

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Who May Abide the Day of His Coming?

TORONTO-HAMILTON-BUFFALO GATHERING, Oct. 11-12, 1975

THE Gathering opened at 2 pm on Saturday, bro. R. F. Philip presiding. After the reading of Heb. 3, bro. David Gwalchmai gave the first address, "The Blessing of Being Called to the Truth: Our Priceless Heritage." Bro. Dave very aptly expressed the concept of our Gathering when in his opening remarks he said, "It is indeed a great honour and privilege that we have been blessed with such an opportunity as this." Referring to our calling he said, "It is the greatest of all blessings extended to us who have this name of brethren and sisters of Christ."

The Divine Word sets forth a bright and clear message to mankind throughout the entire Scripture writings, displaying the fundamental scriptural principle that God requires obedience to His commands and ordinances. Brethren Thomas and Roberts opened the door from the darkness of the world into the Light of the Gospel for us. The Word of God is the greatest treasure given to mankind, but weak mortal minds cannot comprehend the greatness. This great blessing of the time now present provides peace of mind to us in this troubled world. Bro. Dave took us to the first Psalm to show that—

"Blessed is the man". . . whose "delight is in the law of the Lord . . . He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in due season."

—a tree well-planted, well-rooted. And further—the glory of the New Jerusalem—that we are chosen by the providence of God, and like the fig tree in the parable in Luke 13, must continue to grow, or be cut down.

"Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it."

The reward is only "to him that overcometh."

* * *

After a 10-minute recess the meeting continued with bro. Joseph Jackson presenting the subject, "Walking in the Truth in a Troubled World." There are steps in our spiritual life, which he illustrated in chart form. He began by saying that the next step we face in our deliberation on the theme of our Gathering is how we, as custodians of the Pearl of Great Price, are affected, controlled and motivated by the heritage that has been entrusted to us.

Living the Truth in a Troubled World is a difficult thing to do amid political, ecclesiastical, moral and economic disease and misery. We should not become entangled with the things of this life, nor be overly concerned, but rather, having food and raiment, so to be content. With moral decay all around us, our priorities must be strongly on the side of Godliness.

The signs of the times are a warning to us not to make long-range plans to increase our treasures on earth—tomorrow our life might be removed—& then what of those earthly treasures? Have we built sufficient treasures in heaven? "As it was in the days of Noah "the earth is filled with violence—an age of affluence and idle time, and idle time invites trouble. We must remain aloof from involvement. The days of Noah were indicative of what the world would be in the Last Days. "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord," and we too must seek for favoured-grace as did Noah—

"Let not Mercy and Truth forsake thee; bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart. So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man" (Prov. 3:3-4).

Here is the secret—*good understanding*—this we must ever search and pray for. Let us USE our precious time: never waste or misuse it: "Study to show ourselves approved unto God" (2 Tim.2:15)

"Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2).

* * *

The evening meeting opened at 7 pm. The speaker was bro. Edgar Sargent, who spoke on, "Who Shall Stand When He Appeareth?" He began, "Our brethren this afternoon reminded us of our priceless heritage — 'Who shall abide the day of his coming: who shall stand when he appeareth?' Brother Thomas wrote the following appropriate words—

"The more one studies the subject and knows about it, the more wide his conception of it, and *the more earnest and faithful his convictions*. The more we understand what we profess to believe, the stronger is our faith therein. And the nearer we approach its development, the more necessary it is that a lively interest is kindled within us, that our lamps be well trimmed and our lights be found burning brightly."

Look at the key words: "Abide" and "Stand." The meanings of the original words are profound. The Diaglott version of 1 Thess. 4: 14 gives a more logical rendering of the chronological order of the resurrection process; and in

Dan. 10:8-19 is found a step by step account of the *Anastasis* or "standing up again." Bro. Edgar illustrated this by a series of interesting diagrams.

Resurrection is a process, and bro. Thomas shows elsewhere all are mortal, earthy creatures, whether or not they obey: obedient or disobedient: faithful or unfaithful. Matt.25 relates the parable of the 10 Virgins. The number 10 deserves some consideration. Zech. 8: 23 states—

"In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

Other applications are the 10 Commandments, revolting 10 Tribes of Israel, the 10 Toe Kingdoms, etc., which bro. Edgar related in symbolism. The parable of the Virgins demonstrates that all who have come to a knowledge of the Truth shall stand at the judgment seat. There is no place for boasting—

"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12)

Having done all, we are unprofitable servants; and every man will be judged according to his works. In this electronic age, computer circuitry provides an insight (in a very faint way) as to how a complete record of one's life *might* be transcribed in "the twinkling of an eye." The door to the marriage supper was closed, excluding all the unprepared who went to buy oil.

"And before him shall be gathered out of all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats . . . And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matt. 25:32).

The rejected shall go back into the nations to die a second death.

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2).

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out" (Rev. 3:12).

What a great reward for so little effort!—eternity for just a brief lifetime.

* * *

On Sunday our day of spiritual repast began at 10 am with bro. Willard Kling addressing the children of the Sunday School. It had been arranged to base the subjects for consideration on that day's readings (Oct. 12), so bro. Willard took us to the first portion (1Chron.29). The word Chronicles simple means record. The last few chapters we have been considering have brought to our to our attention a wonderful servant of God: David. He was the 2nd king of Israel, and his name means Beloved. We first learned of him as a shepherd boy watching over his father's sheep. He was the youngest son of Jesse, and at God's command Samuel anointed him king at Bethlehem, his home. The greatest man that ever lived of all ages came out of Bethlehem, even Jesus Christ.

As the armour-bearer to Saul, David confronts the Philistine giant Goliath. This youth, with deep faith and confidence in his God, said—

"He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine" (1 Sam. 17:37).

And confronting the boasting giant, he said—

"I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, Whom thou hast defied" (verse 45).

His weapon was a simple shepherd's sling, and he chose 5 smooth stones out of the brook. His faith was coupled with works. He trusted in the power of God, and not in himself. He never ceased to give praise to God for His strength and His merciful goodness to him. This is the type of person who will abide the day of the Lord's coming. We must not only learn these things but we must also do the things which will be pleasing to God, for "Faith without works is dead." David finally overcame the enemies of God, and gave praise and thanks for his deliverance—

"He is my Shield and the Horn of my salvation" (2 Sam. 22:3).

Peace came to Israel, and the Ark of God was placed in a tabernacle, covered with skins of animals. It was in David's mind to build a splendid House for the Ark, but this was not God's purpose, for David was a man of war, and the House of Prayer must be related to a time of peace. It remained therefore for David's son Solomon, in his peaceful reign, to build the House. David prepared for the building, and the people, rejoicing, offered willingly. David recognized that all that he and the people gave came from God in the first place—

"All that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine" (1 Chr. 29:11).

We can give God nothing except ourselves: our hearts and minds and love. Referring to the Instructor, bro. Willard called attention to the greatness of God, Whose "Spirit fills heaven and earth."

A revelation came to David—

"The Lord will build thee an House" (1 Chr. 17).

God is not speaking here of a house built with wood and stone, but one comprised of people—a spiritual house of "living stones" for God's dwelling and glory. Such people are now being called out one by one from the world of darkness. The humbleness of David, in all his exaltation and blessings, cannot be overlooked (1 Chron. 17:16-17)—

"Who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto? . . . For Thou hast also spoken of Thy servant's house for a great while to come."

The son promised to fulfil the promised blessing and glory was not Solomon, but the Lord Jesus. After 40 years David's reign came to an end, and Solomon his son reigned in his stead. Solomon means "Peaceable," and his reign is symbolic of the reign of Christ over all the earth, following the conquering reign of the warrior David. David and Solomon—together 2 wonderful types of our Lord and Saviour. Remember young David's faith —

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth" (Eccl.12:1).

* * *

The exhortation at the breaking of bread was based on the 3rd reading for the day (John 4), and was given by bro. Edward Truelove. Bro. Ed dwelt on the humbling experience of preparing an exhortation for others, and then continued with a quotation "Unless there is within us that which is above us, we will be always subject to that which is about us."

As human beings we are naturally materialistic. We tend to accept the things we can see and feel, and to disregard the things we cannot see. We live in a very materialistic world. Spiritual things—the things which are Divine—are for the most part immaterial to our present senses. They cannot be seen, they cannot be felt, and they can be perceived only with the eye of faith. Therein lies the battle: the warfare for us. Prayer supplies the strength needed from above. All human beings, we can with fellow-feeling help one another in this battle.

From the Gospel of John we have before us Christ's encounter with the woman of Samaria. There are great lessons to be gleaned out of this: the lessons are here for us to find. The first part of the chapter gives, as it were, a wide-angle look at the setting of the situation. Jesus is returning from Judea to Galilee, passing through Samaria—the shortest of 2 available routes but a risky way for Jews to travel, as feuds continued between the Jews and the Samaritans. The distance was about 80 miles.

