him, wagging their heads, & saying, Thou that destroyest the Temple and buildest it in 3 days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. . .

"And the RULERS also with them derided him. . .

"Likewise also the CHIEF PRIESTS mocking him, with the SCRIBES and ELDERS, saying, He saved others: let him save himself, if he be the Christ, the chosen of God. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God: let Him deliver him now, if He will have him, for he said, I am the Son of God. . .

"And the SOLDIERS also mocked him, coming to him and offering him vinegar, and saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself. . .

"The THIEVES also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth."

There is a whole storehouse of knowledge in these words, no doubt repeated a number of times and more fully expressed, during the period Jesus was on the cross, especially during the first 3 hours while it was light. The many things expressed in these revilings are the things of the Gospel, the things of the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ.

So, concerning the thief who repented, when we ask, "What did he believe when he repented?—we are not at a loss to answer. For those who mocked and reviled Jesus on the cross, including the 2 thieves who were crucified with him, were declaring God's truth—though none of them believed—that Jesus was the Son of God; that he was the Christ or Anointed One, the Chosen of God; that he was the King of Israel and King of the Jews; and that God's promises to both David and Abraham would be fulfilled in him as their promised Seed; that he could destroy the Temple at Jerusalem and build it in 3 days (but actually, of course, Jesus predicted that the Jews would deliver him up to the Gentiles to be destroyed, but he would rise from the dead on the 3rd day); that he "saved others"; and that in connection with his sacrificial death the repentant thief would believe that only through death, the crucifixion of sinful flesh in Jesus, could eternal life come as the gift of God through the resurrected Christ.

Truly, this was the one and only Hope for sinful, mortal, perishing mankind, such as this convicted, condemned robber hanging on the cross. This was indeed the Hope of Israel, to be fulfilled when the crucified but resurrected Christ came into his Kingdom here on earth, to reign in glory where he suffered in shame. The repentant thief came to believe that Christ would save sinners, and he confessed his repentance & his faith in Jesus, saying—

"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom!"

To which he who "saved others" replied—

"Verily I say unto thee today thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

But the unrepentant thief was demanding of Jesus—

"If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us."

This is the same proof wanted by those who were crucifying Jesus. All classes were demanding the same evidence from Jesus as proof that he was the Son of God and King of Israel, and the one who "saved others" and would in 3 days rebuild the Temple.

So all these different classes of people joined in mocking and reviling Jesus, urging him to save himself—that is, they did not believe he could do so. But of all the mocking company, only one believed and obeyed—had faith: the thief who repented.

The idea, then, that the repentant thief had to believe, that it was easy and natural to believe, because of the hopeless circumstances he was in—the belittling "nothing to lose" theory—has no foundation in the facts of the case, since the other thief, in identical circumstances, did not repent and believe. His repentance & belief were deeply sincere and freely confessed.

This is the great lesson to us concerning the two thieves on the cross with Jesus: under the same circumstances and opportunities one believed and the other did not.

One would think that, if anything, both thieves should have continued railing on Jesus, because they appear to be comrade malefactors, both guilty of condemnation, and in their plight should have found affinity together to the bitter end. Or else, we might expect them to accuse one another to the bitter end, each blaming the other for the plight they were in.

The repentant thief may have had a fear of God before he was crucified. Note his significant remark to the other—

*"Dost not thou FEAR GOD?"*

While he joined in the common reviling of Jesus at the beginning of their ordeal, he was moved to shame at his remarks; then to utter humility and groping repentance; and finally to faith in Jesus. And he put his confession of faith into words revealing much:

"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom."

This was true salvation to the repentant thief, God's salvation through His Anointed One, in that Kingdom to be established.

But the unbelieving thief wanted his one proof: that Jesus keep them from dying on their crosses; that he be saved there and then. That thief did not want to "bear his cross," and die thereon. He wanted a continuation of his present life now, rather than believe in eternal life in the future in Jesus' Kingdom.

The repentant thief made no such demand. In faith born out of conviction of the Truth, he understood that Jesus Messiah must die on the cross and, after 3 days, rise from the dead, and at some future day come into his Kingdom here on the earth.

Does this unique incident of the repentant thief sanction what is called "death-bed repentance," and thereby teach us that baptism is not necessary for salvation? Certainly not.

Death-bed repentance is a matter of, at the last moment, "accepting Jesus as your personal Saviour." As we have seen, there was a lot more to the thief's repentance and faith, even in believing in Jesus as Messiah, the King of the Jews to sit on David's restored throne in the restored Kingdom of Israel, and that the flesh must be crucified.

This was certainly not "death-bed repentance" as that term is normally understood, but rather a complete & sincere repentance that was a full development of understanding God's Truth, joined with faith in a crucified and dying—but to be resurrected—Jesus, and accepting death on the cross as his probation to the end of his mortal life—a faith that went against all present appearances, perceiving the true divine realities when close disciples lost hope.

