

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

LAMPASAS, Texas—Christadelphian Hall, 1606 E. Ave. I—Bible Class 10 am; Memorial 11 am; Nazareth Revisited Class 7pm (Lecture each 4th Sun.7pm); Daily Reading Class 7pm Wed. Bro. Ross Wolfe, 1802 Rumley Rd., Lampasas 76550. Phone (512) 556-5249.

LOVING Greetings to those of like Faith.

We continue to have a lecture once each month, with little response from the alien.

We invite those who can to be with us for our June 11-13 Fraternal Gathering, to build each other up in the things concerning the Truth.

Visitors have been: bro. & sis. Paul Neely, bro. & sis. Fred Higham Jr., sis. Mildred Banta, sis. Kay Wolfe, sis. Eva Banta, & bro. David Van Pelt (Houston); sis. Seba Edwards (San Angelo); bro. & sis. Bill Edwards (Harper): bro. & sis. Frank Truelove (Richard).

We received encouraging words of exhortation by bre. Higham, Truelove, and Van Pelt. Bro. Truelove also gave a lecture, "Judgment to Come: the Giving of Divine Awards to Those Who Are Responsible at Christ's Return."
—bro. Ross Wolfe

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA—Memorial 10:30 am; Class 11:30-Home of bro. Wm. Sharp, 140 Princeton, Claremont, Calif. 91711. Phone (714) 626-0490.

GREETINGS in the One Hope to all of like precious Faith.

The purposes of the Creator develop slowly but relentlessly toward the glorious end which He had in mind when His Spirit first *"moved upon the face of the waters"* when *"the earth was without form and void."* Marvellous indeed are all the works of God, not the least of which is His method in visiting the Gentiles *"to take out of them a people for His Name."*

How diligent we should be in our efforts to work out our salvation by conforming our lives to its precepts of righteousness. May the Holy One of Israel bless the efforts of each of us to do what is pleasing in His sight.

Since our last communication, sister Sharp and I have enjoyed the pleasant and stimulating company and fellowship of the following brethren and sisters.

Bro. & sis. Ed Truelove and family were with us for several days in March, 1975. Bro. Ed gave us a word of exhortation at our memorial service on Mar. 23.

Our sister Carolyn Thompson from Evansville, Ind. was with us for 3 Sundays, May 25, June 1 & 8.

On Aug. 10 we had with us bro. Norman Blacker of Edmonton, Alberta.

We also were privileged to meet with sis. Grace Frisbie of Houston on several occasions while she was at her daughter's home in Carpenteria, Calif. Our visits were on Apr. 20, 1975, and Feb. 1, 22, and Mar. 15, 1976.

Such contacts with our brethren and sisters, infrequent though they be, plus the Fraternal Gatherings we are permitted to enjoy, give us much needed spiritual refreshment while travelling thru this wilderness wherein no waters be.

With love in the Hope of Israel,

—bro. Wm. Sharp

WHANGAREI, New Zealand—YWCA Hall, Rust Ave.—Memorial 10:30am; Lecture 7 pm — Bro. M. J. Griffin, PO Box 55, Whangarei.

LOVE and Greetings to the Household of Faith.

Although some of us are separated by many 1000s of miles from the main body of our brethren and sisters, Paul reminds us, in writing to the Roman, Corinthian and Ephesian brethren and sisters, that—

"We are One Body in Christ, and every one members one of another. "

Those in isolation follow with deep interest all the ecclesial activities of the One Body, and like bro. Jackson [January issue], the ecclesial news is the first section we turn to on opening our magazine. We would re-echo our brother's plea that this section of our magazine continue to be supported.

We continue to do what we can, in the face of a disinterested world, to spread the Gospel message; but, as ever, the real work lies within ourselves.

We are pleased to report that recently we were able to pay a short visit to our bro. & sis. Starr, in isolation some 150 miles south from here.

Present events throughout the troubled world should make us realize more fully the gravity of the days in which we live. Russia's open interference in Africa illustrates the measure of her contempt for the opinions of the Western nations—based on the full assurance of her own overwhelming military power.

The feeble protests of the Western nations, as they look with misgiving on recent events in Africa, are lightly brushed aside. Surely the King of the North has reached the "plenitude of his power" as so marvellously envisioned by bro. Dr. Thomas over 100 years ago. And now the nations of Africa are again on the move, and seething with unrest—a portent of the terrible judgments that will finally overtake that continent (as, indeed, all continents).

Egypt, in renouncing her treaty with Russia # has brought about the very reaction that will ensure that (Dan. 11:42-43) —

"The land of Egypt shall not escape. But he (the King of the North) shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and overall the precious things of Egypt. "

All this quickening of the pulse of fear and distrust among the nations brings to mind the words of Isaiah, *"I the Lord will hasten it in his time."*

Truly, brethren and sisters, *"We have not followed cunningly devised fables,"* and the outworking of the prophetic picture in our time, as in times long past, confirms the words of Peter that—

"We have also a more sure Word of prophecy " (2 Pet. 1:19).

These things being so, let us ponder deeply the apostle's following words—

"Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed."

Love in the Truth from all at Whangarei, Sincerely your brother,

—M. J . Griffin

A prominent member of another group, eager to disprove bro. Thomas, in their official magazine, hailed this pact as positive proof Russia couldn't be Gog. How unwise to be swayed by passing events in intemperate zeal to discredit our pioneer and promote 'some new thing.'

EDITORIAL

Happy Art Thou, O Israel

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom . . . She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her"—Proverbs 3:13-18.

AS we listen to discussions on the subject of happiness, it becomes evident that most people seem to think that the greatest happiness they could achieve would be freedom and ability to go wherever they want to go, and do whatever they want to do—complete freedom and opportunity to gratify the flesh. If, however, we examine this mental impression, we will discover that it is a mistaken concept; and that, instead of achieving happiness, it merely produces shallow, temporary unsatisfying "satisfaction" through the fulfilment of the desires common to all members of the human race.

The purpose of life is not to see how much of this world's good we can accumulate, or how much money we can spend on the gratification of our natural desires. The words of Jesus bring this forcibly to our attention when he says (Luke 12:15; Matt.16:26)—

"Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth .. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?"

If a person would succeed in any quest, he must *work to a plan*, and keep his eyes fixed on that toward which his efforts are directed. To seek what is impossible is folly. We must face the facts and realities, apply and direct our mental vigour profitably, and choose to do that which is in harmony with wisdom, regardless of what present *desires* call for. It must be conceded by all that nothing truly good and profitable is ever reached without labour, or anything won without toil. The person who floats aimlessly along during his life on the deceptive tide of passing desire, without thinking where he is eventually going, may be contented—but it will be that meaningless, purposeless, animal form of "contentment" that a cat experiences when it sleeps in the sun. It is a brief, shallow, rootless thing of the immediate passing present, wholly without substance.

Genuine *lasting* happiness is well worth searching and labouring for: but it cannot be found in material things. We must go to the Word of God; for there, and only there, can we find the kind of happiness that endures. If one reads the Bible with the humble, searching object of learning its message, it soon becomes evident that it is a designed work of divine wisdom, and not the haphazard result of chance. In the very beginning our attention is directed to God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, Whom to know, said Jesus, is life eternal. The very first verse is of sweeping, boundless, simple majesty—and this remains its tone throughout. The Bible demonstrates, above all, God's eternal existence and omnipotent power; the work of His prophets; and the sayings and doings of the Anointed Jesus, through whom God manifested Himself to man. As the reader increases in the knowledge of these things, he soon discovers that—

"The fear of the Lord is the *beginning* of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding"

(Prov. 9:10).

The word "fear" in this verse does not signify dread or terror; its meaning is reverence. When we begin to reverence the great and holy God, then we begin to appreciate His Word. And as our appreciation increases, so does our knowledge and understanding of what has been revealed. Thus we experience our first stage of happiness which is so eloquently expressed in these words (Prov. 3:13-18) —

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

"She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her . . . Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her."

As the reader progresses, he soon discovers that new vistas are opened before him, and many of his previous ideas of the Bible have to be discarded. This is especially so regarding the subject of the Gospel, which many of us at one time believed was simply that Christ died on the cross as a substitute for man to save immortal souls from endless hell fire. What a pleasant surprise and relief was ours when we discovered that immortal soulism and eternal torture are not Bible doctrines, but products of the darkness and superstition of ancient Egypt. And, further, that the Gospel is a much more wonderful and comprehensive thing, and dates back many centuries before the appearance of Jesus, and is based upon what Peter describes as "those Great and Precious Promises!" The work of Jesus, at his first advent, is summed up by Paul (Rom. 15:8)—

"Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the Truth of God, to confirm the Promises made unto the Fathers."

This was accomplished when he took away sin by the sacrifice of himself, through which he brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel, and opened up the Way of Salvation to all who come to him in faith and obedience. When he publicly preached the Gospel to the multitudes, he said nothing about death on the cross. His teaching to them related to the "Kingdom of God." And the apostles followed in his footsteps: when Philip (Acts 8:5)—

". . . went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them . . ."

—the subject of his teaching was plain (and so were the results)—

"When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, *they were baptized*, both men and women" (v. 12).

The second phase of happiness comes into our lives when we discover what the Gospel will do for us. Paul sums it up clearly and specifically in this manner—

"Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made. He (God) said not, And to seeds (as of many), but as of ONE: And to thy Seed [singular], which is Christ . . .

"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" (Gal.3:16, 27, 29).

Introduction into Christ, however, though both crucial and transforming, is not the final apex of happiness. We must not rest there. There is *something to be done*, even a lifetime of faithful, joyful effort, which Paul describes as "*working out our salvation!*" He says—

"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 [that is, for the purpose 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" (Rom. 6:3-4).

When one walks in "*newness of life*" he separates himself from all the former natural, carnal oldness of life, all the so-called "pleasures" of this world, and sets his affection on things above, and does all in his power to "walk

worthy of God." He fully realizes the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and—like Paul—presses toward the mark of such a great prize in his effort to win Christ (Phil. 3:10-11)—

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

He realizes abundantly that—

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Cor.15:50).

—and that it is only by a resurrection from among the dead, and having his body changed like unto the glorious body of Jesus, that he will be "made like unto the angels, who die no more." He will therefore, in the words of Paul, say—

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim.4:8).

Yes, the Bible exhibits a glorious future of happiness, a future of everlasting joy to those who *walk in the Truth*, a future when—

"The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea"

(Habakkuk2:14).

This is what produces a happiness that can only be described as overwhelming, peaceful, supreme, rapturous, unutterable, radiant and sublime.

—Editor

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS

If the Lord will

LAMPASAS: Friday to Sunday, June 11-13

Bro. Ross Wolfe, 1802 RumleyRd., Lampasas, Tx. 76550, Ph. (512) 556-5249

HYE: Monday to Sunday, July 26 - August 1

Bro. Nick Mammone, 70 W. 34th, San Angelo, Tx. 76901, Ph. (915)653-5187

(Please notify us of any other proposed Gatherings)

Many things that are not expressly forbidden are excluded from a saint's practices if he seek to reach the standard set up for him in the writings of the apostles. It is an injunction to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh or spirit, remembering that our bodies are members of Christ.

There are things on which men of sense and holiness do not require prohibition. Who does not know that narcotism is inconsistent with the pure action of the vital machinery of which God has constituted man? Who does not know that tobacco fumes have a defiling effect on those who steep their faculties in them? Who does not know that it is the universal practice of wickedness, and associated with every form of debauchery and evil-doing in our dark and evil day. Who does not instinctively shrink at the sight of children smoking? Who could behold a woman smoking without feeling that she was degraded? Who could imagine Christ with a cigarette in his mouth?