Weary with his journey, Jesus is tired, hungry and thirsty: thus the approach to the woman. Through this encounter we see in Jesus a personage to whom we can relate, with whom we can identify. In him we have a Mediator who knows, who understands. Jesus asks for a drink, and in return is asked—

"How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?"(v. 9).

The situation was quite unusual for 3 reasons: she was a woman; she was somewhat of a moral outcast; she was a Samaritan (the reason for this last is amply explained in 2 Kings 17:6-24. Between these 2 peoples there was terrible and burning hatred). In his approach to the woman, Jesus ignored all the usual barriers—things which belong to the material world. He refused to allow the weakness that encompassed her to slam the door on the channels of communication, or stand in the way of compassion. If Christ were to appear on the earth today, in the same capacity and for the same reasons as he did 2000 yrs. ago, where do we suppose we would find him? Among the despised and rejected of society. We might easily be swept up in the whirl of materialism and miss him.

Bro. Ed went on to the contrast between stagnated water and springing wells: in stagnant pools, the operation of the general law of sin and death. Two ways of life: the one with no hope: gradual stagnation and decay and eventual death. In contrast, living water is the symbol of endless life—the symbol of the operation of the Truth upon man, causing him to spring up in life and fruitfulness, to be motivated. Christ is our source of life.

We do not have eternal life now, but by belief, faith and obedience we have chosen the way of eternal life. Worldly things stagnate and die: spiritual things last forever. The outcome of our life will be determined by the effect that either one of the two has upon our actions.

Jesus, with his manner with the truth, forced the woman to face herself—to look at herself as she must have appeared in the eyes of one who knows all things. We are compelled to look within our own hearts—our motives and affections and desires. There was no way of escape for the woman but to accept the real truth about herself.

Samaritans were false worshipers, and false worship is a worship of convenience. False worship is ignorant worship. True worship requires exercise of the intellect and understanding, A false worship is a blind, superstitious worship. Thus the dialog in vs. 20-22 —

"We KNOW what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews."

And we—adopted Jews through the circumcision of the heart—KNOW what we believe. There are only 2 persons beside God able to see within our hearts—ourselves and Jesus Christ. *Let us think of this when we attempt to pass judgment on someone else.* Placing ourselves in the place of the woman of Samaria: what would it be like to be in the presence of one who knows everything there is to know about us? — our deepest secrets and the hidden counsels of our hearts. Are they pure? Will they stand the light? The question will be answered when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

* * *

The last address of the Gathering was a lecture to which the public was invited, and several came. Bro. Ted Williams spoke on: "Christ's Return to the Earth is at Hand: The Time of Tribulation for All Nations." He said that of the many avenues of thought that might be used in approach to this subject, he had chosen one that might be a surprise: "By the foolishness of Preaching."

The words are the apostle Paul's, in 1 Cor. 1:21. Paul was sent to preach the Gospel. The Truth that Paul and the other apostles were bringing to the people of their day, and which was regarded as not more than foolishness, they continued to preach. This doctrine that we—as Christadelphians—believe of the return of Christ to this earth to set up a Kingdom of righteousness and peace upon the ruins of the governments of men is considered foolishness. It is not preached in the churches. Christ's return to reign over all nations of the earth from Jerusalem is foolishness to the world.

Everything that was created was for man's personal use, for his personal welfare. And above all this God granted him a miracle-working mind, superior intelligence, the power of thought, the power of reasoning and of making decisions. Man is the only creature on earth that has a personality, a character and an individuality in the full sense of consciousness.

In the beginning, the people chose to take to themselves the knowledge of what is good and of what is evil. Man became disobedient, and God left him to the production of his own knowledge. After the Flood had destroyed the whole wicked population, man again as he multiplied followed the same evil course when—

"They said one to another, Go to, LET US . . ." (Gen. 11:3).

The whole history of man is written: "Let US . . ." God allowed them to make laws and form governments with all the accompanying evils. We belong to a civilization today that is sickly and diseased. Governments that man is devising are an increasingly corrupt, crime-and-violence-ridden society. Nation against nation: formulating societies called United Nations, NATO, etc. Nothing stands out more plainly today than Russia, the great Colossus which will one day make a bargain with nations, and enter the Holy Land of Israel, and there meet total destruction (as described in the day's 2nd reading: Ezek. 38), which will then lead to the overthrow of all nations of the world by Christ.

We who live in the prosperous nations know that the greater half of the world's population is in dire poverty and need. Amid all the preparations for war, the billions on armaments, half the world's population is in dire want for food. What an evil state! Education abounds, and wisdom decreases. The environment is steeped in pollution for profit. Man's history from the very beginning has been bent on self-destruction, and now he has the power to do it.

"The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt" (Isa. 57:20).

Russia is boldly branching out for world power, and people taken on a national scale, have it in their hearts to do evil.

Christadelphians for generations have tried to bring out this truth: to bring out the common sense of the teachings of Christ—to be "in the world, but not of it." We have to work; we have to do things as others connected with daily life; we are in this respect no different from anyone else. But we know the Gospel: those things concerning the Kingdom of God. We are given the opportunity of assessing the values of *human* government and *God-ruled* government.

God rules in the kingdoms of men: God is the ruler over His Own creation, though at present He lets man go his evil way to his own destruction. There is no place in man's mind for God's Truth. Truth is called fables. Today the nations are like Israel of old: every man doing what is right in his own eyes.

We, as Christadelphians, belong to a Divine political party. Our King, who will head this party, is absent for the present time, but he is coming, and in the meantime we are preparing ourselves for his return. By lectures and other ways we are inviting people to become affiliated with us and this particular party, and receive the blessings of God and Jesus Christ at his return, when he will abolish all human forms of government; when every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree and none shall make him afraid; when everyone will delight in the law of the Lord; when it will be the desire of all nations to make pilgrimages to the Holy Land to hear the Word of the Lord and worship at His Temple. Turn to the whole Scriptures for the truth of Christ's coming. This is foolishness with the world, and it is part of the "foolishness of preaching."

"There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Pet. 3:3-4).

So now, as always, we turn to the Scriptures for the sure testimony of the proof of Christ's coming. We know the churches do not teach it. In our affluence it is easy to become forgetful of the prophecy of truth. One verse out of 100s suffices to prove that Christ is coming back (Acts 1:11)—

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

These words are monumental. Heb.9:28 complements this passage—

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

All that is needed to prove that Christ is coming back is the acceptance and acknowledgement of the authority of Scripture, and loving study of it. Be thoroughly satisfied that the Bible is God's Book, conveying His mind for the present and the future. In the New Testament writings there are more references to Christ's second coming to this earth than there were to the first. The number of times his 2nd coming is mentioned works out to 1 verse in every 25 in the New Testament. And the Old Testament is yet more fully occupied with it, strange as it may seem. We may think of the first coming of Jesus as the particular burden of the New Testament—yet we find with study that this is not so: the Old Testament has far more to say about the coming of Jesus known to us as his second coming, which is yet future. Summing it up, Peter said, shortly after the resurrection and ascension of Christ (Acts 3:20-21)—

"God SHALL SEND JESUS CHRIST . . . whom the heavens must receive UNTIL the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of ALL HIS HOLY PROPHETS SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN."

The second coming of Christ is evident even in all the orthodox church creeds (they once believed it), and the people repeat them but do not take the time to analyse what they are saying. The so-called "Apostles' Creed" says, speaking of Christ—

"He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God Almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick & the dead."

Then the Lord's prayer, which is repeated Sunday after Sunday—

"Thy Kingdom COME: Thy will be done ON EARTH as it is in heaven."

Parrot-like, they repeat it and repeat it, and do not know what they are repeating. They do not understand or believe. And so we must continue to proclaim the Truth, even though it is foolishness to the world, in the hope that some will hear and obey.

* * *

After the lecture, a buffet lunch was served before the brethren and sisters took leave, one from another—some beginning their long journey home that evening. There were about 115 in attendance, which in itself gave much comfort to us all. Certainly our efforts were well blessed. From correspondence and personal conversation, the Gathering seems to have been a milestone in the walk of all those present. —bro. V. C. Gilbert, Gathering Secretary

Ecclesial News

CANTON, Ohio—YMCA, 205 Second St. NW, phone 866-3485-S.S. 10 am; Memorial 11 am; Bible Class Thurs. 7:30 pm in homes. Bro. Braden Edwards, 3700 Lincoln East, Canton, Ohio 44707 (Please note this is a new address).

LOVING Greetings to the Household of faith.

We regret very much to have to report that our bro. Paul and sis. Ruth Inman have left us to join another group. We miss them very much, and pray they will see their error and return with us.

Sis. Sharon Inman has married and left the ecclesia. We pray that she too will realize before it is too late the value of the Pearl of Great Price and will return to serve God. What a sorrow it is to see one leave the Truth!