Also, this unique case of the repentant thief on the cross is not meant to be for us an example of salvation without baptism. Baptism into Christ was not required for salvation until after Christ had risen from the dead. THEN

the command went forth for believers of the Gospel to be baptized into Jesus' Saving Name for the remission of their past sins.

On the cross with the repentant malefactor, Jesus' sacrifice was not yet complete. He had to rise from the dead before baptism was preached in his Name. This remission of sins even included those who had crucified their Prince, to whom we are told, Peter said on the day of Pentecost (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 & Christ."

And their reaction to his words, and his subsequent exhortation—

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

"Then Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (vs. 37-38).

Thus we find that the command to be baptized into the Name of Jesus Christ was not proclaimed till "Pentecost was fully come." At the time the thief on the cross believed, baptism into Christ was not a requisite for salvation, but for us it is required.

And those who believe must not only be baptized, but must arise from the waters of baptism to newness of life. The flesh must be crucified. As Jesus said in Luke 9:23 —

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and TAKE UP HIS CROSS daily, and follow me."

The unrepentant thief did not want to die on the cross. The repentant thief, in faith, accepted it. For his remaining hours on the cross (his legs later broken with clubs to assure his death), he would endure all in patience, and die in faith.

While this believing thief did not have to be baptized by water into the Saving Name of Jesus, we do see him "taking up his cross" and following Jesus to death by crucifixion. Truly, he was nailed to the cross against his will—he did not want to die at the beginning, let alone die the terrible death of a cross—but now that he believed on Jesus, he willingly endured the cross in faith. The unrepentant thief met his doom unbelieving, and unwilling to suffer and die on the cross.

So Jesus prayed on the cross —

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

—leaving the door of hope capable of being opened by the repentance and obedience of his betrayers and murderers. So surely the same door was to be opened by the thief's repentance and faith and confession. And this forgiving spirit saturated Jesus' whole being as the Saviour, so that he kept saying—repeating—

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

Likewise the thief's words, when he said to Jesus—

"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom."

Here too, as with Jesus' prayer for forgiveness of his betrayers and murderers, the verb is imperfect, indicated that the thief repeated his request to Jesus a number of times. The thief was indeed persistent. This is now the repentant thief's fixed state of mind—the spirit of his mind. We remember that Jesus on some occasions did not grant a request immediately, to bring out and manifest the steadfastness of the supplicant.

Can we then imagine the wonderful transformation in the penitent thief's mind?—from a mind of complete despair, a criminal death, seeing no hope of release from certain doom: then transformed to a mind of faith and hope in Christ and God's Kingdom, so that on believing he now kept saying—

"Lord, REMEMBER ME when thou comest into thy Kingdom."

The repentant thief's mind and whole being was now saturated with this one thought, full of faith, so that he now believed—perhaps more deeply, wholly and vividly than you or I believe—that he would be remembered by Jesus when he came into his Kingdom.

—N.M.

## Current Events Fulfilling Prophecy

*"There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked"—Isa. 48:22*

*"The whole world lieth in wickedness"—1 John 5:19*

**PERSIA: POWER & OPPRESSION.** Shah out to convert immense oil wealth into world power. Spent \$4-billion on US arms last year. US sells him anything he wants, hoping he'll be loyal satrap, & protect US interests. But worry's growing that US may be creating a Frankenstein monster.

To expand his influence, he has pumped \$3-billion into Italy, \$1-billion each into Britain, France & World Bank, & \$7-billion into Asian & African nations. He balances his profession of goodwill to US with Russian detente.

Most Iranians live on bread & vegetable oil, yet elite frolic in striking splendour. Like Louis XIV, Shah believes he's the state: has no inclination to introduce democracy. Says oil prices should go higher: says he's only acting as Western nations always have.

He's keenly aware his regime's a one-man show. He ruthlessly purges any who show signs of gathering a following, & keeps his closest associates on a tight leash. In this age of suicidal terror squads, one bullet could change the whole course of Iranian history. (Nwk 10:14)

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Shah has brought Iran to threshold of grandeur at least equal to Cyrus of 2,500 years ago. 2nd greatest oil exporter; has world's biggest refinery. '74 oil income \$23-billion ('73, \$5-billion). Becoming one of world's major military powers. By '80, will have 840 fighter-bombers—more than any NATO nation except US. Industrial production expanding 50% a year.