On these grounds alone, a man of judgment will say that smoking is a thing to be eschewed by every man who seeks to purify himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit that he may be "holy both in body and in spirit," walking as becometh a saint in the midst of an evil world.

—**Bro. Roberts, 1893.**

Rachel Weeping for Her Children

"Thus saith the Lord: A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, bitter weeping. Rachel, weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.

"Thus saith the Lord: Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for there is a reward for thy work, saith the Lord, and they shall return from the land of the enemy. And there is hope for thine end, saith the Lord, and thy children shall return to their own boundary" (Jer. 31:15-17).

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

"A voice was heard in Ramah." Ramah was one of those cities which were allotted by Joshua to the tribe of Benjamin on the frontier of this canton and that of Ephraim. The word signifies an eminence. Sometimes it is put simply for a high place, and then signifies neither a city nor a village.

In Ramah, or on the high places of Benjamin and Ephraim, was a voice to be heard—in the city of that name, and in all the region round about. This voice or cry was also foretold by Isaiah:

"Ramah is afraid, Gibeath of Saul is fled. Lift up thy voice, O daughter of Gallim: cause it to be heard unto Laish. O poor Anathoth" (Isa. 10:30).

Gallim and Anathoth (the latter the birthplace of Jeremiah) were cities of Benjamin. Referring to the same event, Hosea says

"Blow ye the cornet in Gibeath, the trumpet in Ramah; cry aloud Bethaven after thee, O Benjamin. Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke." (Hos. 5:8).

Hence, the voice to be heard was lamentation and bitter weeping on account of the desolation and slaughter of Benjamin and Ephraim by the enemy, and their deportation to their enemy's land.

The contexts of these references show that the predictions relate to the removal of the whole 12 tribes from their land by the Assyrian power. Benjamin stands for Judah and Jerusalem as well as for its own particular canton, for the kingdom of Judah included Benjamin, and Jerusalem was one of the cities that fell by lot to it when Joshua subdued the country.

Ephraim represents the rest of the tribes, or the kingdom of *Israel* as distinguished from that of *Judah*, inasmuch as Samaria (the seat of government) belonged to Ephraim and Manasseh.

The prophecy of this voice of lamentation in Ramah found its initiatory accomplishment when the overthrow of the 12 tribes was consummated by Nebuchadnezzar, the Chaldean head of Assyria. Then captives of Judah's kingdom were gathered together in Ramah (Jer. 40:1), and with them Jeremiah the prophet, at the disposal of Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard.

The voice of lamentation ascending from these prisoners can better be conceived than described. The tender and delicate of the upper and wealthy classes of the state—whose children and relatives had been slain by the sword, and their palaces and mansions burnt with fire—were there assembled to be marched off by a barbarian soldiery into their enemies' land. The cry of that day was a loud, shrill and bitter lamentation, not confined to Ramah, but extending throughout the land from Beersheba to Dan.

Jeremiah, though especially protected by the favour of God and the king His servant, mingled in that lament for his country's ruin,

"How doth the city sit solitary" (he exclaims) "that once was full of people! As a widow is she become! She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, tributary is she become.

"Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the nations, she findeth no rest; her pursuers overtook her between the straits.

"Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper; for the Lord hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions: her children are gone into captivity before the enemy" . . .

—that is, "*They are not.*" But, notwithstanding all that calamity,

"There is hope for thine end: they shall come again from the land of the enemy—they shall return to their own border."

And they *did return in part*, as an earnest—so to speak—of the great restoration in Israel's "*latter end.*" Benjamin—the son of Rachel's sorrow, and the son of Jacob's right hand—returned with Judah, his fraternal ally, from the land of the enemy to his own border, 70 years after his deportation.

This was the first and only restoration of the Hebrew commonwealth. But there was a little comfort in it. Ephraim and Manasseh "*were not*" being still exiles beyond Bashan.

These were Rachel's children, as well as Benjamin, being the descendants of Joseph her firstborn. They have never yet returned from the land of the enemy to their own border. The time for this is not arrived; but of its certainty there can be no doubt in the mind of him who is intelligent in the Faith, believing the words of Moses and the prophets.

But the voice of lamentation and bitter weeping was not stifled by Benjamin's return. There was another crisis in Hebrew affairs to be encountered, which would cause that voice to rend the air with piercing cries of lamentation and woe.

Its echoes would sound from one end of the Roman world to the other, and be hushed only by a second deportation of Benjamin into the land of the enemy. After this the cry would be heard no more in Ramah, or on the high places of the land of Israel. "*Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears.*"

This "refrain" hath continued hitherto. Since the destruction of Benjamin's city, the metropolis of Judah's kingdom, the tribe's lament has no more been heard in Ramah; for Rachel's weeping and tears can only result from the eyes and voice of her descendants in the land.

The reason why the voice of weeping no more ascends is because there is hope for Benjamin, Ephraim, and their companions; and this hope is *that they will return from the land of the enemy to their own border.*

This restoration is the subject of Jeremiah's prophecy found in chs. 30 & 31. Let the reader peruse them in this connection. They contain the Gospel of the Kingdom *with its mystery unexplained.*

The following are a few quotations from them:

"The days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel and Judah: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it."

Speaking of the day of Israel's own engraftment into their own olive, he saith—

"Alas! for the day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of armies, I will, break his (Gog, the Russo-Assyrian) yoke from off thy neck; and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall NO MORE serve themselves of him. But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David (the beloved) their king, whom I will RAISE UP unto them."

"I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."

"Behold I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling-places; and the city (Jerusalem) shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof."

"Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them. And their nobles (the saints) shall be of themselves, and their Governor (Christ) shall proceed from the midst of them: and I will cause him to draw near, and He shall approach unto me"—or be High Priest.

"In the latter days ye shall consider it."

In reference to these "latter days," The Lord saith, again—

"I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria;

"For thus saith the Lord: Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; publish ye, and praise ye, and say, O Lord, save Thy people the remnant of Israel.

"Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth" (the land of the enemy) "for I am a father to Israel, Ephraim is My first born.

"Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, as a shepherd doth his flock.

"For the Lord redeems Jacob, and ransoms him from the hand of the stronger than he—they shall not sorrow **any more at all.**"

Then comes the passage about Rachel in Ramah. These quotations show what the hope is for Rachel's end; and what is meant by the return of her children from the land of the enemy to their own border. There is a mystery, however, connected with this the obvious import of the prophecy, which I shall explain presently.

But before proceeding to this I would remark, that Rachel is representative of the policy of which Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh were important constituents. Rachel was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin; and *literally* never wept for her children "because they were not," inasmuch as she died long before them.

The voice of lamentation is therefore affirmed of *her* in a figurative sense. The voice was a real voice of woe, and declared of Rachel in the case of her descendants. The appointment of Joseph's 2 sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, as patriarchs of tribes with Benjamin, made her the mother, or matriarch, of a fourth part of Israel; and by their political relations to the other tribes, the chief mother of the flock.

Hence, the inheritor of Joseph's pre-eminence is styled "Ephraim my firstborn." Laban would have had Leah for the matriarch of Jacob's posterity; but God, who establishes all things by an election, chose Rachel (as He had done Isaac and Jacob in preference to Ishmael and Esau, the beloved of their fathers) to be, with Sarah and Rebekah, the matriarchs of Israel.

Rachel's children, then, are constitutionally the whole 12 tribes. She died and was buried near to Bethlehem-Ephratah, afterwards rendered famous as the birthplace of David, and his son Jesus Christ.

Sleeping in the dust of Judea, she is personified as weeping in bitterness of soul for the cruelty inflicted upon her sons in the land of the living. *Her* tears fall from *their* eyes when Nebuzaradan, Herod, or Titus becomes a sword in the hearts of their children and friends; and as Israel's mother she refuses to be comforted so long as they are in the land of the enemy, exiles from home.

But there is a mystery, or hidden meaning, to this prophecy, which doth not appear to the careless reader. Hosea, referring to the restoration of Israel, says to Rachel's son,

"O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself: but in Me is thine help. I will be thy King."

"The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up: his sin is hid."

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from My eyes."

Ephraim is politically dead, and buried; so also is "the whole house of Israel;" for, say they, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off from our parts," or native homes (Ezek. 37:11). But, saith the Lord God,

"Behold, O My people. I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, and bring you to the land of Israel."

The bringing them into the land of Israel is national restoration. The nations are the graves in which Israel is nationally entombed; but the time is at hand when their King shall say "to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back."

He will be the plagues of these death-dealing and destroying powers; and until this come to pass, Rachel will not be comforted, individually nor matriarchally; for till then she will not be raised from the dead to her beloved Joseph and Benjamin, and her children the whole house of Israel, rejoicing within their own border under their glorious Shepherd, "the Stone of Israel," wearing Joseph's crown as the one like him who was "separate from his brethren."

She will rejoice because "*they are*"—because they are children returned from the land of the enemy to live in their own border, and a multitude of them *for evermore*.

But saith the inquirer, if this exposition be admitted, what does Matthew mean by saying that Herod's slaughter of "all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof," was the fulfilment of this prophecy of Jeremiah about Rachel?

Matthew does not say that that event fulfilled Jeremiah's *Prophecy*, but "*The saying*." The saying was fulfilled in an appropriate sense; for Bethlehem and the limits thereof were the resting place of Rachel's dust, which might be figuratively said, in the words of the prophet, to utter a voice of lamentation and bitter weeping, when the cry of her daughters rent the air.

On that occasion, "A voice was heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning." This was a fact. The mothers of the murdered infants would not be comforted, because they were dead. This was another fact. It was also a fact, that the mothers were Rachel's people; but it was figurative to say *Rachel* wept.

Taken altogether, the saying of Jeremiah was very applicable; especially as it was the earnest of a lamentation which would be the *accomplishment of his prophecy in full*—an accomplishment to which Jesus alluded when he said to the women who bewailed and lamented him,

"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." For behold, the days are coming in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts that never gave suck.

"Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

In Matt. 2:15 there is another example of a prophet's *saying* being fulfilled, or rather applied to an incident to be taken as an earnest of the fulfilment of the thing predicted:

"When Israel was a child" (saith Jehovah) "then I loved him, and called My Son out of Egypt."

This is an historical fact. But Matthew intimates that it is *more* than history; that it is a prophecy also: and this intimation is found in the saying that the exodus of the child Jesus from Egypt, was calling God's Son out of Egypt in a sense of the prophet's saying. Christ is called "*Israel*" in Isa. 49:4. He bears Jacob's new name, and the name of the nation of which he is king.

God loved His people Israel in childhood, and Jesus too. He called them both out of Egypt, where spiritually the tribes are to this day. But "Out of Egypt call I my Son." Their king's exodus is an earnest of theirs.

Ephraim, God's firstborn of the nations, will come out of Egypt's antitype, to return again no more. Then will Hosea's saying find its accomplishment in full, when —

"The Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people which shall be left, from Egypt."

Out of Egypt will Ephraim then be called.

—1853

O Wretched Man That I Am!

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"—1 Cor. 2:14

ROMANS CHAPTER SEVEN

THIS chapter forms part of a chain of reasoning, but may nevertheless be considered apart without disadvantage, if its relation to the chain is recognized. It illustrates Peter's remark about Paul's epistles:

"Wherein are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do the other scriptures."