Bro. Harry Phillips has moved to Worcester, Mass., and is meeting with the ecclesia there. He was a great help to us here, and we are confident he will be so there also.

I am serving as temporary recording brother. I have moved to the address shown above.

—bro. Braden Edwards

RICHARD, Sask., Can. SOM 2PO—Memorial 10 am; S.S. 12 noon; Lecture last Sun. of month 8 pm; Class Fri. 8 pm. Bro. Arthur Jones, Route 1

WE send greetings to the brethren and sisters everywhere, and look forward to the day when distance will no longer keep us apart, and when joy and gladness will be the order of the day, when Christ will reign in righteousness over all the earth. This day seems very close. All signs point to an early end to man's rulership, and we can be thankful to God that man will not be allowed to destroy himself and the world. The powers that be seem to be losing control, and their policies reveal that God may be leaving man to run his own affairs, which will bring on a "time of trouble such as never was."

With this in view, let us all strive to set our house in order, and try to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, holding fast to the Truth, which is the power of God unto salvation to those who believe it and obey it.

Since last sending in news, bro. & sis. Bennett from Lethbridge have been welcome visitors. Bro. Bennett gave us encouraging words of exhortation.

Bro. Arthur Jones has taken the recording duty, so correspondence can be sent to him. We close with love and best wishes to the brethren and sisters everywhere.

—bro. Fred G. Jones

The Ministry of the Prophets

"Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit"—2 Pet. 1:21

WHEN we speak or read of the prophets, we usually think of those servants of God whose writings constitute a large part of the Old Testament—Isaiah to Malachi; but an examination of the Scriptures reveals that they are only a few of His many prophets. Some are barely mentioned by name, while in the case of others, only their message is recorded.

The period of the prophets was a remarkably long one. It extended from *Enoch*, the 7th from Adam, all through the history of Israel to *John the Baptist*, and the apostles. It was Jude who quotes Enoch as saying—

"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them . . ." (Jude 14-15)

The first man to be described as a prophet was Abraham. It is so stated in Gen. 20, where the reproof of Abimelech is recorded, in these words, "*for he is a prophet!*" We pass on quickly through the long years until we come to the days of Moses, and the next man to be described as a prophet is Aaron, but his work was small compared to Moses, of whom it was said—

"And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face"

(Deut. 34:10).

Moses, however, was more than a prophet. The Law was given to Israel through him, and he was their leader to bring them out of Egypt. When he died, he left them with a religious system, and a code of civil laws that has never been equalled, but has been copied in many of its parts. He was succeeded by Joshua, and then for a period of about 450 years the affairs of the nation were administered by judges. By the end of that time, Israel had drifted into superstition—

"Every man did what was right in his own eyes."

But a new day was soon to dawn upon Israel, when selected men would bring God's messages and instructions direct to the people something no other nation has experienced. They were not necessarily men of learning, nor did they belong to the nobility. In most cases, they were men of *humble circumstances*. Their mission was to stir up the people and induce them to be faithful to the Law, as God has testified (Jer. 7:25)—

"Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have sent unto you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them."

While Samuel was the first great prophet after Moses, he was also one of their greatest judges. He comes before us especially in connection with Saul and David. David was a prophet of the highest rank. This is principally revealed in the Psalms, and is of such importance that when Jesus appeared to the apostles after his resurrection, he spoke to them of the things concerning himself in Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms. There were other prophets in David's time, among whom Nathan was outstanding, for it was through him that God's covenant relating to Christ was made known to David.

We pass on into a time when the people had again fallen into idolatry, and the nation was steeped in wickedness. A famous prophet appears in Israel—Elijah the Tishbite. The fearful promptness of the fulfilment of his prophecies made an indelible impression on the people. His stern character reveals an unwavering faith in Israel's God, Whose great power and glory were perhaps more strikingly manifested in Elijah than in any of the prophets except Moses. That wild figure, that stern voice of him whose works stand out in such bold relief from the pages of Scripture, seem to fade in the distance as we look forward to the far greater and more wonderful time when he will return to finish the work God has in store for him.

Elijah was succeeded by that strange character, Elisha, who performed such an important part in the national life of Israel. From that day forward several prophets appeared, but mostly in Judah.

We pass on to Isaiah, whose prophecy forms a profoundly important part of Scripture. Through him, the light of God's Word shone with brilliance—a light that has not faded. His words have been preserved, and they are precious in our hands today.

Jeremiah appears next and he, like Isaiah, took up his work with courage and determination, and boldly declared the sins of the people, and called upon them to repent.

Next on our list is Ezekiel, a man of sign, and a most remarkable prophet. These men of God had sad personal histories, as they submerged all their own interests to the service of their people on behalf of God. These are the noble men whose company we hope to share in the Kingdom of God.

The Word of the Lord sounded forth fearlessly from Ezekiel as he prophesied of the terrible judgments that were coming upon the nation. Then, looking into the distant future in the vision of the valley of dry bones, he portrayed the present developments in the land of Israel. He follows this with a detailed description of the judgments to come upon the nations of the world before the Kingdom of God is established throughout the world. His book concludes with the remarkable prophecy of the Temple to be built as a "*House of Prayer for All People*."

And so the light of God's Word continued to shine through Daniel and the other faithful servants of God unto Malachi, as God declared through Hosea (12:10)—

"I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets."

The part the prophets played in God's work among His people cannot be overestimated. Their writings form a great part of the Scriptures which Jesus said "*could not be broken*." Paul says they were God-inspired, and it was *from them* that he expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading the people concerning Jesus, who had previously stated that all of the prophets would be in the Kingdom, and *all their prophecies must be fulfilled*.

But the work of the prophets did not rest with Israel after the flesh; it continued on into the Christian dispensation. This is plainly evident from the teaching of Jesus and the apostles, for—

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

May the message of God's servants, the prophets, be in our hearts as a burning fire shut up in our bones, that we may become weary with holding it in, and cannot do so. Let us never fail to read them daily. If we do this with prayer and meditation, our petition will be:

*Almighty Maker of my frame, Short is the measure of my days:
Give me to know how frail I am, And spend the remnant to Thy praise.*

—Editor

Do This in Remembrance of Me BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS **THE PRESENCE OF UNBELIEVERS AT THE BREAKING OF BREAD**

THIS is our practice in New York City. We assemble every first day of the week to break bread. Very few of the outside barbarians attend the meetings: not because we should not be glad to see them, but because they do not take sufficient interest.

When any strangers drop in, we take it as an indication that an interest is arising which we are glad to see, and would be careful to do nothing to discourage. At the close of a discourse we say—

"The assembly is dismissed, and the brethren will proceed to break bread; but if any not of the Body please to remain, their presence will be no burden or embarrassment."

This custom we approve as reasonable and not opposed to sound doctrine. In the apostolic ecclesias, "prophesying" occupied the place of "speaking to men (who believe—1 Cor. 14:22) to edification, exhortation and comfort" when, as an ecclesia, they were assembled together for worship, of which breaking of bread was an important part (v. 23). Into these meetings, idolaters called "unbelievers," and others called "unlearned," came (v.23). They witnessed their proceedings, and were liable to come to conclusions according to what, as spectators, they observed (vs. 24-25).

1 Cor. 11:26 was not a secret meeting performance. The word *katangellete* shows this: it signifies "to announce, make proclamation, set forth, teach, inculcate, preach"—

"As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye openly publish (or make proclamation of) the Lord's death until he come."

To whom is the proclamation made? To the unbelievers, to the unlearned who may be present, and to the faithful by way of remembrance. The ecclesia is the pillar and support of the Truth, whose mission is in divers ways to "make known the manifold wisdom of the Deity" to all to whom it can find access, "being instant in season and out of season"—which implies that instruction to unbelievers by precept *or example* is at *all times* in place.

We decline to touch the unclean, nor in any of our enterprises will we be "unequally yoked with unbelievers." When we break bread in the presence of these, we are in no spiritual sense touching the unclean, or yoked with them. If they appear in our presence to observe our proceedings, this is their act and not ours. —1865:256

SHOULD WE USE UNLEAVENED BREAD?

THE Mosaic Law was the "*representation* of the knowledge and the truth" (Rom.2:20); the shadow of the future good (or heavenly) things, not itself the image of the things" (Heb. 10: 1: 8: 5); the "patterns of the things in the heavens," not "the heavenly things themselves" (Heb. 9:23). For the "*corporeal substance* is of the Christ" (Col. 2:17). That, namely, which is constituted of the good, the true, and the heavenly, pertaining to him in all his relations.

Unleavened breads were representative, shadowy, or typical things. They represented "purity and truth." This is apparent from the apostle's allusion to them in 1 Cor. 5:8. Says he—

"Christ our Passover is slain for us; therefore let us keep the feast, *not with the old leaven*, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the *unleavened (cakes) of purity and truth.*"

When therefore the Law saith—

"Thou shalt not offer the blood of My sacrifices with leaven" (Ex. 34:25)

—we have a typical enactment before us, which was fulfilled in the *letter* by offering the blood with dough baked before it was leavened. This observance was an element of the typical righteousness of the Law, which was to be *fulfilled* by those who—

"Walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4).