Shah's father was army major who seized power in '21. Britain exiled him to S. Africa because he was friendly with Hitler. Present Shah broke power of great landowners, distributed land to peasants, smashed feudalism that paralysed country. One of world's few remaining absolute rulers.(Tm 11:4)

*NOTE: The worry that US is creating a Frankenstein is well founded. If they had the wisdom to heed prophecy they would know this, but God is letting them—in their ignorance—build weapons against themselves. When the right time comes, something will put Persia in the Russian camp possibly a coup, and/or increasing recognition of, & fear of, Russia's growing power. Persia has 1000-mile Russian border: US is far away. The autocratic Shah is walking a lonely & perilous tight rope. Russia will bring him down when & if it becomes necessary in their purpose.*

**ENERGY WAR.** Across a global front, battle joined last week. On one side: US, determined to drive down oil prices. On other, oil cartel, equally determined to maintain enormous profits. So far only verbal salvos, but looming in distance are more dangerous weapons: political & economic pressures &—as last desperate resort war.

Saudi Arabia has continually tried to reduce oil prices: has been blocked by Persia, Libya & other oil producers. Last week's tough talk by US marks significant shift. If it fails, US will be in dilemma: will have to match tough talk with tough action. Yet US has little clout. As lack of economic muscle became apparent, govt. said war couldn't be excluded as possible. (Tm 10:7)

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Some Arabs interpret new US hard line as war declaration. Up to now, West nations tumbling over selves in largely futile dash to make sweetheart deals with Arabs. In past year, new oil prices have siphoned off \$75-billion from West. Already the massive haemorrhage has severely weakened many economies. Italy on brink of bankruptcy: Communists making open play for power. Odd thing is why so little done in past year to stem tide.

Arabs rapidly collecting world's liquid assets; will of necessity become world's bankers. They're determined to be treated as the monetary superpower they're fast becoming. Arab corporation has been set up to buy majority control of US companies. Saudi Arabia has \$4-billion on deposit with Chase Manhattan Bank alone.

Saudi Arabia & Egypt have strategy for breaking down US resistance to Arab buying into US business: it's to win US favour by sharply reducing Russian influence in Mideast. (Nwk 10:7)

*NOTE: Talk of war may be extreme, but it's significant it's even being discussed: Ford almost threatened it. Suddenly the Arabs have a stranglehold on the world's economic throat. Note last sentence: Saudi & Egypt seek to reduce Russian influence. An Arab split is coming: the right nations are moving in the right direction.*

**MAO'S CHINA.** In 25yrs. since Mao & Communists swept to power, China has transformed itself more radically & more quickly than any country in history. From a devastated, underdeveloped, exploited country, has remade self into largely self-sufficient, growing, fiercely independent world power.

It has eliminated -often brutally— all traces of old society, with its privileges & wealth for very few; dehumanizing poverty, disease & famine for vast majority. China is land of smiles, health & purpose—tho not freedom. Life is regimented, & hard by any standard. But no longer do beggars, prostitutes & addicts throng cities, or bandit gangs roam countryside. (Tm 10:7)

*NOTE: World's biggest nation—800 million people—is a harsh & efficient dictatorship. Communists appear to have accomplished what no one before could: feed the people adequately. From 1912 on, China tried "democracy"—but was weak, corrupt, oppressed by foreigners. Under Communism, propaganda is incessant; no deviation of thought tolerated. If we lived there & were faithful to the Truth, we would be hounded & persecuted & ostracised from society. This is increasingly true of most of the world. Let us thank God constantly for our freedom to live & proclaim the Truth & let us use this blessing & responsibility to the fullest extent.*

**UNITED NATIONS:** ungainly, ineffective giant: very name a contradiction. Shown over & over that UN can't prevent war if either side bent on violence. Couldn't stop Cyprus fighting. US has paid \$5-billion of total \$12-billion UN cost since beginning. Is it worth it? (USN 10:7)

*NOTE: UN, created in '45 by US for the perpetuation of its power & influence, has become a raucous & blatantly bigoted sounding board for anti-Israelism & anti-USism. UN's real "bosses" are "Big 5" with veto power—US, Britain, France, China, Russia. At beginning, it was always solid 4-1 against Russia. After 20 years fighting against it by US, in '71 Red China replaced Free China (Taiwan) as "China" in UN, with veto power on any UN action. Over years, France has become increasingly anti-US & pro-Russia. Britain has become increasingly impotent & vacillating.*

**WITH PORTUGAL EMPIRE DOOMED,** pressure's increasing on Rhodesia & So. Africa. In both, Blacks vastly outnumber Whites. For years, China & Russia have armed & trained Black guerrillas. Major recipient has been Frelimo — the Marxist Mozambique rebels now in power. Mozambique's 1700 miles of Indian Ocean coastline give it tremendous political importance.

Frelimo's debt to Russia & China is a large one; they're certain to demand payoff. Russia wants ports for warships. West will find Mozambique climate cooling fast. Rhodesia is landlocked; depends on Mozambique ports for its world trade. (USN 10:7)

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Closing in on Rhodesia: when Black Frelimo SOUTH took over in Mozambique last month, Rhodesia acquired 700 additional miles of hostile border. Already hemmed in by Zambia on north & Botswana to west, Rhodesia has now only 150 miles of border with a White state—S. Africa. Dismantling of Portugal's 500-yr.-old empire has left Rhodesia perilously vulnerable both militarily & economically.