There are statements in it that are only intelligible on a just apprehension of human nature in all its relations. Those who grasp only some of these are baffled by some of those statements. It requires spiritual-mindedness to see their truth or understand them. Carnal men do not know what carnal nature is. Strange though it may appear, it requires spiritual discernment to be able to know and recognize 'the flesh' in all its signification. A lion does not know itself a lion: even so a carnal man does not know what carnal nature is: it can only be discerned by the Spirit and those who are taught by it. To carnal men, this spiritual discernment is only a thing to laugh at, but it is nonetheless a reality which enables those possessing it to understand Paul, and to endorse Paul's experience as their own.

This chapter is almost a touchstone by which a man's whereabouts in spiritual understanding may be ascertained—

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, they are spiritually discerned."

Rom. 7 is particularly addressed—

"to them that know the Law (of Moses)"-v.1.

—because the argument to be employed was to hang on an illustration derived from the Law, and to relate to their position in reference to the Law. The first fact laid down is that the Law's jurisdiction over a man extended to the full term of his life. However long he lived, he could never reach an age when he would be free—

"The Law hath dominion over a man so long as he liveth" (v. 1).

Death put an end to this dominion, for no law could reach dead men. This is illustrated by the case of a husband to whom a wife was bound so long as he lived, but at whose death she was free to be married to another. Her husband died *really*, and she died *legally*, to the law holding them in union as man and wife; and the woman was at liberty to form a new connection. Paul applies both features of the illustration to the case in hand—

"Ye, my brethren, are become dead to the Law."

How?—

". . . by the body of Christ."

How came they to be related to the body of Christ? By being "baptized into Jesus Christ" (Rom.6:3), and so becoming members of his body (Eph. 5:30). What had the body of Christ to do with death? It was hung on Calvary till death invaded it. What had this to do with escaping the jurisdiction of the Law? Christ was made under the Law, subject to death like his brethren (Gal.4:4; Heb.2:9-16). Therefore, when he died under the curse of the Law, the jurisdiction of the Law ceased. And when he rose again he was "another" man in relation to what he had been before—a free man, by marriage with whom we may obtain freedom also. Is this what Paul means by the illustration of a widow being married to a new husband? Yes. He says (v. 4)—

"Ye are become dead to the Law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another."

To whom?—

"To him who is raised from the dead."

Wouldn't it have been sufficient to be married to the first Christ—Christ before crucifixion? According to God's wisdom, it would not have been sufficient, for he was not then free. Is it to the dead Christ we are married? No—

"To him who is raised from the dead" (v. 4).

—partaking whose death in baptism, we also partake of his purchased freedom from the law of sin and death. The *object* of this way of God is Stated to be—

"That we should bring forth fruit unto God" (v.4).

This is no chance saying, or mere rhetorical finish to a sentence. It touches the very marrow of the plan of salvation. The object of that plan is that the glory of the goodness that will come by it may be directly and proximately and obviously due to Jehovah, and that the glory of the creature may be excluded. It is expressed by Paul thus—

"That we should be to the praise of HIS glory" (Eph. 1:12).

If salvation had been given as a reward of *merit*, there would have been something for the flesh to glory in. Fruit brought forth in such a connection would have been fruit unto ourselves. But—

"The Law having entered that the offense might abound" (Rom.5:20).

—and all the world having thus become guilty and condemned, room is made for the abounding of grace (or favour) in our admission to forgiveness for Christ's sake, in whom the Law has been vindicated and fulfilled. Fruit brought forth by those occupying this position of favour in Christ is 'fruit unto God.' They are *God's* husbandry (1 Cor. 3:9), *God's* workmanship, created (by Him) in Christ unto good works (Eph. 2:10). He has—

"Predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ *to Himself*, according to the good pleasure of His will *to the praise of the glory of HIS grace*" (Eph. 1:5-6).

To this position they are called by the Gospel (2 Thess. 2:14). When called, they are "in the grace of Christ" (Gal. 1:6). The favour of being admitted to such a position precedes all "works." The works to come after will decide whether or no we are to continue in the favour, but in the first instance, conferring of it is independent of our works. Here lies the solution of all seeming conflict in the apostles' writings on the subject of grace and works. The opportunity of being saved is of faith that it might be by grace (Rom. 4:16), and it is of grace that it might be to the praise of God to Whom praise only truly belongs; and not to man who is powerless and empty, that we might bring forth fruit unto God and not to ourselves.

V. 5: "When we were in the flesh, the motions of sins which were by the Law did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death."

In the literal sense, Paul was still in the flesh when he wrote these words, as illustrated by such remarks as—

"Though we walk *in the flesh*, we war not after the flesh" (2 Cor. 10:3).

"As many as have not known my face *in the flesh*" (Col. 2:1).

But in his spiritual relations, he was no longer "in the flesh." He did not stand on the flesh; his hopes were not founded on its achievements; his friendship toward God was not based on its merits, but on God's favour in Christ. It was his doctrine that—

"They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8).

—because—

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

They were condemned already, and could not justify themselves from past sins by their good deeds. Hence Paul did not and could not rest in the flesh as a ground of confidence. He describes himself and those who were with him as those who rejoiced in Christ Jesus—

". . . and had no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3).

Paul once rested in the flesh, as this v. shows—

"When we were in the flesh."

As he says in Phil. 3:4—

"If any man thinketh he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, *I more*: circumcised the 8th day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, touching the Law a Pharisee."

Before Paul saw Christ near Damascus, he was resting on his achievements under the Law. He was then, spiritually, "in the flesh"; and his statement in the verse before us is that—

"When he was in the flesh, the motions of sins which were BY THE LAW did work in his members to bring forth FRUIT UNTO DEATH" (v. 5).

But now, says he (v. 6)—

"We are delivered from the Law, THAT being dead wherein we were held . . .

—that is, the bondage of the Law which held them ended in Christ, on whom it expended its whole curse—

". . . that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

In this connection, we can understand his language in 2 Cor. 3:5-9—

"Our sufficiency is of God, Who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit, for *the letter killeth*, but the Spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven on stones, was glorious . . . how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."

But this argument about the Law causing sin and bringing condemnation suggests, on the face of it, that the Law is a sinful thing. Paul accordingly anticipates and answers the objection (v. 7)—

"What shall we say then? IS THE LAW SIN? God forbid!"

Here we must pause a moment to consider the "I" of this and the succeeding 18 verses. Who is it? It would not be necessary to ask this superfluous question were it not for a class of interpreters who say the "I" isn't Paul but "an unregenerate man"—a personation of wickedness introduced by Paul to illustrate the workings of sin.

A very rapid glance is sufficient to show the erroneousness of this suggestion. The "I" of Paul's discourse is one who is wretched on account of his shortcomings (v. 24): this is not the condition of a man "dead in trespasses and sins." Paul's "I" thanks God at the prospect of deliverance through Christ (25), which the typical sinner of the new theory could not do. Paul's "I" delights on the law of God after the inward man (22): this does not the so-called "unregenerate man." Most obviously the "I" is Paul himself, as the connection requires, & as is conclusively proved by the last sentence of the soliloquy (v. 25)—

"So then with the mind I MYSELF serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

Nothing but the requirements of a wrong theory could have suggested the violence of taking away these words from Paul, and putting them into the mouth of a so-called "unregenerate man."

But now comes the question of how some of the statements are to be understood if Paul is the speaker. This will best be answered by a close following of the statements, in the consideration of which we shall find Paul speaks of himself *at different stages of his life*, whence we obtain one clue to a right understanding. In answer to the question whether the Law, after all he had said, was not to be considered sinful, he says—

"God forbid! Nay, I had not known sin but by the Law, for I had not known lust except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

His object is to prove the Law was a spiritual institution designed to make manifest the corruptness of human nature. Keeping this in view (which is stated in v.14), it is easy to follow the argument. Paul's knowledge of sin was

derived from the Law, for if the Law had not forbidden certain natural actions of the mind, he would have remained ignorant of sin in these directions, though fully exercised therein. As he says elsewhere—

"By the Law is the *knowledge* of sin" (Rom.3:20).

His argument is,

"The Law is spiritual, for it taught me what sin was."

It made him aware of his tendency sin-wards (v. 8)—

**"Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence.
For without the Law, sin was dead."**

Here is a distinctively retrospect illusion—a reference to a *past experience* of Paul, which becomes more definite in the next 3 verses—

"For I WAS alive without the Law ONCE, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment which was ordained to life I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me" (vs. 9-11).

As a child of the circumcision, rejoicing in the inherited privileges of Abrahamic extraction, Paul—in his early years—was *alive*, looking up to God with confidence, and forward with hope in the Promises made to the Fathers. But when the commandment came to him (on his arrival at maturity—that is, when he came as an adult under the operation of the Law—when his *faculties awoke* and his mind opened to the full perception of what the Law required), he experienced the revulsion of feeling described in these verses. He found himself condemned by the Law that was ordained to—and to which he looked for—life.

But he puts not the blame on the Law. It was the propensities native to himself that rebelled under the dictation of the Law. The conclusion he draws is—

"Wherefore the Law is holy; and the commandment holy, just and good" (v. 12).

But he again recurs to the apparent paradox (v. 13)—

"Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid!"

And in the next sentence he gives us the philosophy of the Law, so to speak—a philosophy which is foolishness to the natural man, but in which, nevertheless, it is possible to discover a surpassing beauty. He states that its object was (v. 13)—

"That sin might appear sin, working death in him by that which is good, that SIN BY THE COMMANDMENT MIGHT BECOME EXCEEDING SINFUL."

Sin (the natural rebelliousness of the human heart against the authority of God) was, without the Law, *latent*. A man without command to do that which was disagreeable, or abstain from that which was pleasant to his natural impulses, could not be manifest either to himself or others in his real disposition towards God. He would be a sinner *undeveloped* for want of opportunity; innocent of transgression because of the absence of law, but certainly not a righteous man whose characteristic is submission to God. *The object of the Law was to make this latent sinner manifest—*

"The Law entered that the offense might abound" (Rom.5:20).

It was "added because of transgression" (Gal. 3:19) in this sense—

"That every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19).

It was a complicated system of exactions by which weak human nature was certain to become convicted in many transgressions. For thus it is that Paul was able to say—

"AS many as are of the works of the Law are *under the curse*; FOR it is written, Cursed is everyone that *continueth not* IN ALL THINGS which are written in the book of the Law, to do them" (Gal. 3:10).

Sport has been made of the fact that God gave a law that men were not able to keep. Son-of-Belial like, the questioner has dared the presumptuous question: Why should He do such a thing? It is easy to ask, What would be thought of the man that should appoint his fellow a task impossible for him to accomplish, and then punish him for not performing it? You cannot argue from such a transaction between man and man, to what it is between God and man.

Man is the workmanship and property of God, and He may do with man what man may not do with man, for who shall say to Him, What doest Thou?

But the next thought is of even more consequence. Between man and man such a transaction, without any object beyond itself, would be tyrannical; whereas on the part of God, as an element in a process *by which great good is to be worked out*, it is the form of wisdom and kindness. One man cutting off another man's leg with intention to maim, is a monster; with intent to save life from dangerous malady, he is a benefactor. This illustrates the difference between the 2, and demonstrates the shallowness of all arguments from man to God as to the working of this principle.