If a Christian drinks of the Lord's cup not discerning the Lord's body, or with malice and wickedness, he eats and drinks condemnation to himself, and does not "fulfil the righteousness of the Law," but on the contrary "offers the blood of Jehovah's sacrifice with leaven," which is death. To eat bread and drink wine at the table of the Lord is to "offer up spiritual sacrifice." This offering is "acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5) when offered not in the *letter*, but in the *spirit*, of the Law. The letter of the Law is—

"Thou shalt not offer the blood of My bulls and goats, heifers and lambs, with fermented bread,"
But the spirit of the Law is—

"Thou shalt not eat my flesh and drink my blood with malice and wickedness, or thou shalt be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (John 6:53-58; 1 Cor. 11:27)

We conclude, therefore, that the quality of the bread matters not, so that we eat in purity and truth, discerning the Lord's body. To strain at the quality of the bread is to Judaize. -1881:245

"NOT FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLY"

CHRISTIANS—the "living stones"—are "built up," or erected, into the "spiritual Temple," or constituted the "holy priesthood," for the especial purpose of offering—

"Spiritual sacrifice to God, through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5).

Peter further pronounces the constituents of this "One Body" to be an "elect (or chosen) race, a purchased people" (v. 9). He says they were "chosen and purchased" that they might declare the perfections of Him Who had called them from darkness.

Paul enjoins them to be "imitators of him as he was of Christ," and to "hold fast the traditions he had delivered to them." Now he did not forsake the assembling of himself together with the disciples. And of the traditions, it was one of them that they should come together on the first day of the week to break bread, and so *openly publish* the death of the Lord until he come.

The brethren, after the day of Pentecost, continued steadfast in all the things Jesus commanded his apostles to teach. None save the apostates in those days forsook the assembling of themselves together with the brethren. *Then* it was the fashion *never* to be absent, unless some obstacles interposed. They came together with alacrity, that they might be mutually comforted and consoled, amidst the trials and combats they had to sustain in a pagan world.

To meet with the brethren of Christ every "first day of the week" to "offer spiritual sacrifice to God through Jesus" the "Great High Priest"—to meet on that day to publish openly in word and action the remarkable death of the Messiah—to celebrate with joyous heart and countenance the revival from the dead of him who is the Resurrection and the Life—*let him not forget that these things are a part of that 'well-doing' in which he is required by divine authority to persevere if he would attain to a glorious, honourable, and incorruptible life.*

What would a schoolmaster think if, after he had entered the school, his pupils were scarcely ever to make their appearance at the appointed hour of instruction? Would he not close his doors and justly conclude his scholars had abandoned him for another guide?

And do brethren imagine that the Great Teacher—whom the Father sent into the world to dispel its ignorance, and to enlighten men with his wisdom—is less sensitive to the neglect of his appointment than an ordinary instructor of youth? Would this man bestow the rewards of his academy on those absentees? No! Neither will the Son of God confer "the promised reward" on those indolent and neglectful citizens of his Kingdom who devote all their time to themselves and their own lusts, and none to him.

Some excuse themselves on the plea that they work hard all week and are fatigued. In reply to this we would observe that brethren have no business to encumber themselves so much with the perishing and trifling concerns of this world as to require such great exertions to meet their obligations. We would have those bear in mind that they are a "purchased people" "bought with a price," and that price is more costly than the bowels of the earth can yield, that is, the "precious blood of Christ."

"Be not deceived, for whatever a man sows, that also shall he reap."

Instead of forsaking one another's company on the first day of the week, the apostle enjoins the Hebrew brethren to exhort one another, and so much the more as they saw the day approaching when the things constituted should be removed. Is it not equally important that their brethren who are contemporary with the "time of the end" so much the more exhort one another while it is called today? -1838

The New Covenant in My Blood

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

BREAKING BREAD AN ABSOLUTE COMMAND

CHRIST said, "Do this in remembrance of me." This command was not limited to his 12 apostles, for we find Paul "delivering" it to the Gentile believers at Corinth (1 Cor. 11:23). It was one of the ordinances he delivered to them which he praised them for keeping (v. 2).

Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles: therefore to us. We have no access to the things of Christ except through his ministry. Consequently the breaking of bread is one of the things "absolutely required" of an obedient believer.

—1874:282

* * *

The breaking of bread is not an observance left to 'voluntary love.' It is one of the things Paul refers to as the 'ordinances which I delivered unto you' (1 Cor. 11: 2). An ordinance is that which is *ordained*—a thing commanded. To say, then, that Christ's appointment in this matter is a 'loving request' and not a command is to go against the fact, and to teach both a dangerous and treasonable doctrine.

Dangerous, because it would leave the natural man at liberty to consult his own convenience, and lead him into ways of forgetfulness, ruin and death. And treasonable, because it tends to invalidate the leading and most beneficial of the sovereign ordinances of the House of God.

—1897:151

* * *

There was a very bad habit that some of the brethren and sisters appear to have had in Paul's time, and it is not peculiar to his days—that of neglecting to assemble themselves together. It is one of the commands of the Holy Spirit through Paul. We are commanded to meet *together*, and *strengthen one another*, and *build each other up* in the Faith.

When brethren pray for Christ's return, do they indeed wish for it when they neglect to meet him at the opportunities they have of doing so? For has he not said—

"Where 2 or 3 are gathered in my Name, there am I in the midst"?

He is as surely in our presence as though we actually saw him, taking account of the actions and hearts of those present, and placing a mark against the absentees who have conferred with flesh and blood. We have even the word of Jehovah Himself, that—

"They that feared the Lord spake often *to one another*, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His Name"

(Mal. 3:16).

From this it is manifest that they that fear not the Lord do the contrary. Moreover, Jesus tells us, except we abide in the Vine, we cannot bring forth fruit, which amounts to this: that if we neglect to meet with him at the *appointed times* to gather strength from him as the Vine (he being more immediately present where 2 or 3 are gathered in his Name), we are in a very great danger of becoming unprofitable branches, fit only for the fire or dunghill.

Having laid hold of the first principles of his doctrine, let us "go on to perfection," helping to build upon the foundation that has already been laid by the prophets and apostles—

"Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom *all the building fitly framed TOGETHER*, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord" (Ephes. 2:20-22).

"Hearken, my beloved brethren," Jesus says—

"Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find *giving his household their portion of meat in due season*. Verily he will make him ruler over all that he hath" (Luke 12:42-44). —1878:308

"BROKEN" OR "GIVEN"?

IT is true that in instituting the memorial supper, the words employed by Jesus concerning the bread as recorded (Luke 22:19) were—

"This is my body which is GIVEN for you."

—not "broken" as in the doubtful reading of 1 Cor. 11:24. This does not however exclude the use of the word "broken" as observed by some. The bread to which Jesus referred was broken before he uttered the words. In all the accounts it is testified that he took bread and "brake" it, and said, "This (broken bread) is my body, etc."

Paul lays hold of this feature in a casual allusion (1 Cor. 10:16)—

"The bread *which we break*, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

Nay, the whole memorial institution is spoken of as the "*breaking*" of bread—not the taking of bread. *Why* the "breaking"? The whole surroundings of the case show that the breaking of the body of Christ is the thing signified.

There is, first, the fact that the institution of the breaking of bread is a showing forth of the Lord's *death* (1 Cor. 11:26). There is, next, the fact that the bread and wine represented his body and blood in their *death relation* (v.27). There is, third, the fact that Jesus directly connects the *shedding* of his blood with the wine, which requires by analogy that the bread should involve the idea of *violence* to his body.

If we make it "give" merely in the sense of *excluding* "break" we disconnect the idea of death from the ordinance. If the idea of death is admitted in connection with the ordinance, then it's a mere question of the word chosen to describe a fact, which is an inexpedient discussion, as leading to a hurtful strife of words. 1879:425

* * *

You need not be troubled at the unskilful criticism which would try to get rid of the word "broken" as applicable to the body of Christ in the breaking of bread. There is nothing in it. The position of the fact does not depend upon the presence or absence of the word "broken" from the actual formula employed by Christ at the breaking of bread; but upon his whole act and attitude at the table, and the nature of the facts symbolized by the institution.

"He took bread and *broke it* and said, This (bread) is my body."

All the 4 accounts state this: Matt., Mark, Luke, and Paul in 1 Cor. 11.

If the bread was his body and he broke the bread, it was an intimation of the breaking of his body, even if he had not said—

"This is my body which is broken for you."

Broken bread, broken body, involve each other. The substitution of "given" for "broken" would make no difference, for the body was given in being broken in death, just as the blood, like the poured out wine, was shed for us in the same act.