Arms & money that once fuelled successful guerrilla movements in Portugal's colonies can now support a Black liberation struggle against Rhodesia. Frelimo insurgency experts, trained by Reds, already instructing Rhodesian guerrillas in new sophisticated weapons, including Russian heat-seeking missiles. Over 80% of Rhodesia's exports pass thru Mozambique ports: closure would mean swift economic strangulation for Rhodesia. (Tm 10:21)

*NOTE: 50 years ago, Europe ruled Africa with despotic, unquestioned power, & the native Black population was not even a passing factor in the news. But Russian agitation & support has changed all that, & now only embattled Rhodesia & S. Africa remain. The sudden collapse of Portugal's Empire has put them on the front line. Black Africa is increasingly anti-Israel.*

**ENDANGERED OZONE.** Ozone layer protects all life from sun's deadly ultraviolet rays. This vital gas blanket so fragile that it could well be severely damaged or destroyed by atmospheric nuclear tests, supersonic aircraft, or widespread use of aerosol sprays.

Propellants used in spray cans are highly destructive of ozone. They're building up in atmosphere, & gradually rising to ozone layer. Estimate is that even if sprays were discontinued now, the gases already in air would cause 10% ozone reduction by '90, with substantial increase or ultraviolet radiation on earth. Could cause cancer, disrupt food chain process, alter weather patterns. At current rate, aerosol sprays will reduce ozone layer by 40% by 2015 AD, wreaking havoc on terrestrial life. (Tm 10:7)

750,000 tons of fluorocarbons escape into atmosphere yearly from aerosol products. By '95, could deplete ozone by alarming 13%. (Nwk 10:7)

*NOTE: Cancer -perhaps the cruellest & deadliest of diseases is constantly increasing, especially in "civilized" countries. Many things that man in his mad "wisdom" is doing appear to be contributing to it. Man is increasingly demonstrating that without submission to divine guidance, he can only bring himself harm, & eventually self-destruction. The more knowledge he gets, the more he turns it to pollution & destruction in his catering to greed, ease & luxury.*

**US DEMOCRACY.** Just 4½% of US population owns 25% of real estate, 50% of personal cash, & 60% of personally-held corporate stock. This elite 4½% includes everyone worth over \$60,000. (Nwk 10:7)

*NOTE: We often read such statistics of other backward, oppressed countries, & marvel at their undemocratic exploitation & inequity—& forget it's just as true here. But the folly of the "poor" is just as much a cause as the greed*

of the rich. The US population is \$850-billion in personal debt, mostly for such rubbish as TV & luxury autos & elaborate, palatial homes.

**UNFOLDING ECONOMIC NIGHTMARE.** One after another, major world powers marching to brink of bankruptcy, unable to pay high oil prices. England, France, Italy, Japan already many billions in red. Talk getting tough: high US officials say, "It's massive crisis: anyone who thinks West powers will let selves be flushed down drain by bunch of people who own oil on desert is out of his mind."

But Arabs hold all trump cards. Not only do they control most of oil, but the billions they're raking in are giving them grip on their customers' economies. Over \$3-billion Arab oil money in British banks: if suddenly withdrawn, result would be catastrophic. Arabs have just given Japan \$1-billion loan. Italy has been forced to last resort—mortgaging gold reserves. Arab reaction to Ford threat was anger: hardening against US. (USN 10:7)

*NOTE: What stirring times! What great changes! Arabs—world's helpless laughingstock in '67—now have whip hand: & are using it ruthlessly. Greatest result: the weakening of Europe, & complete exposure of its helpless vulnerability, inviting Russian domination. Without oil, Europe is powerless, not only to wage war, but just to carry on at all—& the control taps are now in other, vengeful hands.*

**CATHOLICISM IN FERMENT.** 200 bishops from whole world at Vatican, considering problems confronting Church in time of growing political, social & economic turmoil. Pope told them: "Church is in difficulty. . . many seminaries almost deserted: religious orders can't get recruits."

Over 2/3 of delegates are from Asia, Africa, Mideast, Latin America: only 1/4 from Europe, which used to dominate. Papacy now has diplomatic relations with 84 nations. Catholic Church now has more influence round world than any time in past 500 years. Pope has internationalized his Cabinet (the "Curia"): has French, Dutch, Yugoslav, US, Brazilian, Spanish members.