God gave a rigorous and burdensome law, that men might at last come to know how sinful they are, and how powerless to work out for themselves eternal good. Here it may be asked, Why did He allow man to get into such a state? Why didn't He so watch and hedge the beginnings of things that man might have continued very good, and earned the divine favour by his unflinching compliance with the divine will? The answer is: that God might be exalted in salvation being a thing of His Own favour.

Again it may be asked, Why is it so very important that God be exalted? Why not develop eternal society upon the principle so much applauded in the world-of self-reliance, independence, self-respect, etc? Here we touch the root and marrow of the whole subject. The recognition of God as the Highest and the Best and the Benefactor direct, tender, cordial—is necessary for the pleasure of God and the well-being of man, and is demanded by the eternal reason of things.

God is eternal and sovereign: man a helpless dependent upon His power, wisdom, and goodness. The recognition of this fact is the essential basis of any intercourse between God and man, let alone eternal fellowship. The distinct, thrilling, striking recognition of this fact is brought about by precisely the experience through which God has put that part of the human race of whom He intends to make future use. The Law convinces them all as transgressors: every mouth is shut. There is no room for glorying. Salvation has come of the pure goodness of God, in harmony with His Own wisdom. God is exalted, and we are abased to the position of humble recipients of His favour, in Christ, in whom our sins have been condemned. As an indispensable preliminary to this result, it was necessary that the natural man be put under the Law (v.13)—

"That sin [in him] might appear sin, and that by the commandment it might become [what it is] exceeding sinful."

Paul continues (v. 14)—

"For we know that the Law is spiritual . . .

The Law is the dictate of the Spirit's authority and the embodiment of the Spirit's wisdom, imposed upon the natural man who, as the Spirit's work and property, is bound to be subject (vs. 14-24)—

"The Law is spiritual, but I (Paul) am carnal, sold under sin.

"For that which I do, I allow not; and what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the Law that it is good. Now it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not.

"For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.

"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

These are the words that constitute the difficulty which some experience in the understanding of this chapter. They think it inconceivable that Paul, the obedient and exemplary saint, who could say—

"Be ye followers of me" . . . "Walk *as ye have us for an example.*"

—could describe himself in words which appear to imply an abandoned character. Their difficulty arises from a superficial view of the case. The difficulty disappears when we follow Paul in the full depth of his argument. *He is dealing with the roots and foundations of the subject.* He is showing what the Law is IN ITSELF, and what human nature is IN ITSELF. The former he proves to be holy and spiritual; and though it is the occasion of sin to those placed under it, he shows the cause of this to lie in them and not in it.

He makes use of himself to illustrate the point; for he could speak experimentally as one in whom the Law had wrought its full work of causing him to know himself. And although standing in the liberty of the Gospel, and serving and delighting in the law of God after the inward man, he was still in the flesh physically, and, therefore,

carried about with him the spiritual burden of the old man whom—though held in subjection—he found to be an ever-present obstacle to the full flights marked out by the new mental man created in him in Jesus Christ. He could, therefore, declare all the things set forth in the concluding half of the chapter, without creating any difficulty as to his acceptable walk and conversation.

Those who have soared the highest, spiritually, will understand this best. Only spiritual-mindedness feels the burden of the natural man. The natural man, pure and simple, has no sense of burden in a spiritual direction. He is content with his attainments because he knows nothing beyond them, like a rustic dauber on canvas—well-pleased with his own productions and those of his fellow-daubers, which would fill with anguish the soul of a true artist.

Paul had become spiritually-minded, but this was an engraftment from without. It was superimposed on the natural Paul by the education of the Truth and (in his case) the direct instruction of the Spirit. It was a *new man* united with the old or natural man. There was thus a duality created, of which every man similarly subject to the Spirit is conscious; not a separable duality, but still a felt one, so far as mental operations are concerned. It is necessary to have this duality in view, in order to appreciate Paul's remarks in question. The duality is very visible in his remarks. Of the one he says—

"In me (that is, IN MY FLESH) dwelleth no good thing" (v. 18).

—implying that in the *other* me—that is, the new 'me', the mental 'me' created by the Spirit through the Word—there was some goodness: a capacity to—

"Delight in the law of the Lord AFTER THE INWARD MAN" (v. 22).

Again—

"I see another law in my MEMBERS warring against the law of my MIND" (v.23).

This is what he said to the Galatians (5:17)—

"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, so ye cannot do the things ye would."

The implantation of the mind of the Spirit by the Word does not extirpate the natural man with his affections and lusts; it imposes but a check, a control, a power to restrain and crucify and bring into subjection. But this power does not obtain complete ascendancy. As long as the body continues physically the mortal, sinful thing it is, the natural man acts as an obstruction to the operations of the new man of the Spirit, causing the person thus dually-constituted to feel and speak as Paul, being conscious—like him—of inability to accomplish what he 'would,' and a necessary submission to things he 'would not.'

Of the natural man, which (though in subjection) continues till we are glorified, he can say, 'I am carnal, sold under sin.' This we inherit: sin personified is the owner of the human race, because through disobedience at the beginning it obtained possession of the whole, and, therefore, of the saints such as they are as natural men; and it continues in possession till they are redeemed from the power of the grave. The release begins with the mind, and ends with the body. The body continues 'dead because of sin' (Rom.8:10), till Christ shall (Phil. 3:21):

"Change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."

While they continue in the flesh they can say with Paul (v.15)—

"That which I do I allow not; what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do."

This has always been a puzzle to the carnal class, but is intelligible enough to those who—

"Delight in the law of the Lord after the inward man" (v. 22).

Many illustrations of its meaning might be given. Let one or 2 suffice. Perfect fellowship with God (and it is after a perfect fellowship that the new man aspires) requires a continual memory and a continual love and adoration of Him—a continual sense of His greatness and holiness—a continual praise, though unexpressed. *To forget God is sin.* To see Him ALWAYS before us at our right hand is the example set for us by the Spirit in David and his Son.

But behold this natural sinner with which we as yet are clogged: his thoughts get easily filled with other things; he gets exhausted in physical energy and in a state of mental blank towards God; nay, worse, through this weakness he perhaps forgets his duty to a neighbour, and fails to sustain the part of an obedient son. The commandments concerning submission to evil, or concerning the doing of good, may be forgotten by him. He may think selfish thoughts or contemplate a selfish purpose, or fail in conducting his affairs as a faithful steward of the manifold grace of God. Concerning anger also, from the same weakness he may often fail.

These things which he does, he allows not. He hates them, and himself as the performer. The things that he would do—the continual communion with God, the continual serenity, and purity, and love, and obedience, the

continual blessing and comforting of others—he does not. His attainments are feeble, and blemished by continual imperfection. And in consequence he knows by experience what are the unutterable groanings Godwards, thru the interceding Spirit in Christ, to which Paul alludes in Rom. 8:26.

At the same time, he takes the comfort Paul administers to himself:

"If, then, I do that which I would not, I consent unto the Law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but SIN THAT DWELLETH IN ME. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (vs. 16-18).

We will not be held accountable for the non-performance of the *impossible*. It is not in order that He may punish us, but that He may make His kindness the more obvious, that weakness is the inheritance of the children of God in the first stage. Sin dwelling in them is the cause of their shortcomings. The new mental man created by the Truth (where he is created and kept alive by the continual nourishment of the Word) repudiates and grieves for the shortcomings. He consents heartily unto the law of all God's requirements, that it is good. It is not that he is guilty of the things he grieves for. If things were as he ardently desires, he would serve God day and night continually, without fault. It is a grief and a burden that he has not yet apprehended that for which he has been apprehended of God. He is looking and longing with all his heart for the time when he will be delivered from the bondage of the corruption, and rise to equality with those glorious beings, the angels of His power, who—

"Excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word; His ministers that do His pleasure" (Ps. 103:20).

In the spirit-nature, conformity with the will of God will be as instinctive and easy to him as failings are with him now. He yearns for this nature, and strives to walk in accordance with its dictates now. His life in its outward acts is ordered in harmony with its precepts. This, in fact, is the great difference between him and those who are purely carnal. The latter have no aspirations Godwards, but are content with what they 'know naturally as brute beasts.' The other pants after God "as the hart panteth for the water brooks," and strives to obey His commandments *while yet* in a state of humiliation before Him, because of the cleaving of his soul to the dust. He joins fervently in Paul's exclamation (vs. 24-25)—

"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God [Who shall deliver me] through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh, the law of sin."

That is, mentally we seek after what God requires; but physically we are subject to those conditions and necessities whose existences are due to sin.

There is much in all these things that to the merely mathematical mind will appear paradoxical. *No man can comprehend them who is destitute of a living sense of a living God*, for this is the leading factor in the whole problem. Because the natural man is destitute of this—

"For the carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be"

(Rom. 8:7).

—therefore it comes to be true that (1 Cor.2:14)—

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them; they are spiritually discerned!"

But let a man fear God (which is the *beginning* of wisdom), and let him reverently, diligently and prayerfully read His Word, and he will be able to understand these (at first sight difficult, but really) comforting and glorious things, for it is written (Prov. 2: 1-5)—

"My son, if thou wilt receive my words and hide my commandments with thee, so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver and searchest for her as for hid treasures—*then* shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

"The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy" (Psa. 147:11).

"All the words of his mouth are in righteousness. There is nothing froward or perverse in them. They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge" (Prov. 8: 8-9).

"Who is wise?—and he shall understand these things. Prudent?—and he shall know them. For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein" (Hos. 14:9).

"Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord" (Prov. 16:5).

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Please bear with delays in correspondence, etc. All has been packed and mostly unavailable for some time. It is hoped by the time this appears the transfer will have been completed, and a beginning made on delayed correspondence.

Living Sacrifice

"The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit"—Rom. 8:26-27.

FROM Adam, we have the law of sin in our members, and we are also all sinners ourselves—

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23).

It is God's law that (Heb. 9:22)—

"Without shedding of blood is no remission—forgiveness—of sin."

Why? Because sin is a destructive, infectious plague that cannot be ignored. It must be dealt with and eradicated. The sacrifice of Christ is God's way of dealing with this plague, and eventually removing it completely from the earth.

It is not a magic wand, or just a technical ritual. It is not just a form of words, or an arbitrary arrangement, or a rubber stamp. It is a practical method, an orderly procedure, a beautiful, effective contrivance of divine love and wisdom.

Christ—that is, of course, God in Christ—laid the essential foundation: something we ourselves could not do. He was specially provided and specially strengthened to do that work. *We* are required to build our own salvation on that foundation—

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).

The promise of life is to "him that *overcometh*" (7 times in Rev. 2 & 3). Whatever that means, it clearly means that we must *do* something, we must *accomplish* a certain task, we must achieve a certain victory—on Christ's foundation, and with God's help.

* * *

The eternal principles of holiness, righteousness, justice & truth required a perfect sacrifice for sin, a perfect condemnation of sin and upholding of holiness, to lay a sound foundation for the extension of God's mercy to fallen mankind. God and His holy law of life had to be honoured and vindicated—openly, publicly, eternally. This was done in the crucifixion of sin's flesh on the cross—a voluntary cooperation and manifestation of joint love by God and Christ for mankind.

Christ's perfect lifelong obedience and sacrificial death provided one real, sound, holy, perfect man out of the whole race of fallen mankind, in whom and upon whom God could build His divine family. Until Christ destroyed the devil in himself on the cross, he was not the completed, purified, victorious man that God required as the foundation of His plan (Heb. 2:14)—

"That through death he (Jesus) might destroy him that had the power of death, that it, the devil" (Heb. 2:14).