This does not conflict with the prophecy that "a bone of him shall not be broken." Though a bone was not broken, his flesh was broken; and his flesh was his body in contrast with his blood. He said:

"The bread that I give is my *flesh*, which I give for the life of the world. My blood is drink indeed and my *flesh* is meat indeed" (John 6:51-55).

His flesh was his body in the proximate and most visible sense; and this was broken in the terrible process of being "nailed to the tree." The Lord has chosen to give us broken bread and poured out wine to represent his flesh and his blood offered in sacrifice; and we must resist any process of interpretation, with however much show of Greek, that would take away this meaning from the institution, or which, if it have not this aim, is mere word-trifling.

1892:261

* * *

ONE OR MANY BREAKINGS?

THE custom of the majority of the ecclesias at the breaking of bread, so far as we are aware, is for the presiding brother to break the bread once before passing it round among the brethren and sisters to be partaken of. To break it into many pieces seems out of harmony with the thing it symbolizes — the breaking of the body of Christ "once for all." We have no express guidance in the recorded customs of the apostles. They broke the bread—whether once or several times it is not said. In the absence of plain direction, we must be guided by a sense of propriety and fitness.

It does not matter much, as the ordinance is a spiritual and not a ritualistic operation. That is, it is designed for a moral effect on those taking part, namely, bringing to remembrance of the Lord's death until he come. It is not a mystic ceremony whose efficacy depends on exact mechanical conformity to the original. If we could know exactly how the apostles did, every loving disciple would be anxious to do the same. But not having this certainty of knowledge, we must come as near as judgment of probability allows, and be content with the part that is certain—that the brethren and sisters of the first century broke bread and drank wine in company to—

"Show forth the Lord's death until he come."

To insist upon one breaking or many breakings as a condition of fellowship would be a hurtful mistake.

—1890:18

BREAKING BY THE PRESIDING BROTHER

THE bread should be broken by the presiding brother before it is passed around, so that each member in eating may partake of the symbolized *broken* or sacrificed body. The objection to the taking off of a small portion by each one (as the breaking) is that it does not represent the scriptural sense of breaking the bread or body. Jesus was symbolizing the great sacrifice about to be offered in his own crucifixion, and the idea conveyed by his words was not that his disciples *each* break the body, but that they eat of it *already broken*; so when the presiding brother breaks the bread he does it in "remembrance"—

"For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death until he come." —1888:249

PRESIDING BROTHER DOES NOT PERSONATE CHRIST

IN the Lord's absence, no one can personate him at the breaking of bread. The leadership of the presiding brother in the matter is a mere matter of convenience, and not a personation of Christ.

That he should, however, break the bread before handing it to his brethren is appropriate, because it was a "broken body" that the disciples were called upon to remember in the partaking of the bread. For this reason, it should be one piece divided among all, not a number of pieces, like biscuits, as is the practice of some.

As to giving thanks, it is a matter of indifference whether the presiding brother do it himself or call on another. The one giving thanks ought to do so, instead of digressing into general petition. —1877:182

UNLEAVENED BREAD AND UNFERMENTED "WINE"?

"KEEPING the feast" of the memorial supper "as the Lord himself did" is not a question of the quality of the bread and wine we use: for on this we have no directions, and "where there is no law, there is no transgression!" It is our *moral* relation to the things signified that is everything (1 Cor. 5:8)—

"Let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of *malice & wickedness*, but with the *unleavened bread of sincerity & truth*."

No brother would object to literal unleavened bread being used, but no enlightened brother would insist on it as essential.

As for wine, you cannot have wine without fermentation. A rabid teetotalism is responsible for a good deal of fog on this question. Grape juice is one thing: wine is another. Men may agree to call the former "wine," but it is not the thing that has for ages been known as wine. Bible wine is grape juice in the vinous stage, in which there has been that amount of fermentation that imparts to it the heart gladdening power of which David speaks. — 1890:219

* * *

The crotchet on this question is not new. It was buzzing about in the days of bro. Thomas, who had no patience with it. The answer is this: "Where there is no law, there is no transgression." Any who say we ought to have unleavened bread and unfermented wine are "wise above that which is written." The Lord has left no directions, and therefore we are free. The object of breaking the bread and drinking the cup is to "bring to remembrance" the things symbolized, and this does not depend upon the quality of the articles partaken of, but on the mental discernment in the act.

If Christ had commanded conformity in these particulars, we must needs have conformed, but there is no such command. The command is limited to the act generally of eating bread and drinking wine in remembrance. We obey this when we eat bread and drink wine, though the loaf we eat be differently shaped and compounded, and our wine differently tasted and made.

We are not told the exact nature of the wine, simply because it was of no importance to know. It will not be contended that an essential piece of information was withheld. If not, then conformity to the original only requires us to use "wine," without being particular as to the quality. It is the spiritual, and not the physical, use of the wine that is to be considered, and therefore its physical constitution is altogether a secondary question.

We are not under the Law which required a minute conformity in 'meats and drinks.' The yoke is easy, the burden light. We bear that burden in this particular in breaking bread and drinking wine, without being contentious on a point that cannot be settled.

But surely, says the stickler, we can tell whether it was fermented or not? No, we cannot. There has been a great deal written on this point to little purpose, except giving impulsive minds a crotchet. The wines in common use were fermented, and frequently the grape juice was drunk in its vegetable or unfermented state. That is all that is certain, after much so-called scientific research.

But it throws no light on the quality of that used by the Lord & his disciples. The Lord was called a wine-bibber, which, though an exaggeration, points to the fact that he partook of stimulating or fermented wine, in connection with which alone the charge could arise. The wine miraculously produced at Cana was also of the order, for the master of the ceremonies, after considerable wine-drinking had taken place, pronounced it the "best"—a verdict which such a connoisseur would never have given on vegetable juice.

The wine used at the institution of the supper was probably of the same order, being used as an accompaniment to the eating of the roast lamb of the Passover. The phrase "fruit of the vine" (Matt. 26:29) is indeterminate as to the specific form of the fruit. Literally, the grapes are the fruit, and as it was not grapes but wine that was referred to, it shows the phrase was used in a general sense as descriptive of that which was produced by the vine, and not as defining a specific condition of it. It throws no light on the question of whether it was fermented or otherwise. The question is unimportant for all the reasons appearing.

It is said to be 'essential' for the faithful observance of the memorial feast that we use unleavened bread and unfermented wine. We are referred to the last occasion on which the Lord Jesus kept the feast of the Passover as affording strong evidence in support of this view. But is it really so? Undoubtedly the bread on this occasion was unleavened, as none other would be procurable upon that particular occasion, but it does not follow that because Jesus used unleavened bread when he instituted the memorial supper that the disciples henceforward used the same kind. It is nowhere commanded, and it is not recorded that they did so. Had it been essential that a particular kind of bread and wine be used, it would have been written for our guidance with as great distinctness as characterizes any part of the Law as given by Moses.

Although there is a *little* ground in the record of the last supper to base an argument on respecting the bread, the same is not true of the cup. There is nothing said about the wine, and although it may have been "unfermented," it is much more likely to have been "good wine," for we find Paul writing to the brethren at Corinth a little later, and he reproves them because some of them partook too freely of the cup (at the memorial feast, please note) as to get drunk. Was that "unfermented" wine? (1 Cor. 11). It is always worthy of remembrance that the first miracle of Jesus was making "good wine!"

Allusion is made by some to the law respecting the feast of the Passover as affording some further proof of our obligation to use unleavened bread and unfermented "wine." But any attempt to bring the Gentiles into subjection to the Law, beyond those things specified by the Holy Spirit in Acts 15, must end in failure, for no faithful and intelligent brethren will go beyond the commandment in this matter more than any other.

This 15th of Acts will well repay (like the whole of God's Word) a careful reading, and vs. 1-33 have a direct bearing upon our relation to the Law of Moses. What God saw fit to communicate to those Gentiles that had turned to Him is expressed in vs. 28-29, and as effectually demolishes the present contention as it did those mentioned in v. 1, and which so seriously exercised the servants of Christ 1800 years ago.

If a brother or an ecclesia prefer to use "unleavened bread" and "unfermented wine," they are at liberty to do so. But when they declare it to be essential to salvation, they go beyond what is written, and so make themselves transgressors, by passing judgment on their brethren in a matter concerning which there is no law. -1892:133

* * *

The wine of Palestine was what the juice of the grape is when "made (the best) wine." The nearest approach to this in our country is the Tent wine. It is the juice of the grape in the first stage of the vinous process and, therefore, though possessed of stimulant properties, is an intoxicant in only the slightest degree.

This is the wine used by the Birmingham ecclesia. It was adopted as regard to scruples of the same kind as indicated in your letter. But when the holder of the scruples insisted on a purely vegetable juice, no further concession could be made. It is not for any brother to lay down laws for the rest in such matters. 1 Cor. 8:9 applies only to private practices. The drinking of wine at the Lord's table is an appointment of the Lord, and not to be set aside for any.