One of most important developments: closer relationship with Communist nations—a complete about face. This Pope has relaxed rules on meatless Fridays, services in Latin, congregational participation, mixed marriage. In '71 Synod, nearly 1/2 of bishops voted for letting priests marry. (USN 10:7)

*NOTE: Catholicism—Babylon, Mother of Harlots & Abominations—is a major factor in the divine prophetic picture, great destroyer & enemy of God's people, to be in turn destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming. It is in change & ferment, adjusting to new realities of growing Red power.*

**FAMINE IN INDIA.** Few years ago, thanks to "Green Revolution," India proudly told world it was on verge of food self-sufficiency. But India has fallen on lean years: millions hungry; many starving. 2 years of poor weather, & skyrocketing oil costs, have hit India cruelly. Fertilizer & irrigation pumps depend on oil. So far, pride has prevented India from approaching source most able to give: in past 10 years, US has supplied 50 million tons of emergency food to India. (Nwk 10:7)

*NOTE: It would appear that India must be forced back into cooperation with the Tarshish powers. The Arab oil price rise has hit India disastrously, almost fatally. India is Hindu, & anti-Moslem.*

**POLAND & CHURCH.** Poland's head man Gierek says: "One can be a good Catholic, like most Poles, & be active participant in construction of a socialist society at same time—as most Poles are. We've never considered Church a challenge to Communist Party or our system. In fact, Church has never tried to endanger system or party, & we've never tried to endanger it.

"We won't attempt to minimize role of Church in Poland. Church is substantial force in this nation that can help keep moral values & virtues that are common to all people irrespective of their faith." (Tm 10:14)

*NOTE: A very interesting comment from Poland's Red dictator. Both the Catholic Church & Communists have come a long way since the early days of Communism. With moral values collapsing into degenerate immorality in US & West, Communist Gierek's comments have a comfortable, old-fashioned ring that will appeal to many decent people.*

**MED FLOWS RED.** In PORTUGAL. Spinola out, left-leaning general in; Communist in Cabinet; Communist Party nation's strongest political force. GREECE: 27-yr. ban on Communist Party lifted; Party has won quick popularity. SPAIN: Carlos keeping discreet contact with Communist leaders who control powerful underground labour movement. FRANCE: Communists have launched major "open-door" campaign to win voters & capitalize on economic crisis. ITALY: spectacular Communist gains: 1 1/2 million members: have 179 seats in 630-seat Parliament: it's Communist Party's huge size that has put Italy thru wringer for past 30 years. (Nwk 10:14)

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6 months ago, corners of NATO's southern tier—PORTUGAL & GREECE—were firmly controlled by anti-Communist dictatorships. Not only have dictators disappeared, but long-repressed Communist Parties eagerly grasping for political power. In centre of tier, another impotent govt. fell last wk. in ITALY, raising fears that

Communists may get into govt. Communist influence increases with each crisis. In SPAIN, the Communists, a disciplined & dedicated force, are quietly planning for day Franco dies. Along whole southern tier, Communists are capitalizing on anti-USism. (Tm 10:14)

*NOTE: Both newsmagazines noted this ominous (but to us encouraging) trend the same week. For all practical purposes, NATO is increasingly meaningless, & both Europe & Russia know it.*

**BRITAIN FLOUNDERS.** Govt. has lost much of its power to unions. Militant labour leaders dictate Britain's domestic & foreign policies. Union chiefs using their clout to hamstring any meaningful attempts to fight inflation; & forcing referendum on withdrawal from Common Market.

Britain rapidly becoming a leftwing Spain. Growing doubts about survival as integrated nation. Scottish nationalists making impressive strides in drive for autonomy. Full scale No. Ireland war averted only by presence of British Army. (USN 10:14)

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Land of hope & glory. Britain in worst economic crisis since WWII. Democratic institutions themselves seem wobbly in very land that conceived parliamentary democracy. In 30 years, Britain down from world's 3rd most prosperous country (after US & Sweden) to position "somewhat ahead of Italy & Greece." Trying to borrow its way out of trouble by going round cap in hand to countries as Iran & Kuwait for loans to prevent sterling collapse.

Talk of dictatorship in country like Britain with long democratic history sounds farfetched, but problem's not just economic: increasingly it's social. Britain undergoing appalling stress & strain. Real hatred & bitterness have come in. Hard to remember time when politicians in such low esteem.

Cleavage in society as rigid as ever. Unlike rest of Europe, where prosperity has helped blur social barriers, British classes keep very much to selves.