All his life he held the devil within himself completely powerless by the strength of his perfect love and perfect obedience. But that war had to be brought to a climax and settlement. Sin, the devil, had to be not only held off, held powerless, but utterly destroyed.

It must be a sacrificial death—a voluntary, obedient submitting to a death that was otherwise escapable. If Christ had just lived a perfect life and then died a natural death, he would not have been voluntarily giving up his life, laying down his life, pouring out his blood, choosing in obedience to be a purifying sacrifice for mankind. Nor would it have clearly and dramatically and openly and publicly manifested God's holiness, and the repudiation and condemnation of sin.

In Christ—THE man, the perfect sacrifice, the complete example, the central reality of the whole divine purpose—the body of sin had to be put to death, *really and truly and literally and actually*, as it was typically and figuratively in the Mosaic shadows. It had to be lifted up before all the world in condemnation and repudiation.

The crucifixion of Christ is the most public event of all time. All mankind's history is dated from Christ—forward and backward—AD & BC. This present entire heathen, pagan world, in international dealings, dates every act according to his birth. Diverse as they are, it is their common point of reference. This is no coincidence, no mistake, no accident or oversight. It is a providential, condemning witness. From God's point of view, Christ's life and death form the pivot of all human history: all radiates from it, all revolves around it.

Sin, the Devil, the Diabolos—in the Romans, in the Jews, in the world of mankind—openly rejected him, openly rejected the perfect Son of God who had never done anything but good, and put him to a cruel death, cut him off violently from the land of the living. The Seed of the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman—the eternal enmity—began in Eden, brought to a climax at Calvary, finally resolved when the last enemy, death, is destroyed, and God is all in all.

Christ, in his death, did not appease or satisfy or put away God's anger. Rather he manifested God's love and holiness and goodness. God's anger against sin is never appeased. He will be angry with sin till sin is eliminated from the earth. But anger is more properly applied to responsible living creatures: not inanimate principles. God's anger at sinners is appeased when they repent and change and put away and repudiate their sins, and wholeheartedly seek Him.

Christ's sacrifice was not to appease God's anger. The whole conception was all of God's Own love and wisdom and initiative, for man's reconciliation—

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them . . . We beseech you, be reconciled to God . . . He (God) made him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:19-21).

There is nothing here about anger being appeased, but rather God and Christ working together in love to manifest Truth, and to open a way of holiness for man to escape death and achieve the divine nature. THEN, with the flesh of sin condemned, and holiness upheld and vindicated, mercy could be soundly extended without violating righteousness—as long as the perfect Christ-foundation is always kept prominently in view and recognition as the only doorway to life. Therefore we always pray, always approach God, always seek His attention and help and communion "*in Jesus' Name.*"

Mosaic sacrifice has long since passed away in actual use, but its lessons and instructions are just as current as ever as to what God requires of those who seek Him.

The ordinances of sacrifice in general, and Christ's supreme sacrifice in particular—the one great reality which fulfilled all the shadows—were *representative*, NOT substitutionary. This is an essential and fundamental distinction. The substitution idea leads to all sorts of error. The representative principle guides us both in true understanding and true action. Christ's sacrificial death was not as a substitute, *instead* of us: it was as a representative, *on behalf of us*. He was one of us. He stood for all mankind. Only as part of him can we approach unto God. All are wrapped up and included in him—

"If one died for (on behalf of) all, then were all dead" (2 Cor. 4:14).

This reasoning does not follow, if "for" is taken as "instead of." As a representative, as *one of us*, a strong one of the sin-stricken race, his death was beautiful and fitting, and a manifestation of God's holiness, and an opening up of a way out of death through travail unto joy, for himself and for us in him.

As one of us, our representative, he opened up the way of life. And we can follow him in that way to eternal life only by dying completely to ourselves and becoming *a part of him*, completely enclosed *in* him and covered *by* him. As a representative, a strong loving Elder Brother to lead the way and carry the weak, he manifested God's love and provision for man.

"*By his own blood* he entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:12).

"God brought Jesus again from the dead *through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant*" (Heb. 13:20).

Viewed as a substitute, dying *instead* of us, bearing God's wrath, the innocent punished for the guilty, there is no beauty, no justice, no glorifying of God, no manifestation of God's righteousness. God did not in anger punish Christ for our sins. Rather in love He *forgave* our sins for Christ's sake —

"Whom God hath set forth to be a *hilasterion* [a 'mercy-seat,' a place of extending mercy] through faith in his blood, for the remission [forgiveness] of sins that are past, that He (God) might be just, and the Justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:25-26).

Christ is the golden mercy-seat, the coverlid of the Ark, the Cherubim-throne of the glory of God. The Mosaic mercy-seat was purified unto God's service by the sprinkled sacrificial blood—"by *his own blood* he entered . . ." Viewed as a substitute, the Mosaic sacrifices and the great fulfilling, culminating sacrifice of Christ teach us nothing as to the way we must walk. They just take the responsibility off us and put it on someone else. Substitution is a heathen conception of sacrifice, not a scriptural one.

Perceived as representatives of us, Christ's sacrifice and the Mosaic sacrifices in all their host of detail and regulation teach us a great treasure of guidance and instruction, of solemn responsibility and joyful duty.

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifices of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name . . . To *do good* and to *communicate* [*koinonia*: share, distribute] forget not, for with *such sacrifices* God is well pleased (Heb. 13:15-16).

The Mosaic sacrifices beautifully manifest and teach 7 basic principles of approach to God: —

1. REPENTANCE, CLEANSING, PURIFICATION. We are unclean from birth by reason of the law of sin in our members, and additionally by our allowing it to move us to sinful action, to rule over us. This is especially illustrated by the purifying Sin & Trespass Offerings.
2. ADORATION, HOMAGE, WORSHIP, SUBMISSION-humble and abased recognition of the greatness and majesty of God.
3. CONSECRATION, HOLINESS, DEDICATION, DEVOTION. The complete, unreserved giving over of the whole life to God. This is seen especially in the solemn Whole Burnt Offering.
4. THANKSGIVING, GRATITUDE: recognition of goodness and blessing *from* God. This is shown in the Drink Offering of wine.
5. SUPPLICATION, ENTREATY, DEPENDENCE, NEED. Seen especially in the sweet Incense of prayer.
6. OBLIGATION, RESPONSIBILITY, DUTY, LABOR, SERVICE. Seen particularly in the Meat [more correctly, Meal] Offering—the fruit of the ground and of man's daily toil.
7. COVENANT-RELATIONSHIP, FELLOWSHIP, COMMUNION, entrance into the divine family—especially manifested in the joyful Peace Offering, the only one of which the offerer himself partook.

A primary requirement of the sacrifices is that the offerer must bring them "with his own hands." There could be no substitutes. The rich could not pay to have someone do it for them. An earnest friend or parent could not do it for one who was lax. Each must do it himself in person. All stood equally before God, and each must do his required part. The clear lesson for us today is that no one is exempt from the work of the Lord. We *dare* not leave it to others, no matter how much better qualified they seem to be. Truly the work may take many different forms according to ability and circumstances—sweeping the hall is as important as lecturing to many 1000s, *if that is our best*—but all are required to give their best & most, and to do everything they do "as unto the Lord."

We should never, in any aspect of life, do anything that cannot be done as unto God. This eliminates all useless, unworthy activity, and gives meaning and purpose and holiness and sanctification to life's every necessary task, however humble or ordinary it may be. And it also emphasizes the responsibility to do *everything* we do to the very best of our power and ability—not because the thing itself is necessarily important, but because the way we do anything is important to our character. We must live wholly *in God*: all must be done as unto God: and God requires the very best.

This is another general aspect of the sacrifices: they had to be the very best a man had. They had to be perfect and without blemish. This was not only to teach that the One Great Offering for sin must be perfectly sinless and spotless, and that man can never therefore earn his own salvation from sin and death—but it was also to teach the parallel and balancing lesson that *our* offering to God must be the very best we have, even though we admittedly fall far short of perfection at best. Giving less than our all is presuming on God's mercy, and dishonouring His love and goodness that He has poured out so abundantly upon us.

For anyone not to desire with intense longing to give everything they can to God, and do everything they can for Him, reveals a fatal lack of devotion, and gratitude, *and understanding*. God can and will graciously accept our

puny little "best" as perfection—as purified by the blood of Christ, but how can He possibly impute perfection to us if we do not care enough to do our best to strive toward perfection? This makes a mockery of the whole process, like forcing a noble scholarship on an indolent scholar. If our hearts and minds and efforts are on other things, how can we expect God to pursue us and force perfection upon us?

The first requisite of approach to God is a willingness—yea, more than a willingness, rather an anxious eagerness—to do everything He requires, and to get rid of everything that stands in the way—a true, mature recognition of the respective values and importances of the very brief present and the eternal future. Any reservation or reluctance to submit to any requirement of God makes us useless to Him, for the heart is not right—and *a right heart is vital*.

* * *

THE BURNT OFFERING. This was completely consumed upon the altar—except the skin which went to the priest. This point is interesting, because the skin is the covering, the cloak of righteousness. In symbolism of the slain lamb, God covered the sin and nakedness of Adam and Eve with coats of skins. Their own skin was not an acceptable covering: rather it exposed and emphasized their shameful nakedness.

The Burnt Offering is the basic sacrifice. The 2 lambs every day, and all the principal sacrifices every week, every month, on all the feast days, and on all special and solemn occasions—were all whole Burnt Offerings. This offering symbolized the complete dedication and devotion of the life to God that is essential to gain His favour. This is perhaps the biggest and most vital lesson of the entire sacrificial picture. Until and unless we realize that the essence of our covenant with God is that we give our whole lives to His service, we have no hope of life. For the dedication of this very brief life of probation, He has promised an eternity of purest, highest joy.

At the very best and most that we can do, the requirements and the reward are infinitely out of proportion—we can give nothing remotely comparable to what we receive. But God does require (and what could be more reasonable) as an evidence of our love, *all* that we have: *all* our heart and strength and life and mind. The Whole Burnt Offering, completely consumed on the altar and arising as a sweet-smelling savour to God, teaches us that to attain to the glories of eternity we must constantly labour to bring all our time and energies into the service of God. The sacrifices were typical. They were shadows. They were pictorial representations of what must happen *in reality in us*, if we are to be acceptable to God.

"Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices"

(1 Pet. 2:5).

Therefore this Whole Burnt Offering must have its counterpart in us. It is just as if God said directly to us, "This is what I require of you!" Indeed, He does through Paul say so—

"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service"

(Rom. 12:1).

And it is a reasonable service. In view of the infinite magnitude and glory of what God promises, anything less would *not* be reasonable. Anything less than a living sacrifice, a Whole Burnt Offering, would be an insult to God's love. And we must not only give ourselves wholly to God. Even that is not enough. We must do it *eagerly*, with the oil of joy without which no sacrifice was acceptable (except in some cases where the specific omission of the oil had a particular significance). We must truly see and realize the necessity and beauty and fittingness and desirability of so doing. It must be a deep and true and satisfying pleasure. We must develop a spiritual state of mind wherein we are not able to be happy doing anything less.

Out of the travail of all our problems there must be born in each of us something very wonderful and very unworldly; something very personal and individual; something very beautiful and spiritual. If this occurs, all the travail is worthwhile. We must perceive in *all* that happens a divine, loving means working out a glorious end. Very little in this life will be as we desire it to be. But we have the all-sufficient assurance that all will be exactly as *God* desires it to be.