—1897:315

* * *

It is not intended in these remarks (on the wine at the memorial feast) to countenance the use of alcoholic liquors. Any man bent on "purifying himself from all filthiness spirit' of the flesh and will eschew every practice which at all tends to hamper him; and there is *no doubt* that the use of narcotics and alcoholic stimulants comes under this category, interfering as they do with the healthy play of the delicate organism of the brain, helping the inferior feelings, & obstructing the higher faculties. Abstinence is, without doubt, the best course for those who seek to work out their salvation. -1870:349

WHEN AND HOW OFTEN TO BREAK BREAD?

THERE is no command on record expressly enjoining a weekly observance of the breaking of bread, but there is evidence that this is the will of Christ concerning his followers, and this is sufficient for those who "desire to do his will."

The evidence is brief and strong. In the first place, we have Christ's personal command, "Do this in remembrance of me": a command to which he intended so much importance to be attached that he communicated it to Paul on making choice of him as the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul says (1 Cor. 11:23)—

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

— and he proceeds to detail the institution of the supper.

Next we have the fact that the early believers, receiving their directions immediately from the apostles, "continued steadfastly" in "the breaking of bread" (Acts 2:42). As to the question, "How often?" we have the fact that at Troas (Acts 20:7)—

"The disciples came together to break bread" on "the first day of the week."

And the weekly periodicity of this custom is shown in the following incidental allusion (1 Cor. 16:2)—

"Upon the *first day of the week* let everyone of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

Now, how came the disciples, who were instructed of Paul, to meet on the first day of the week for the breaking of bread? Did they do it of their own accord, or did Paul direct them to do it? There is only one reasonable answer. Paul informs us that he delivered to them the ordinance of the breaking of bread. Did he tell them to break bread, and omit to tell them how often? No reasonable person can believe such a thing.

The conclusion is, they broke bread every first day of the week because *Paul told them to do so*; and what Paul told them is law to us. "He that heareth you" said Jesus, "heareth me." The words of Paul are equal to the commandments of Christ, for he himself says—

"If any think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are the *commandments of the Lord*' (1 Cor. 14:37).

It follows that the *weekly* breaking of bread is an institution of the Household of Christ, the negligence of which is disobedience. We are commanded to—

"Forsake not the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is" (Heb.10:25) —1870:313

* * *

As for breaking bread on some other day than the first day of the week, it would not be according to the apostolic ordinance "delivered unto us." And as the whole institution is an affair of ordinance, it would not be safe to depart from the ordinance.

Nevertheless, if special circumstances preclude compliance with the ordinance on that day, we cannot imagine that the Lord would be displeased with a loving effort to call him to mind on another day. Moses could take exceptional cases to the Lord for direction, as when certain ceremonially defiled men were forbidden by the elders to eat the Passover; whom the Lord, on appeal, allowed (Num. 9:6-12).

This generation is not so favourably situated as to get a divine settlement of doubtful cases. We have to use our best judgment on the general principles supplied in the Word, which, as a rule, are sufficient for guidance.

—1897:282

AT WHAT HOUR SHOULD WE BREAK BREAD?

NO doubt the meeting at which Jesus instituted the supper was held in the evening, but there is no evidence that a particular hour of the day formed a feature of the ordinance as apostolically enjoined. The whole spirit of Paul's teaching is against the idea. He was afraid for the Galatians because they observed "days, months, times & years."

To make the hour of consequence would be to interfere with the character of the institution, and create insuperable difficulty. Had the time of day been a part of the institution, it would have been enjoined and not left to be doubtfully inferred.

—1871:96

BREAKING BREAD ALONE

THERE is no reason why a brother or sister, having none to assemble with of "like precious faith," should not break bread every first day of the week alone. The object of the act is to bring to remembrance the sufferings and coming revelation of our Lord Jesus. It is just as important to one as to many that these events should be brought to mind.

—1870:214

* * *

Break bread alone if you cannot have company. The number "2 or 3" was to show that a great number was not necessary to command Christ's attention: not that "2 or 3" were absolutely necessary.

—'75:473

THE PRESENCE OF UNBELIEVERS

THE breaking of bread is a proclamatory as well as a memorial act—

"Ye do SHOW FORTH the Lord's death until he come" (1 Cor. 11:26).

Therefore the doors of the place where the act is performed ought not to be closed against respectful spectators. The stranger is potentially related to the loving ceremony since he is invited to become a disciple of the Lord. To omit him from the ceremony itself is as far as we are justified in going in the way of exclusion. We have no right to object to his presence if he be so minded. The apostolic assemblies were not closed against "interested strangers"(1 Cor. 14:24). The question was fully debated in the early volumes of the Christadelphian while bro. Thomas was in the land of the living.

—1895:22

THE ECCLESIA HAS THE RIGHT TO DECLINE FELLOWSHIP

THE memorial breaking of bread is an institution based on perfect freedom: freedom on the part of an individual claimant to unite if he feels at liberty; and freedom on the part of the assembly if they know of any just grounds for objecting.

But the 2 freedoms are liable to come into seeming collision. Most people recognize liberty on the individual side only, and stigmatize as tyranny the objection of the Body to the claim of any individual. To uphold individual liberty as against collective liberty is a confusion of rights. The liberty of the one is the liberty of many. The liberty of the individual in plural form is not tyranny.

The true medium is to be found in the maintenance of perfect freedom on all hands to decide all questions of duty, individual or collective. If one person is at liberty to choose, many persons are at liberty to refuse, if the law of the Lord require.

—1898:157

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WE have varied somewhat from the normal proportions of the magazine to include all the above in one issue, that it may be a handy reference. We hope it will be acceptable, interesting and useful. Any with experience in ecclesial affairs will have encountered some or all of the foregoing crotchets. Like the current promotion of the Catholic theories that the Revelation is all First Century and/or all in the future, few crotchets are new and few crotcheters are original. Bre. Thomas and Roberts went through it all, and there's a wealth of practical wisdom and guidance in the magazines of their day, and great balance and stability to be gained by familiarity with their writings.

On the matter of unleavened bread, a perennial crotchet, one of the clearest demonstrations will be found on pg. 111 of Young's Concordance, cols. 2-3. It will there be seen at a glance that there are 2 entirely different words in the original Greek for bread: *artos* for bread in general, and *azumos* for unleavened bread. While *azumos* (specifically unleavened bread) is used 8 times, all in connection with the very occasion of the Passover when the Lord's supper

was instituted, still it is *artos* (the common word for any bread) that is invariably used in connection with the Lord's supper itself.

In all the Gospel accounts of the supper, in the reference to breaking bread in Acts, and in Paul's delivering of the ordinance in 1 Cor. 11, it is ALWAYS *artos*, NEVER *azumos*. It is striking that there was a specific word for unleavened bread, but the apostolic records never use it of the memorial bread.

Surely this is intentional, and surely it proves that there was never any thought of stipulating or restricting to unleavened bread. Note how the two words are used in Matt. 26:17-26: "The first day of the feast of unleavened bread (*azumos*) . . . Jesus took bread (*artos*)." Truly the '*artos*' in this case would be '*azumos*,' but only *incidentally*, not *essentially*, so. The same striking contrast in the use of the 2 words occurs in Mark's and Luke's accounts.

All that the ordinance ever requires or refers to is *artos*: bread without reference to quality or characteristics. Jesus 12 times uses the same common word for bread when speaking of himself as the bread from heaven which believers must partake of, in John 6.

CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS

CHRIST'S sufferings consisted largely of the mental suffering caused by the present evil state of things among men. His sorrow and his grief were of a sort that many—we might say, nearly all—are unsusceptible of. Christ had a high conception, far higher than ever we can hope to reach, of what men ought to be, and of the position that God ought to occupy among men. And therefore he felt a pain that none could experience who were not of the same state of mind, in mingling with men who were, on the whole as regards God, like the brutes. We find that we come into fellowship with the sufferings of Christ in proportion as we grow up to him, and become like him, drinking in his spirit, sharing his tastes, and laying hold of his hopes. — Bro. Roberts, April, 1876

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WE ask the forbearance of those who would like to see a fuller, more thorough and more orderly treatment of the increasingly exciting signs of the approach of the end. At present our circumstances make this a little difficult. We hope to be able to resume soon.

According to Your Faith Be It Unto You

"Without Faith it is impossible to please God."

SO states the author of Hebrews (11:6). These words give us cause for much profitable reflection. Our faith, or the lack of it, most decidedly influences our relationship with God. Generally, faith is something which is foreign to us in a natural sense. It is not automatically acquired. It can be attained only by much striving and study; and often attended by hardship and tears—

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom.10:17).

"Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith . . . might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:6-7).

The faith that pleases God requires essentially a special development and integration of that ingredient into our character, to the point that our lives become governed by it. It would do us well from time to time to analyse the effects that faith has upon our lives, the stage of development it has reached in our characters, the influence it has upon

our thinking processes. Are we living our lives any *differently* because of it? Do we sometimes wonder whether it is present in our lives at all?