Three times in past 2 years, properly elected govts. have been challenged by organized labour, & soundly beaten. Unions concerned have usually been Communist-influenced if not Communist-controlled. (Nwk 10:21)

*NOTE: Britain is in the throes of revolution, 200 years after US's and France's. It is long overdue. Perhaps they will come thru the storm. They are a capable people—but so were the Italians, Spaniards & Portuguese in their heyday, when God used them. North Sea oil promises Britain a new lease on life. Perhaps she will rise to it. Perhaps she has yet a work to do.*

**FOR THE ELDERLY INFLATION** often means doing without food for day or 2, or forgoing badly needed medical care. In US urban areas, 25% of elderly spend under \$8 a wk. on food (that's minimum for health). Only 7% of elderly have good dietary intake. It's not uncommon to see elderly picking thru garbage cans. In face of all this misery, little being done. (Nwk 10:7)

*NOTE: This US -the "Great Society" is man's supposedly best accomplishment. In rest of world it is generally worse, tho Communism, while grinding freedom under its iron heel, offers some alleviation of "freedom's" inequities. Only the Kingdom of Christ can bring a better day.*

**LESSON FROM MENNONITES.** "Mennonite Disaster Service" is virtually as strong as Mennonite membership—245,000. It's listed by US govt. (with Red Cross & Salvation Army) as only 3 private agencies qualified to aid in disasters. With no public funds, it does its good deeds in almost total obscurity, but its efficiency's nothing short of extraordinary. In '72 it took only 3 days for 3300 Mennonites to reach East Coast's hurricane-devastated area. Tornado in Kansas last June brought 1000 Mennonites to spot in hours.

They come early, stay late. Some still on job in Corning, NY, from the '72 floods. They bring own tools; & food & clothing for victims; come in own cars & rented buses. Some stay 6 months, & when they must return to jobs & homes, other volunteers replace them. (Nwk 10:21)

*NOTE: Let us ponder this—& examine ourselves. How do we compare? Do we luxuriate in self-indulgence—big cars, big homes—confident that thru knowledge & acceptance of a few basic Gospel facts "we are the people"—while lesser breeds outside the pale do quiet, unseen, selfless works of kindness? Truly belief of the Truth is vital to salvation, but belief of the Truth without a corresponding transformation of the whole life and character can only bring greater damnation. If we are not at least as devoted to the service of God as the best of the outside world, what hope have we?*

**OIL CRISIS THREATENS TO BRING DOWN WEST.** Seriousness of plight just sinking in. Unless something done soon, deep global depression in making. Sharp differences of view as to what to do. (USN 10:14)

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World Banking Conference. Seldom, if ever, have world's finance ministers met amid such foreboding. Delegates at Washington meeting last week say oil-price bomb about to explode-shattering world's financial structure, bringing worldwide depression, bankrupting some nations. (Nwk 10:14)

Looming crisis. By '80, oil exporting countries could have \$650-billion foreign currency surplus. Already there's been by far the greatest international transfer of capital in history, threatening to choke world monetary system & strangle world trade. World stock markets continue to plunge.

Deepening perception of potential impact of high oil prices: accelerating inflation, collapse of international banking networks, ultimately a corrosion of democratic institutions. Industrial nations can't afford to continue haemorrhaging vast amounts of their financial resources.

By far the most profligate of energy users, US burns 1/3 of world's oil. Much is wasted: guzzled in 2-ton cars carrying 1 person, or burned up in poorly insulated houses that are over-heated in winter, over-cooled in summer, over-lit all yr. round. All talk notwithstanding, US hasn't yet begun to conserve. (Tm 10:14)

*NOTE: The West is going on its dizzy way to disaster. Already the signs of depression are closing in. US's great auto cos. are laying off 10s of 1000s, yet they are designing & pushing more & more luxurious & gadget-loaded cars for snob value & status symbols at vastly inflated prices, while the public wallows deeper & deeper in a wild orgy of debt.*

**PORTUGAL:** dramatic turn to Left. Spínola out, replaced by left-leaning Gen. Gomes. Civilians jailed. Communist Party is strongest political force in country, capable of calling big strikes, massive rallies. (USN 10:14)

*NOTE: How rosily it started last April—with Spínola the national hero to lead Portugal to an instant, joyous, carefree, democratic paradise! But now he's gone, blocked & frustrated by political scheming, then abruptly dumped as no longer needed for a facade. The way of man.*

**US ON SPENDING BINGE** since end of WW II. Consumer debt up 47% in past 4 years, to huge \$188-billion. (Nwk 10:28)

*NOTE: Sad folly &—like Italy—the root of all today's problems. Human lust & greed, like the horseleech, is insatiable: it never cries "Enough."*

**GERMANY'S MIRACLE.** While its neighbours scramble desperately to sell their goods, Germany's customers are knocking each other down in rush to buy. Exports up 17% this year. While others in Common Mkt. teeter on edge of bankruptcy, Germany has \$34-billion currency reserves. Germany does not dispute that its success in fighting inflation has been in part at partners' expense, but says: "Others would do same if they could." (Nwk 10:21)

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Germany keeps exporting more than enough to cover rising oil costs. Has world's biggest currency reserve; is world's top exporter: \$100-billion a year. \$20-billion '74 trade surplus. But there are cracks in picture: business slowing; bankruptcies up; growing profit squeeze. (USN 11:4)

*NOTE: Smashed flat by the war, then cut in 1/2, Germany grows new limbs like some fabled monster. When Gog & Magog are joined, they will be a humanly-invulnerable nucleus of the latter day Image.*

**SAD STATE OF US SCHOOLS.** All across US, parents, school boards & pupils demand schools stop experimenting & get back to basics — reading, writing, arithmetic, & behaviour standards. Most high schools & colleges that gave up grading systems for less competitive 'pass/fail' systems have returned, largely at students' request, to old-fashioned marks. Over 1/3 of US state legislatures have passed laws requiring achievement tests.