* * *

Let us never think of sacrifice in the common, debased sense of the term as men use it—as a loss, a deprivation, a giving up of something. The word doesn't mean that. Men in their ignorance and self-commendation have added that. Sacrifice is a humble, joyful, eager yielding of the self to God in love and thanksgiving, without any assumption of self-glory for some supposed noble self-deprivation. Literally, the word in English simply means "holy act, deed or work of holiness." The original Bible words for sacrifice just mean "gift, offering, drawing near, devotion, dedication."

We have nothing to "sacrifice." All is God's to begin with. We can never give God anything but our love and our intelligent worshipful realization of the goodness and beauty of all His ways. The joy and satisfaction of love is in

giving. Giving is the essence of love. If giving is not its heart and joy, then it is not love, but lust. Love gives: lust wants. The world cannot see the difference.

God is love. He wants to give. It is His essence. He wants to pour out showers of blessing and goodness upon us, but He can do it only where there is an intelligent appreciation of the true facts of life that He has revealed, and a deep and unshakable commitment in the heart to live in harmony with them. Where there is ignorance of the true realities of life, as in the natural mind of the flesh, or where there is unwillingness to conform the life to the things of God, where lust and greed and pride and pleasure are allowed to pull in the other direction, then God cannot bless.

* * *

THE PEACE OFFERING. This was voluntary. It was never commanded specifically, except on the occasion of Pentecost. And this exception is fitting, for Pentecost symbolizes the First-fruits at Christ's coming: the marriage supper of the Lamb—the great consummation of the communion of God with His people taken out of all the previous ages of the world.

In the Peace Offering the offerer himself partook. The Peace Offering was the culminating offering, the joyous offering, the partaking of holy food belonging to God, in His house, as His guest and companion. In this offering, God and the priest and the worshiper all snared. There was a portion for each. Here is the perfect union and fellowship of the believer with God through Christ: the covenant meal of friendship and loving intimacy, foreshadowing the great fruition and fulfilment of the eternal divine plan.

But though this was a voluntary offering, of the offerer's spontaneous freewill and thanksgiving, still there were many specific details of procedure that *had to be followed exactly* for the offering to be a blessing and not an abomination. Here is vividly emphasized the lesson that we must be taught of God in everything. Of ourselves we know nothing of eternal truth, and we can do nothing right, even our thanksgiving, without divine instruction.

This offering must be completely eaten the same day it was offered (or, in some cases, by the following day). If any part was left any longer, it was an abomination. There are several lessons here. First, the general one of obedience: it must be God's way, even though the offering was voluntary. Then hoarding was discouraged. This is the lesson of the manna. The blessings of God must, in faith, be put to current use in His service. Hoarding is faithlessness and idolatry. Then the related virtue of generosity. To get it all eaten, the offerer was expected to share the feast with others, with the poor, especially the poor among the Levites who were devoted to the service of God and dependent on the offerings of the faithful Israelites for their sustenance.

There is another regulation concerning the Peace Offering that is solemnly thought-provoking. Though it was a joyful and freewill offering to God, yet if any ate of it while unclean by reason of contact with death or unclean objects, *he was to be put to death*. God is a consuming fire to the careless and unheeding. By being given to God, this food became holy, bringing great responsibility to any who partook of it. The eater must be made and kept clean in the God-appointed way, or he would be cut off from life.

What a sobering consideration!—right in the midst of the most joyous and God-directed activity. Israel was called to holiness. They were to be a pure nation of priests to dwell in the presence of God. Tremendous blessings were theirs if faithful, but also tremendous responsibilities. Even in this joyful Peace Offering, there could be no carelessness or thoughtlessness or forgetting of the duties of the divine relationship; no heedless or casual contact or association with the unclean. We are told that all this was for lessons and warnings to US—

"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (1 Cor. 11:28).

In the memorial feast, we fellowship at God's table, as did the partaker of the Peace Offering. This bread and wine mean joyful eternal life, *if* we partake worthily, *if* we realize and live up to our great responsibilities; *if* we are faithful and sincere in our solemn covenant of the complete dedication of our lives to the work and service of God—to separation from the world and all its uncleanness.

* * *

THE SIN OFFERING and the TRESSPASS OFFERING dealt with different aspects of sin. The regulations are quite different. The animal for the Sin Offering varied according to whether the sin was by the Congregation, a Priest, a Ruler, or one of the people: for the Trespass Offering it did not vary. The Sin Offering did not require restitution; the Trespass Offering did. The Sin Offering seemed to deal more broadly and generally and fundamentally with sin: this was the offering for sin in the national festivals. The Trespass Offering was more specifically for individuals.

In connection with both, sins of ignorance are referred to, and must be atoned for by sacrifice. This is an interesting consideration. If we look back 20, or 10, or even 5 years, we shall realize—*if* we have grown in our

knowledge of God—that much of what we did at that time was tainted with the sin of ignorance. We see now where we were then limited in our spirit and attitude and understanding.

And we can be quite sure, though we cannot see it now, that if we continue to study and meditate upon the Word of God, in another 5 or 10 years (if we are still in this present probation) we shall be able to look back and discern many of our *present* limitations and shortcomings that we are blind to today. And so it continues throughout our life. We live under the constant shadow of sins of ignorance, and we must constantly pray for God's mercy on them.

There must be a constant growth of knowledge and understanding in the ways of God and the spirit of Christ. For each added day of life and opportunity that is given us, more will be expected of us in character and labour and understanding. Woe betide that slothful servant who has not been using all his time in labour and preparation for his Lord!

* * *

We must overcome—not to absolute perfection, because that for us is impossible—but to perfection within the framework of the definition of Scripture, and the merciful appointments of God. Perfection is required by God. In His holiness He can tolerate no less. And in His love He has provided for it: by our constant effort *toward* perfection, *and* by the constant washing and repurifying in the blood of Christ. Every sin must be washed away in that blood. Every sin must be repented of and repudiated. We must stand pure before God to be accepted.

We are so constituted in weakness that we do not and cannot even know all our sins. Every thought out of harmony with the perfection of God and with absolute truth is sin. In the imperfection of our mind and knowledge and weakness of the flesh, we cannot help but constantly sin—constantly fall short of perfection. But He has graciously provided for this too—

"The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought ..."
—we do not know, we cannot know, to perfection what we should pray for—what sins of weakness and ignorance and incompleteness and partial comprehension we should pray to be forgiven for and cleansed from. We are slowly learning, slowly advancing toward the goal of perfect understanding—

". . . we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered, and He that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit."

* * *

For deliberate sin, there was and is no forgiveness. But some sins which *we* would consider deliberate *were* forgiven—so we cannot judge others. The sabbath day gatherer of sticks was put to death: David's murder and adultery were forgiven. Only God knows where to draw the line as to what is deliberate rebellion, and what is weakness for this poor erring flesh. For *ourselves*, we must always bear in mind the danger, remembering with trembling that God will not be mocked. He will not for a moment tolerate rebellion. Whenever we do anything we *know* is wrong, however small it may be, we are treading on the loose gravel of the edge of the precipice of no return—

"*God is not mocked*" . . . "*God hath no pleasure in fools.*"

For *others*, we must always be prepared to forgive and receive, and leave the final judgment to God Who knows each heart.

* * *

THE MEAL OFFERING, always of wheat, was a thankful recognition of the care of God in the daily bread, and a presenting to God of the fruit of daily toil.

THE DRINK OFFERING of wine was an outpouring of spiritual rejoicing and zealous gladness and thankfulness of heart, essential to make the other offerings acceptable to God.

And 3 things must accompany the sacrifices: the SALT of purity and uncorruptness—

"Ye are the salt of the earth."

The OIL of knowledge and enlightenment in the Spirit—

"Ye are the light of the world."

And the sweet INCENSE of faithful prayer—

"Pray without ceasing: in everything give thanks."

* * *

THE PASSOVER was a special sacrifice, a sacrifice of special deliverance. Its ordinances were unique, but it most closely resembled the Peace Offering. All of it except the blood and fat was eaten by the offerers themselves. Unlike

the Peace Offering, none was given to the priests, for when it was first instituted there was no separate priestly class. It portrays Israel in its highest relationship to God as a holy people, a nation of priests.

The Passover lamb was given special attention and care. It was roasted whole, and no bones were to be broken—especially pointing to Christ's offering. Bitter herbs were to be eaten with it, representing salvation through sorrow and suffering.

It was to be partaken of in active readiness for a journey—with feet shod, loins girded, and staff in hand. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, and we too must keep the feast in a state of readiness for the journey, wherever it may lead—recognizing that we have here no continuing city. Nothing of the present is permanent or important. We must keep ourselves lightly loaded and travel-girded, careful not to build ties and possessions in this present evil world.

The Passover must be accompanied, Paul says (1 Cor.5:8), by—

"The unleavened bread of SINCERITY and TRUTH."

Sincerity and Truth are powerful and beautiful words: powerful and beautiful qualities. *Sincerity* is purity from any pretence or hypocrisy or deception. *Truth* is freedom from any error or falsehood or mistake. These are divine qualities, not common to mankind. Very few will hold firmly and faithfully to sincerity and truth when a small degree of concealment or misrepresentation will save them loss, or get them gain. But such are no use to a holy God—

"Thou desirest Truth in the inward parts" (Psa. 51:6).

Only those who in spiritual wisdom perceive the living beauty—and dedicate their lives to the principles—of Sincerity and Truth are acceptable into God's family. By nature, we are all creatures of error and subterfuge and deception. Lying and evasion for self-protection comes naturally right from childhood. Sincerity must be learned. We must be shown and perceive the beauty of the better, more excellent way. Pure, guileless sincerity is essential to holiness.

We must not look upon sacrifice as a "giving up" of something. It is a gaining and receiving; a joy and a privilege. It is the highest and most satisfying *use* to which we may put anything we have, including our own selves and our lives. To a mature mind, there should be no particular pleasure in just possessing something. It is exceedingly juvenile to get pleasure merely in possession—it is a shallow, silly, selfish, unhealthy pleasure, not worthy of the name of pleasure. The pleasure and satisfaction should come in the *use* to which anything is put, in the *good* that can be accomplished by means of it.

And the greatest mature satisfaction comes from putting all we have to the highest and best use. THIS IS SACRIFICE.

Christ, in perfect wisdom, put his whole life to the best possible use: he accomplished with it the utmost possible good. He reversed the whole trend of history from failure to success. He turned death into eternal life, and sorrow into eternal joy, for all who have the wisdom to lay hold upon what he accomplished for them.

Do we detract from the preciousness and nobility of the sacrifice of Christ by saying that sacrifice is not sacrifice in the common, worldly, self-commending use of the term? Do we rob him of the recognition that he gave up everything, and suffered everything, for his brethren?

By no means. He did not give up anything *worthwhile*: rather he achieved and gained everything worthwhile. There was no self-pity, no self-glory, no self-delusion, in his sacrifice—his pure offering, his drawing near, his gift to God, his "deed of holiness." Christ did not look upon himself as a martyr, but as the most highly privileged, the most really blessed, the most deeply honoured, of all mankind.

It was his infinite blessing and riches to be the perfect manifestation of the love and beauty of God, the perfect manifestation of God Himself, to be ever in perfect communion with God—

"I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE" (John 10:30).

He was a man of sorrows; but he was also a man of transcendent joy. He spoke of that glorious, unquenchable inner joy on the very eve of the terrible ordeal of the crucifixion—

"These things have I spoken that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15: 11).