The world we live in is naturally destructive of faith. Faith is the "evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1), and the world around us is totally involved in and built upon things that are material, things that can be seen with the eye, heard with the ear, and handled by the hand: things, in other words, that appeal to the senses—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Such things are entirely outside the realm of the things of faith.

It is easy to become locked up in the system of this material world, and hopelessly entangled. We are naturally inclined to be receptive to the things which are tangible and immediately confronting us, while all else is pushed into the realm of being of no bearing or consequence. The system of the world generally teaches us to reject anything that has no immediate bearing upon one's attainment of wealth, social status or pleasure. Hence the natural man has no time for anything which requires patience, dependence, or faith.

The very opposite of faith is worry. Worry comes as the direct result of doubt. When we begin to doubt a thing or a person in whom we have placed a great deal of trust, we begin to worry; and that worry shows the erosion of implicit faith. Most of man's experience with faith is where he has placed supreme trust in a man or the works of man. It is little wonder, then, that mankind today are disillusioned with anything to do with trust and faith, and are pessimistic and sceptical about things promised but not seen. Man is not worthy of such trust or faith: rarely does he perform what he has promised. Men have conditioned themselves therefore to live to themselves, and to become independent and self-sufficient.

That is why Paul deemed it so essential, in writing to the Corinthians, that he make a clear distinction between the wisdom of man and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 2:4-5)—

"My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your FAITH should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."

The wisdom of man can be appealing in the initial sense because it is a wisdom of words which sound fine and stir men's minds, but they ultimately discourage faith because they always prove to be words devoid of results and empty of action.

The preaching of Paul, on the other hand, was accompanied by results. Those results were the changed lives of the believers (which, in the corrupt situation of Corinth, was in itself miraculous), and in the manifestation of Holy Spirit power. This was given to believers as an earnest, a token, upon which to base their faith and their hope, that it should stand, not in the wisdom of men, "but in the power of God." 1 Cor. 2:14-16—

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

Essentially, Paul distinguished 2 classes of men: natural, animal, untransformed men on the one hand; and on the other, those who are sensitive and obedient to the Spirit of God (which is another way of saying, the Divine will), whose life is guided and directed by the Divine will, and whose judgments and decisions are made according to that direction.

Every man has this potential or capability to receive and obey the will of God, and to be acutely conscious that there are values beyond the values of this world. Such a one is termed by Paul a *pneumatikoi* (v. 15), that is, a "spiritual man." It is this potential that makes man different from the rest of Creation. It is a principle that creates kinship with God, causing us to become "sons of God."

Many times in his 3½ years of ministry Jesus was quick to point out those situations in which he was pleased by the manifestation of faith on the part of an individual, or disappointed by lack of it—

"And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee" (Luke 5:20).

He was pleased with the faith manifested by the friends of the palsied man, who stopped at no lengths to get to Jesus, but let their friend down through the roof. There were no doubts or misgivings about what Jesus could do. Their problem was not concerning Jesus' ability to heal; it was whether or not they could *get to him*. They did not give up until they found a way.

"When he *saw their faith*, he said, Man, thy sins are forgiven."

Like these men, we too should never doubt the power, ability, and compassion of Jesus to heal us from our sins. Rather our concern should be directed toward gaining access to him, though, as Paul said to the Athenians—
"God is not far from every one of us" (Acts 17).

He is never far from *us*, but *we* are sometimes far from *Him*. Every person is his own barrier, if he allows doubts and indecision to reign in his heart. If we can manifest that absolute conviction of the wisdom and power of God displayed by Jesus, we can and will always find the way to him, regardless of the material obstacles in the way
(Rom. 5:1-2).

Jesus was pleased by the expression of faith in the Roman centurion (Luke 7:9). He seemed *exceptionally* pleased in this case. Perhaps it was because this man's entire attitude and outlook in life was one of faith. He held an important position in the Roman army, and represented the conquering power, and was obviously highly esteemed by all men. He might easily have displayed an attitude of pride and arrogance before Jesus, who in social standing was no more than a Jewish peasant.

But his actions and words bore testimony to an attitude of abject humility in his approach to Jesus. He put little stock in the material things and power which he possessed, except as being symbolic of a greater and higher Power. He placed his values in the power of things unseen, and it was in view of this that he saw Christ spiritually towering above him in rank. Hence he said —

"I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof" (v. 6).

He saw Christ through the "eye of faith" which cuts through the fog and mist of material things, and was able to perceive the Almighty source of Christ's power and authority. That kind of reasoning and insight builds a faith that is unshakable. There was absolutely no questioning of Christ's power. He said—

"I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers. And I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it" (v. 8).

What he was saying was that if his mere human authority produced the results it did, how much greater results could be produced by the word of Jesus, who had *Divine* authority. He had that kind of supreme confidence which looks up and says, "Lord, I KNOW you can do this. Jesus turned himself to all those following. This kind of faith had to go on record as an example—

"I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (v. 9).

On the other hand, Jesus points to doubt as being the cause for Peter's lack of faith in the incident of his inability to walk on the water (Matt. 14:31). We see Peter stepping out of the boat with the greatest of confidence: at least, so it *appears*. It would seem that, momentarily, he *did* walk on the water. In the terrible commotion of waves and water around, doubts began to well up in him, and with the doubts came worry. He worried about what would happen should he begin to sink. Perhaps at this point he appeared too far from the boat and from Jesus to be able to grasp either. No sooner had such thoughts assailed him than he panicked and began to sink.

But before we shake our heads at Peter, let us ponder: how many of us would have had enough faith and love to have left the comparative safety of the boat in the first place?

When things go smoothly, and when everyone is healthy and happy and enjoying a degree of affluence, we may think we possess faith. But let things begin to go wrong, and the waves and sea begin to froth and foam about us figuratively. How do we react? Probably in most cases no different than Peter.

There is such a thing as *beneficial* doubt, however. There is a degree of doubt which in the initial stages of a thing is necessary to cause us to prove a thing rather than accept at face value what one may say, and glibly repeat it or act upon it without having proved it.

A case in point may be that of Thomas after the crucifixion, when the information was being relayed that Jesus was risen (John 20:24-29). Thomas was something of a pessimist. Of all the disciples, it appears it was he only who accepted the fact that Christ would die, while the other disciples had been hesitant to make the final trip to Jerusalem. Thomas had said—

"Let us also go, that we may die with him" (John 11:16).

But for all that he had expected, Thomas was broken-hearted, it seems, when it actually happened. His sorrow appears to have been such that he could not meet the eyes of men and went away to be alone in his grief. Therefore he was not there when Jesus first appeared, and could not bring himself to believe the others' report.

Thomas had to have proof. He was honest in his doubts, and he faced up to them. And when he was presented with the proof, his faith could be ultimately greater than any other because of its thorough establishment. Thomas seems to have been the kind of man who would always think things through totally and thoroughly; who would never get excited or act upon impulse; but would always know what he had faith in and why. He would not say he believed when he did not believe, or that he understood when he did not.

But when he was sure he went all the way: "My Lord and my God!" Thomas doubted in order to become sure. And when he did become sure, his surrender to certainty was complete and could never again be shaken. The apostles later advised such a course—

"Prove all things" . . . "Try the spirits whether they be of God."

But Jesus pronounced a special blessedness upon those who attain the type of faith and conviction Thomas arrived at without having the privilege of sight and feel that Thomas had (v. 29)—

"Thomas, because thou hast SEEN me thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

That truly is faith—as "seeing Him Who is invisible."

To Jesus and the apostolic writers, there was nothing more antithetic and contradictory of faith than worry and care for the things of the present. Paul says—

"I would have you without carefulness," or "Do not be full of care for present things" (1 Cor. 7:32).

The meaning of "care" in contexts such as this is a wearing, painful sense of anxiety, anxiousness or worry. "Be careful for nothing," Paul tells the Philippians (4:6), in the same sense of the term. Likewise to Timothy—

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life" (2 Tim. 2:4).

Jesus said to Martha who, we are told, was cumbered—or *distracted by anxiety*—about much serving—

"Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10: 41).

That is the whole point about worry and care: it distracts our attention, and diverts our efforts toward things that in the eternal picture just do not mean that much, or in fact have no place at all. There is a time and place for everything, and when Jesus was in their midst teaching them it was not the time to be thinking about preparing an elaborate serving.

We have a classic illustration of this in Luke 12:13. Jesus would have no part in the distribution of an inheritance between 2 men, and he used the occasion to teach a great lesson, namely, that the abundance of a man's life ultimately does not come from his possessions. Therefore he warns us to beware of the spirit that always wants more. To those who have an abundance of possessions, Jesus spoke this parable of the Rich Fool (vs. 16-21). Two things stand out vividly about this man—

1. He never saw beyond himself. The parable is full of the words I, me, and mine. The boundary of the world on the north, south, east and west was himself. He could see no other person, and it never entered his head to give anything away. It has been said that money and possessions are like sea-water: the more one drinks, the thirstier one becomes.