Innovations proliferated in US schools at extraordinary rate in past 10 years. New policies—some downright nonsensical—adopted on almost nationwide basis. Problem soon became apparent: for past 10 years, Scholastic Aptitude Test scores have fallen. Most cities report similar decline in reading & math. Even the abysmally low reading & math scores reported by many large cities don't reflect how bad schools really are: many teachers tell poor students to stay home on test day. City officials also leave out of reports schools that would pull down average still further. (Nwk 10:21)

*NOTE: How wonderfully & fittingly can God turn man's wisdom into folly—like the blinded men of Sodom scrabbling helplessly to find the door of Lot's house. US has all the necessary ingredients for peace & prosperity—except righteousness. And that exception is the fatal exception. Perhaps Russia too is tinkering in learned folly with its basic education, but all signs point other way.*

**SURFACE WARSHIPS DOOMED?** Britain has perfected a satellite radar system able to pinpoint every ship on Eastern Atlantic, casting new doubts on future role of surface warships. Whole question of their vulnerability being re-examined in light of this new development. (USN 10:21)

*NOTE: We have often wondered just how long US's mighty, lumbering aircraft carriers (backbone of her sea power) will last when the next war—a guided missile war—starts. How vivid is the memory of Jap torpedo planes so effortlessly sinking Britain's proud, brand-new super battleship Prince of Wales on its vainglorious maiden display cruise near Singapore.*

**ISRAEL & ARAB POSITIONS HARDEN:** as fundamentally irreconcilable as ever. All-out arms race underway. Mideast has contracted for \$13- billion in arms in past year. Single spark could set off war. Israel leaders tell Arabs not to assume they'll be allowed to strike first again: if Israel thinks Arabs planning attack, they'll strike first. (USN 10:21)

*NOTE: Oil wealth is filling the Mideast with anti-Israel armaments. In the natural course of events, Israel's position is utterly hopeless. She is so small & poor: the Arabs are so many, & now so rich. In openly & officially backing the terrorist PLO, Arabs have dedicated selves to Israel's annihilation.*

**MOST EXPENSIVE WARPLANE EVER:** new swing-wing B-1 bomber \$18-billion for 244 planes. Has 6000 mile range: over 1500 mph. Carries 90 tons of nuclear missiles & bombs. (USN 11:4)

*NOTE: "Prepare war: wake up the mighty men!" Endless billions for destruction, because man has never learned, & cannot learn, to live in peace.*

**POLAND PROSPERS.** People better off than ever before: 4 times as many autos as 5 yrs. ago; national income up 9% in '74. (USN 10:14)

*NOTE: Communism used to be a dreary joke, while democracy rode the proud crest of prosperity. But man's greed is boundless, & prosperity always carries the seeds of its own destruction. Of course, it is not really Communism: that's beautiful, but humanly impossible. It's dictatorship in a mask.*

**WAR'S BURDEN.** In '64, US paid \$1.2-billion in military retirement pay. In '74, \$5.2-billion. By 2000 AD, will be \$19-billion a yr. (USN 10:14)

*NOTE: Most of US's national budget is for war—war debt & interest; war preparation; veterans care; military retirement; huge fleets & armies & armed forces. This "civilized" age is the most warlike & war-ridden in all history. Natural man is a vile, evil, fighting beast, for all his pious peace pretensions.*

**PLASTICS & HEALTH.** 2 million jobs in industries selling \$90-billion a yr. in goods depend on poly vinyl chloride (PVC). Ever since invented in '37 by Goodrich, it has been linked to disease. First shown to be dangerous to rats & mice; later implicated in variety of human ills: hepatitis, bone disease, cancer. (Tm 10:14)

*NOTE: One more way wise, modern man's folly is killing him. Vinyl is everywhere, & has become one of the basic essentials of modern society. Man is floundering in his own cleverness—far out of his depth.*

**COMMUNIST CUBA.** During all their waking hours, Cubans bombarded by messages from Communist Party. Schools combine studies with political indoctrination. Every housing area of every city has Committee supervising all neighbourhood activity. To almost all Cuban youths, Castro is unquestioned final authority; Communist Party is guide & teacher. (USN 10:28)

*NOTE: Let us ever be thankful to God that—for all its follies & evils- we are blessed with living in a society where we can freely worship & freely proclaim the Truth of God; where we are not regimented or brainwashed, nor discriminated against & persecuted for our faith. We take this for granted. Many have died to establish it. Most of the world has never known it. Above all, let us remember: where much is given, much is required.*