We read on 2 occasions that Jesus wept. There must have been many, many occasions that he wept. His life was a life of weeping—but *not for himself*. On him was laid the burden of the sorrows of all the world, and it was his glorious, suffering joy to take them all upon him, and to bear them all away.

Love not only gives. It takes. It gives of goodness, and comfort, and strength, and courage. It takes of sorrow, and fellow-feeling, and shared bitterness in the fellowship of suffering. If it does not do both—if it shrinks from either task—it is not love.

We may bring ourselves to the giving part, and triumph gloriously in it, and we think our love is complete. But if we shrink or run away from the taking part, it really is not love. We have not yet attained.

"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us . . ."

"He is the mercy-seat for our sins . . ."

"This cup is the New Covenant in my blood . . ."

"If we walk in the Light—if we WALK IN THE LIGHT

—the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from ALL sin."

—G.V.G.

	MATCH WORD	
February Answers	WITH MEANING	
1. Ed—Witness	18. Manna—What is it	35. Anatole—East, rising
2. Ben—Son	19. Psuche—Soul, life (G)	36. Didymus—Twin
3. Beth—House	20. Cephas—Stone	37. Anastasis—Resurrection
4. Aion—Age, course	21. Doulos—Slave	38. Golgotha—Skull
5. Raca—Vain fellow	22. Eureka—I have found	39. Rhantizo—Sprinkle
6. Elpis—Hope	23. Corban—Gift	40. Koinonia—Fellowship
7. Abba—Father	24. Shalom—Peace	41. Adelphos—Brother
8. Pistis—Faith, belief	25. Messiah—Anointed (H)	42. Aeldama—Field of blood
9. Sheol—Grave (H)	26. Ekklesia—Assembly, called out	43. Episkopos—Overseer, bishop
10. Bapto—Dip	27. Pneuma—	44. Stephanos—Crown (victory)
11. Christ—Anointed (G)	breath/wind/spirit (G)	45. Parakletos—Comforter
12. Hades—Grave (G)	28. Kosmos—World/order of things	46. Anathema—Accursed
13. Logos—Word	29. Parousia—Coming, presence	47. Maranatha—Our Lord comes
14. Phileo—Love	30. Rabboni—Master	48. Phanerosis—Manifestation
15. Agape—Love	31. Nephesh—Soul, life (H)	49. Ephphatha—Be opened
16. Berith—Covenant	32. Hosanna—O save	50. Evangelion—Gospel
17. Ruach—Breath/	33. Diadema—Crown (regal)	51. Presbuteros—Elder
wind/spirit (H)	34. Diabolos—Slanderer	52. Apokalupsis—Revelation
		53. Yom Kippur—Day of Atonement
		54. Talithacumi—Damsel, arise

Current Events Fulfilling Prophecy

TOUGH TALK FROM MOSCOW. Last week Brezhnev told 25th Communist Congress that detente is a means of achieving Russia's strategic objectives. It "does not, cannot, abolish the class struggle: there is no room for neutralism or compromise in the communist-capitalist struggle." He indicated Russia is prepared to intervene almost anywhere in world if "bid by our revolutionary conscience & Communist convictions." He further declared Moscow's right to support "the struggle of other peoples for freedom and progress." Russia is taking on the role of world policeman, and using its advantage wherever a vacuum is created by the withdrawal of US.

On land, Russia has 2½ million troops, supported by 40,000 tanks, to US's 800,000 men, 10,000 tanks. Soviet airspace is most intensively defended in world: 5000 radar stations, 2600 fighter interceptors, 12,000 highly accurate anti-air missiles. By contrast, US air defence has been cutback. At sea, Russia has world's largest navy: 253 attack subs to US's 73; 40 missile armed cruisers & destroyers to US's none; 2358 supply ships to US's 1009. In nuclear forces, 1600 ICBMs to US's 1050. In '75 Russia spent \$141 billion on arms; US \$94 billion. (Tm3:8)

Significant change in US-Russia relations. US has lost illusions about detente; has discovered Russian drive for global empire still moving relentlessly ahead. Russian move in Angola is test of US resolve, & threat to world power balance. In past, US responded immediately & decisively to similar tests. Russia's empire controls, dominates or has strong influence over 425 million people & 9 million sq. miles—19% of world's land. (USN 3:29)

Is Kissinger bluffing in threats to Cuba about new Angolas? His intent is to convince Russia it will be held responsible. He has cancelled 3 meetings on US-Russia cooperation. Next step could be holding up grain sales & US technology. Closer ties with China could be next step. Russia has almost completely ignored warnings. US unwillingness or inability to penalize Russia in practical way for Angola makes doubtful it will worry about new threats. (USN 4:5)

Solzhenitsyn says in past 2 yrs. "terrible things have happened." West has "given up not only 6 countries but all its world positions." He cites Indochina & Angola as examples of West's loss of nerve & spiritual strength. He says West has made so many concessions Russia could now "take it with bare hands." His doom-struck message created a stir. He speaks out of a profound knowledge of the evil in Russia. That evil is real: so is much of the corruption and weakness he sees in West. If he's right, only alternative is Apocalypse. (Tm 4:5)

THINGS are moving rapidly & encouragingly for those who in faith and hope watch the prophetic signs. The tipping point in the world power struggle seems to have been reached, & we can now expect continual acceleration in Russia's climb & the West's decline.

CLOSING IN ON RHODESIA. Angola's Russian-backed Govt. has been recognized by over 60 nations, still has 12,000 Cuban troops in country. Already OAU (Organization of African Unity) calls Angola the bridgehead from which Blacks can end White rule in southern Africa. Formerly pro-West Nigeria, big source of US oil, is unstable, drifting leftward.

Landlocked Zambia is a major economic casualty of current turmoil. Food shortages rising. Closed Rhodesian frontier causing export-import pileups in crowded Tanzanian ports. Copper has provided 90% of Zambia's foreign exchange. Copper is now selling in London well below cost of production. Closing of Angola railroad to sea cut off another route to world. (USN 3:8)

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Cubanization of Angola has begun. Castro's men moving into public view. Now 20,000 to 30,000 Cubans in Angola, showing every sign of settling in. Ever since winds of change began to sweep Africa 20 yrs. ago, it has been staple of military thinking that Black troops were no match for Whites—even a handful of mercenaries—and that White-ruled states of southern Africa could not be challenged militarily. In Angola, however, the military equation was upset by sudden infusion of Russian arms & Cuban manpower. White mercenaries who rushed in to bolster pro-West factions were slaughtered or sent fleeing. South Africa decided on discreet pullback of armoured columns it had sent into Angola: now it finds MIG jets & Soviet tanks on its borders. Cubans are well-disciplined army trained in effective use of most sophisticated weaponry in Russia's arsenal. They're having much success in spreading Red revolution. (Nk 3:8)

* * *

Death rattle may be sounding for Rhodesia. From London, Washington, S. Africa, & many states in Black Africa, message was: make settlement now for early Black rule, or face bitter war that could engulf all southern Africa. Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana & Mozambique (Black states surrounding Rhodesia, warned that if there's not immediate progress, they'll let Rhodesian guerrillas use their countries as bases for attack. Rhodesia's Smith last week repeated his long-standing pledge that "There will be no Black rule in my life-time." Landlocked Rhodesia depends on Mozambique ports. (Tm 3:8)

* * *

Balance of power dramatically altered in Africa. Russia & Cuba riding high. Cuban troops & Russian weapons won Angola for the Reds. Armies backed by US, S. Africa, & pro-West African states lost. Russia now in position to call the terms, exacerbate wars of "liberation" elsewhere in Africa, as Sahara, Djibouti, Rhodesia, Namibia. Rhodesia stands alone, hemmed in by Blacks, ostracized by world. Army is 1/3 Black; military gear is old. (USN 3:15)

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Noose tightening on Rhodesia. Mozambique has declared "state of war"; closed borders; seized Rhodesian exports waiting at Mozambique docks. Loss of ports immensely complicates Rhodesia's trade with world. (Tm 3:15)

* * *

Kissinger says: "In post-war period, there've been innumerable cases where Russia probed & where, when they faced a determined US response, they retreated. In Angola we were on way to meeting challenge, & it was manageable, till Congress cut off all aid to pro-West forces. Russia had stopped its airlift for 3 weeks. After cut-off, Cuban forces were doubled, airlift resumed with great force, pro-West forces lost all aid. If US looks weak, Russia is going to take advantage. Angola is a classic case where we could have resisted, and if we had, we'd have saved ourselves graver problems down the road." (USN 3:15)

RHODESIA was, not long ago, a bright jewel in the mighty British Empire, where proud and prosperous Whites ruled in unchallenged splendour with the awesome power of the Empire behind them. Any thought of danger from weak, backward, faraway Russia was absurd. What a change! Britain is now a weak, shrunken, troubled, faraway island, and Russia is the growing and greedy power to be feared.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

(From the Christadelphian Magazine, March, 1876)

THIS issue contains 12 pages of small print correspondence by bro. Roberts with a dissident group on a current problem involving "No-Willism"—the theory that Christ had no separate will and could not possibly have sinned. These labours must have cost bro. Roberts many weary hours. "Ans. to Correspondents" generally on the same subject

Preparations were in hand for a 6-night debate in Birmingham Town Hall by bro. Roberts with the very popular, clever infidel orator Bradlaugh, on the authority of Scripture.

* * *

THE JEWS & THEIR AFFAIRS (4 pgs): A strong current has begun to move in the direction of Palestinian regeneration—a regeneration which must to a certain extent be accomplished before the advent of Christ, and which the nearness of that advent requires that it should be early carried out.

Bro. Roberts is speaking, not of actions, but of schemes & discussions, which he describes. Actions were very slow to come, & little happened for many, many years.

Jewish Chronicle says: "England as the largest shareholder in the Suez Canal will have special reasons for watching over . . . the safety of Palestine."

Yet it was 40 more years before England took control of Palestine and opened it up for meaningful Jewish settlement & development. It was not even then her own initiative: she was forced to act when Turkey her former ally joined Germany in WW I.

* * *

EDITORIAL: The Truth has been revived in its glorious fulness in this our century, by the instrumentality of Dr. Thomas, who rests from his labours. Those who see it, understand it, and love it—are established, strengthened, settled in it. . . They have not to discuss what the Truth is. This they know and rejoice in, and seek to build each other up in it. They resist "winds of doctrine" which are calculated to shift badly-moored craft from their position. This policy is being condemned in many hard speeches, but they know what they are about. Crotchets which are new to some & plausible to others, are neither new nor attractive to those who are grounded & settled in the unchangeable Word of the living God.

* * *

SIGNS: The Eastern Question has advanced a stage. England has given her adhesion to the reform scheme of the Northern Powers, and Turkey has promised compliance, but the insurgents refuse to suspend hostilities. Servia is on the point of war against Turkey on the side of the insurgents. Montenegro is in the same state. Even Rumania is likely to throw herself into the weight. The practical secession of Egypt by the recent events which have drawn her more closely into connection with England, deepens the clouds gathering over the doomed Turkish Empire.

Opening of Parliament: Her Majesty's intention stated of drawing herself closer with the East by the assumption of a title expressive of her headship over India. . Disraeli recounted the history of the Suez purchase: the Govt. had only 48 hours to decide, & the House of Rothschild made the purchase on the good faith of Disraeli pledging Britain to take the shares. He said, "Look upon it that in the great chain of fortresses which we possess from Britain to India, this Suez Canal is of great importance."