**US's BANKRUPT OIL POLICY.** Ford & Kissinger have made harsh, menacing speeches suggesting that continued high oil prices could lead to economic reprisals or even war. Arabs unimpressed. Since '73 embargo & 4-fold price hike, US done little more than flail about. Never has such an important policy been so misconceived & mishandled. US isn't squarely facing the implications of huge amounts accumulating in oil countries. (Nwk 10:21)

*NOTE: Somehow, we can foresee US & Britain coming safely out of this oil crisis, with Europe swept into the Russian orbit by it. US COULD easily be self-sufficient, if it had the character & sense to discipline its lusts. North Sea oil could save Britain. We live in wonderfully interesting times.*

**RACE VIOLENCE & HATE IN BOSTON.** Lynch mob with Boston accent: smashing his car windows, pulling Black man to street, beating him. Police just came in time to save his life. Mayor said, "What we have in this city is hysteria." (Nwk 10:21)

\* \* \*

Boston mayor declares: "We can no longer maintain either appearance or reality of public safety. Violence which once focused on schools & buses now engulfing entire community in racial confrontation." The violence is dismaying, but shouldn't be surprising: Boston's racist; always has been. (Tm 10:21)

*NOTE: The beast is never far below the surface in natural man. Boston is the self-acclaimed cultural Athens of US. The reality is somewhat less attractive than the image. Men deny the truth of the Tower of Babel at the very time that they re-enact it every day.*

**ARGENTINE REIGN OF TERROR** since death of Peron continued unabated last week, with 100th victim in 3 months. (Tm 10:14).

*NOTE: Admittedly, this is just 1/2 the number of murders in the one city of Detroit in the same period, but these are specially-picked, leading people.*

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## Correspondence

Dear brother Gibson,

October 18, 1974

Grace be unto you, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. In this advanced age of learning, the mind is overwhelmed at the achievements of science. Surely man has elevated himself to a level of frightful cleverness!—this being whom God created and placed in Eden, giving him capacities which were above the beasts of the field.

But, sadly, man has abused this God-given status, and is very near the time when he will be brought low. Of Lucifer, the king of Babylon, it was spoken by the prophet Isaiah (14:13-14)—

*"Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High."*

How fittingly descriptive of modern man's boast and prowess! Solomon in Proverbs teaches many lessons of pride going before a fall: and the pride of man shall meet this same fate—

*"Abase him that is high, and exalt him that is low. "*

And referring back to Isaiah's words—

*"Thou shalt be brought down to Sheol, to the sides of the pit. "*

And from Zechariah (4:7)—

*"Who art thou, O great mountain! Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain."*

There are so many passages which spring to mind, all pointing so definitely to the fact that (Isa. 2:11-12)—

*"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one who is lifted up, and he shall be brought low."*

In the light of so many attested statements, one wonders if God will have any place in His purpose for man's present "monuments of marvel" scattered throughout the cities of the world—or even for the cities themselves? They do not appear to fit into the future picture at all.

Through the manifold grace of God, we are linked by covenant relationship with faithful Abraham who (Heb. 11:10) —

*"Looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder & Maker is God."*

May we all be considered worthy to enter the gates thereof!

The things we see and know of happening throughout the world today form a handbook of evidence relating to the end of Gentile times, and the new era of God's kingdom on earth. If we are saddened by the terrible things of man's doing (which are waxing worse and worse), and by the fewness of our numbers, and by the woeful inattention to the Word of God on the part of the average individual, despite the fact that our loving Father does not desire the death of any—then let us lift our minds upward, and thank God, and take courage, come what may. Outside of Him we have nothing: IN Him we can have all—

*"ALL THINGS are for your sakes" (2 Cor. 4:15).*



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|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 8. Ekron, Ashdod, Gaza      | 29. Mary, Martha, Lazarus   | 48. Jonathan, Abinadab, Melchishua   |
| 9. Er, Onan, Shelah         | 30. Kohath, Gershon, Merari | 49. Passover, Pentecost,             |
| 10. Reuben, Simeon, Levi    | 31. Apes, ivory, peacocks   | Tabernacles                          |
| 11. Ham, Shem, Japheth      | 32. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob   | 50. Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego      |
| 12. Harp, sackbut, psaltery | 33. Galilee, Samaria, Judea | 51. Jemima, Kezia, Kerenhappuch      |
| 13. Men, brethren, fathers  | 34. Fire, smoke, brimstone  | 52. Mantles, wimples, crispings pins |
| 14. Frogs, lice, flies      | 35. Israel, Egypt, Assyria  | 53. Psalms, hymns, spiritual songs   |
| 15. Wood, hay, stubble      | 36. Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar | 54. Charmer, wizard, necromancer     |
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