Gladstone (the Opposition leader) concurred in the policy of the present govt. with regard to Turkey. Turkey had made excellent promises, he said, but they had not been fulfilled.

Britain under Gladstone had previously fought Russia in support of Turkey.

EGYPT MOVES FURTHER WEST. Since signing 2nd Sinai pact, Egypt under sharp attack from Libya, Iraq & particularly Syria. Last week he warned Syria against "false heroism" of a new war. Two US moves last week boosted Sadat's stock: promise of 6 C-130 planes, & \$700 million economic aid. Def. Sec. Rumsfeld says US will ultimately supply Egypt with 'guns & other things.' (Nwk 3:15)

* * *

Egypt sees promise of planes as evidence US ready to begin giving Egypt the military supplies it got from Russia before Sadat expelled them. They say, "We sacrificed much in arms to cooperate with US." (Nwk 3:22)

* * *

Sadat has burned most of his bridges to Moscow: must now rely on US & West for military aid. He has opened door to danger of Arab polarization, with Egypt & other moderates on 1 side; Syria, Iraq, Libya on other. Russia is building new Mideast power base in Syria & Libya. (USN 3:29)

* * *

Last week, amid ringing cheers, Sadat demanded Parliament renounce the '71 treaty with Russia. Russia plainly surprised & embarrassed. He justified his move by saying US has 99% of Mideast cards. (Tm 3:29).

* * *

Sadat certainly seemed putting considerable faith & trust in US. His action makes it highly unlikely he'll be able to get spare parts to get 100s of tanks in operation, or dozens of grounded planes back in air. And Russia is likely to recall the 200 technicians who service the computers that control Egypt's network of anti-aircraft missiles. (Nwk 3:29)

WHAT is driving Egypt to buck the growing power of Russia, & Arab feeling on Israel; & to put its trust in the broken US reed? It can only be the hand of God, shaping events for the final scene. By cutting ties with Russia, Sadat has made most of his present arms useless. By depending on West for arms, he has made it impossible to attack Israel.

ISRAEL: WEST BANK RIOTS. Storm of demonstrations, strikes & riots in West Bank last week over court decision allowing Jews to pray on Temple Mount, sacred spot of Islam. Arab businesses closed. Six mayors, 5 city councils of important towns resigned. (Tm3:29)

* * *

Last week UN Security Council met at Arab request to consider Israel occupation of West Bank & expropriation of Arab lands. Israel took part, reversing longstanding policy of no meeting with PLO. The other 14 members endorsed an Arab resolution calling for speedy termination of Israeli occupation, but US vetoed it. West Bank protests likely to continue. After 9 years they're tired of occupation & alarmed over Jewish settlers' encroachment. (Tm4:5)

* * *

US's Scranton, tho vetoing, declared that Jewish settlements in occupied territory are obstacle to peace. Arabs were pleased: Israel furious. Tense West Bank situation continues. Israel troops killed 10-yr.-old Boy, & beat an Arab protester to death. Boy's mother vowed other 3 sons would be terrorists. (Nwk4:5)

WE have deep affection & sympathy for national Israel, for the fathers' sake; and we pray for the peace of Jerusalem, from which healing peace will flow to all the world, but we must recognize that blind Israel as today constituted is a human Sin-Power, in rebellion against God, & prone to many foolish & evil acts. When men disobey God-especially those close to Him—He hardens them in their own folly to their own destruction.

LEBANON: WORSE THAN EVER. Again things blew up in Lebanon. Army splitting into Christian & Moslem factions. Gen. Ahdab, Beirut military commander, declared himself ruler, paralysing govt. The political accord turned into a shambles. Pres. Franjeh (a Christian) refused to resign. (Nwk & Tm 3:22)

* * *

After year of death & anarchy in savage civil war, the old Lebanon, a Christian controlled business centre of Mideast, appears destroyed forever. A new Lebanon, dominated by Moslems, is potential ally of Arabs against Israel. It was Christians that set off the explosion: trying to break up the Palestinian armed groups who were becoming state within a state. (USN 3:29)

* * *

Worst fighting yet in 11-month struggle between Christians & Moslems. Capital on verge of final collapse. With Lebanon unable to stop the fighting, possibility Syria would move in, bringing threat of Israeli countermove. For first time, both sides using heavy artillery. Leftist shelled presidential palace, and Pres. Franjeh fled to seacoast. Rapidly crumbling situation deeply humiliating to Syria who had recently arranged cease-fire. (Tm 4:5)

THE beast in man is just below the surface. The deceptive veneer of "civilization" is so very, very thin. Throughout world, wherever authority breaks down—Lebanon, N. Ireland, Africa, US ghettos—people kill at random, just, it seems, for the lust to kill. US authorities rejoice that crime rose "only" 9% in '75, as against up to 20% in previous years. In Detroit, murder is daily on the news-well over 2 a day. One ceases to be shocked, or even alarmed: just numbed. So this is the end accomplishment of the glorious upward "evolutionary" spiral? Rather it is the terrible dead-end of vile human self-rule in defiance of God and His holy and pure laws. "Lift up your heads! The Kingdom draweth nigh!"

The Apocalypse and Fellowship

*"If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy,
God shall take away his part out of the book of life!"*

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS, AUGUST, 1872

Another clear and strong item on this subject by bro. Roberts, 25 years before the one that appeared in our April, 1975 issue. There are no really new crotchets: all seem to have their perpetual cycles. And bro. Roberts

seems to have faced them all in his long and arduous career, and faithfully defended the Truth against them. Let us not, at this late date, betray his labours.

A CORRECT interpretation of the Apocalypse is of more importance than may at first sight appear. 1. It was given "that his servants MIGHT KNOW" (1:1) the things it treats of, and if a wrong view of it prevails, the object of its communication is to that extent frustrated.

2. The Spirit pronounces a blessing on those who understand it (1:3), from which it follows that a wrong apprehension of its import deprives the wrong apprehender of the blessing.

3. Jesus pronounces a curse on those who take away from its words (22:19), and no one takes away from its words more effectually than the man who misrepresents its meaning. That misrepresentation of its meaning which asserts its inapplicability to the present constitution of things in the world, and teaches that it has no fulfilment till the saints are removed at the coming of Christ, is especially mischievous in its effects, for it interferes with a scriptural attitude in relation to things and systems which are therein condemned, and participation in which is declared to implicate the participators in the doom awaiting those things and systems.

The ecclesiastical systems and practices of Europe are exhibited under symbols perfectly intelligible to the students of God's Word. A Beast and its Image, a 10-horned Monster, and a Woman are introduced as representatives of the constitution of things in Papal Europe. And a peculiarity of the Saints therein described is that they—

"Worship not the Beast neither his Image, nor receive his mark upon their foreheads, nor in their hands"
(20:4).

That they—

"obtain the victory over the Beast, and over his Image, and over the number of his name" (15:2).

That (unlike those dwelling on the earth "whose names are not written in the Book of Life," and who worship the Beast who makes war upon the Saints) they (the Saints)—

"Keep the sayings of the prophecy of this book"

—which declare—

*"If any man worship the Beast and his Image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand,
the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God"* (14:9-10).

Now, if you regard the whole matter as future to the Lord's coming, do you not loosen and undermine the terrible obligations arising from these sayings? Certainly; you place these obligations beyond the circle of a saint's duties, and you leave him at liberty to imagine that he may safely take part with any system extant in his own day.

Such views are a serious impediment to the co-operation which you* are disposed to ask on the part of the Christadelphians. *They could not admit such an element of corruption among them. They could not identify themselves with so complete a neutralization of the last message of Jesus, sent to his servants.* They could not make themselves responsible for such a departure from his testimony which he himself has fenced with special imprecations. With such a state of mind with regard to the important directions he has given for the guidance of his servants in the Apocalypse, *it is impossible they could enter upon that co-operation which has for its basis an intelligent apprehension of the mind and will of Christ.* (*He is answering a correspondent.)

The idea that the Revelation is future in its fulfilment would be dispelled by the effectual realization of 1 or 2 points which we mention by way of conclusion. The angel interpreting to John the meaning of the 7 heads of the scarlet-coloured Beast, says—

"There are 7 kings: 5 ARE FALLEN, 1 is, and the other is not yet come" (17:10).

Here is a proof that in the day when these words were addressed to John—nearly 1800 years ago—part of the symbolism had been realized in history. In connection with its developments (11:18), the "time of the dead comes that they should be judged," which is inconsistent with the theory that those developments do not take place till after the resurrection of the saints.

A similar argument arises in the fact that the Beast makes war upon the Saints and overcomes them (13:7). Surely this is not after the Saints are raised from the dead! So also with the fact that Saints, under the 6th Seal, are seen in a state of death, and allowed to rest (6:9). And that the Scarlet Women is drunk with the blood of Saints (Surely she is not to kill them after they are made immortal) —

"In her was found the blood of prophets and saints" (18:24).

The apostles were slain by her (Rome under the pagan constitution (18:20). Surely the apostles are not to be killed a second time.

In addition to these and many other points that might be mentioned, the general character of the book as to things said about to "shortly come to pass," and as to "keeping the things written in the book," conclusively show the fallacy of a theory which futurizes everything except the messages to the churches, and reduces it to a thing of no practical consequence whatever. —R.R., 1872.

Bible Questions		WHAT DID THEY HAVE IN COMMON?			
1. Sick	9. Lame	17. Beards	25. Aprons	33. Trances	43. Drunken
2. Bags	10. Cakes	18. Arrows	26. Hidden	34. Crumbs	44. Timbrels
3. Hair	11. Bears	19. Knives	27. Hungry	35. Mantles	45. Herdmen
4. Lots	12. Twins	20. Ravens	28. Censers	36. Javelins	46. Disguised
5. Beds	13. Kisses	21. Fetters	29. Tribute	37. Wisdom	47. Trumpets
6. Boils	14. Calves	22. Baskets	30. Famine	38. Lentiles	48. Rainbows
7. Biers	15. Sheets	23. Gourds	31. Blinded	39. Pitchers	49. Deep sleep
8. Veils	16. Honey	24. Prisons	32. Widows	40. Patterns	50. Gold chains
				41. Deacons	51. Death letters
				42. Serpents	52. Shoelatchets
Saul, Ahab		David, Elisha		Samson, Peter	Rebekah, Gideon
Eve, Moses		Esau, Ezekiel		Gideon, Elijah	Samson, Absalom
Esau, Peter		Gideon, Joab		Naboth, Uriah	Jonathan, Samson
Joab, Judas		Jonah, Elisha		Saul, Phinehas	Ahasuerus, Caesar
Adam, Paul		Anna, Naomi		Joseph, Daniel	Jonathan, Matthias
Amos, Doeg		Balaam, Peter		Joseph, Naomi	Abner, Widow's son
Noah, Elijah		David, Amasa		Og, Palsied man	Nicholas, Parmenas
Noah, Nabal		Darda, Daniel		Samson, Legion	Paul, Egyptian baker
Judas, David		Adam, Daniel		Moses, Rebekah	Jacob, Mephibosheth
Moses, Joash		Nadab, Korah		Tamar, Rebekah	Trophimus, Hezekiah
Paul, Elymas		Noah, John		Jonathan, Elisha	Lazarus, Syrophenician
Joseph, Peter		Samuel, Elijah		Abraham, Joshua	Abraham, John Baptist
Moses, David		Job, Hezekiah		Aaron, Jeroboam	Miriam, Jephthah's daughter

Last month's answer: Two Women—Michal and Rizpah

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