2. He never saw beyond this material world. All his plans were formulated on the basis of this present fleeting life. All his values rested upon material wealth, with no thought for the wealth which is spiritual.

Then there are those whom Jesus terms *psuchikos*, after *psuche*, meaning nothing more than the principle of physical life, something that is present in all creation. He in whom the spiritual potential lies dormant or dead is really no different from any other animal. He is the natural man. He lives as if there were nothing beyond physical life, whose values are all physical and material values, and who makes judgments and decisions according to those standards. He cannot understand spiritual things. One who ranks the attainment of material things as the supreme end of life cannot understand generosity; and one who never has a thought beyond this present world cannot understand the things of God. It is so easy to become so engrossed and involved in the world that for us there exists nothing beyond this material world.

Then Jesus has something to say to those who have few possessions (vs. 22-34). The basic thought running through the entire passage is if we are poor, do not be anxious: don't worry about it. He wasn't encouraging anyone to be shiftless, thriftless, or reckless. He wasn't saying that we should be lazy, but he was saying that we are to be content with what we have, and to place our value upon, and work hard for, the things which last forever. If God cares for the plants of the earth, said Christ, how much more so will He look after those who are striving to obey Him. Therefore (v. 22)—

"Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on."

We must always do the best we can with what we have, and leave the rest up to God with implicit and complete faith in Him. We should be easygoing in the things of this world, and unsparing of ourselves in regard to eternal things. Often it's the other way around.

We recall the compliment to those Hebrew brethren who, after the Nero persecution, found themselves destitute of their possessions—

"Ye . . . took *joyfully* the spoiling of your goods, knowing [not thinking or surmising, but knowing—that is the basis of faith] in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" [or as it should read, "knowing that you have yourselves a better and an enduring possession"] —Heb. 10:34.

We come here to remember our Saviour. We symbolically drink his blood and eat his flesh. It is equivalent to Thomas feeling the nail prints in his hands and the wound in his side. But do we, like Thomas, go the whole way? Are we still cumbered, distracted by anxiety and worry for the things of the present, while we claim to have faith in his blood as a propitiation for sins? If that is true, and if we *believe* it to be true from the depths of our heart, then surely all else matters very little. Yet, where are our values placed? Would we be able to react to the pillaging of our possessions according to the same spirit and attitude manifested by the Hebrews, who accepted it *joyfully*? If we are to be justified through faith in his blood, let us think about it in terms of the formula of healing expressed by Christ himself: "*According to your FAITH be it unto you!*" —E.T.

"DIFFERENCES" and "CHANGES"

THERE is much strenuous effort today, as there has always been, to try to manufacture 'differences' between bro. Thomas and Roberts. Sound brethren and sisters will immediately perceive the red light of warning whenever this attempt surfaces, and will not be deceived, but will be on guard to see what new error it is being used to introduce. This has always been the tactic of the adversary, and it is a groundless fabrication which unfriendly critics endeavour to read into their respective writings.

Bro. Thomas and Roberts worked in complete harmony. In the one major separation that was necessary before the death of bro. Thomas (the Dowieite issue), bro. Thomas was not only wholeheartedly with bro. Roberts in the action, but he felt more urgently and strongly than bro. Roberts in the matter, and was somewhat disappointed at bro. Roberts' extreme reluctance to act.

Bro. Thomas unearthed the Truth in its entirety, and bro. Roberts always was quick to thankfully acknowledge that fact—see March '76 Berean, pg.94.

If the adversary is able to convince the unwary there were "differences" between them, and that both "changed" on basic truths from time to time, then the power and value of the sound foundation they laid in the providence of God is successfully undermined, and the doors are flung open to every new wind of doctrine under guise of new "enlightenment" and "development."

Certainly bro. Thomas did not discover the whole Truth as a complete unit over night. It took years of study. But that was all over by 1848. There was a broadening of understanding and a filling in of details thereafter, and there were clearer definitions as previously unthought-of error had to be faced, but there was no "changing." All his life bro. Roberts repeatedly faced and rebutted this charge of "change," made by unskilful and not always honest readers of his writings. It comes up time and time again in the magazine, and is exposed as groundless. This is not to be wondered at, for many, for their own various ends, charge "contradiction" and "discrepancy" in the Word of God itself.

The Will of God

"He ordained twelve, that they should be with him"—Mark 3:14

"The men which Thou gavest me out of the world .. none of them is lost but the son of perdition"—John 17:6-12.

"Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil (accuser)"—John 6:70

THE incident described in John 13 : 1-5,10-18—Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet and reference to his betrayer—took place "that Scripture might be fulfilled," or, in other words, the will of God.

The Psalmist comes to the conclusion that in times of trouble, an untrue friend is the first to forsake his associates (Psa. 41:9,55:12).

Whatever Judas' motive, he had his opportunity. He is declared to be a thief, for he was entrusted with the money and stole some. He was a deceiver, for he remained till nearly the end as a pretended friend. He was a traitor, for he led the enemy to arrest Christ, and betrayed him with a kiss. Christ gave his verdict of Judas—

"It had been good for that man if he had not been born" (Matt. 26:24).

All that remains to happen to Judas is to arise to face judgment, and to be punished. He was one of the 12 disciples chosen according to the will of God, and he was a necessary link in God's purpose, the right type of man to be chosen for such a purpose. He had the opportunity to attain salvation, but his own inclinations conquered him and drove him to betray his Master.

As in the case of Pharaoh, God's work was carried out by the rebellion of God's enemies. Both Pharaoh and Judas perished in the same manner. A good declaration of God's manner in this type of situation is in Romans 9: 17—

"Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee, and that My Name might be declared throughout all the earth."

We who have been called, who have the benefits and privileges of communion and friendship not only with one another but with Jesus and the Father, also have the responsibilities of this position. We may fail and, like Peter, deny Jesus in times of trial, but upon repentance there is forgiveness and reinstatement, and the process can strengthen us for greater trials to come.

Judas made friends with Christ's enemies for present advantage, and lost everything. He didn't deny Christ: he betrayed him. He brought the enemy to Christ and delivered him to a cruel death.

It is very easy to forget the separateness that Christ's brethren have been called to; the holiness and the sanctity of God's calling. Paul says—

"If any defile God's Temple, God shall destroy him" (1 Cor. 3:17).

Christ claimed as his family those only who "do the will of God" (Mark 3:31-35). Why is the will of God so important?—

"For this is the will of God, *even your sanctification*" (I Thess. 4 :3).

We are separated from the world for God's purpose, to cleanse us and to save us.

Achan stands out as a bad example. Like Judas, his desire was for material things, present gratification; so he stretched out his hands for money, he put on the enemy's garment, and perished. In doing such things we are, first, disobeying God's will, His commands. Secondly, we are preventing God's will from giving us life in His Kingdom, from operating in our life—so bringing death.

Christ was tempted in all points like we are. He knew that God's greatest requirement was obedience to His will. To offer lambs, or gold, or any earthly material, was not what God asked (Psa. 40:6-8)—

"Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire: mine ears hast Thou opened. Burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do THY WILL, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart."

And referring this in application to Christ (Heb.10:5-10)—

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world he saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure.

"Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do Thy will, O God.

"Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offerings for sin Thou wouldest not, neither hast pleasure therein (which are offered by the Law), *then* he said, Lo, I come to do THY WILL, O God.

"*He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second: by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*"

By this *will of God*, and Christ's obedience to it, we are sanctified. This is our calling. Could we break this 3-fold cord of divine strength, by imposing our *own* will into our lives, and thus destroy the holiness of our calling? The will to do as we like, to associate with whom we like, or to attend to God's will if and when we choose, will—if continued in—constitute the enemy in God's Temple, and be a betrayal of Christ. Rom. 12:1-2 proves by example and by experience what God's will is—

"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect *will of God*."

To do this requires faith, for this is a lifetime exercise and experience, and it will be revealed at last when the great Judge says—

"Come, ye blessed, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt.25:34).

Then the self-denial of our walk in life will seem as nothing compared to the reward. Christ says in Mark 10:29-30, that the blessings will be 100-fold. By being called, and ordained to be God's sons & daughters, brethren and sisters of Jesus Christ and of all those who do the Will of God, we have become adopted into the great family of God. For the present, the family of God is only as perfect as each one of us makes it. If we endure, James says we have a crown of life awaiting us (James 1:2-12).

We will be tried in various ways in life. Each one of us has his or her own form of trial, but we need the strength of one another to overcome. So if we associate with unbelievers, or fail to attend the services of the Truth, or neglect to study the Word, or to pray to God for help at all times, or become too busy to devote a portion of our time in God's service, then we are tearing down, piece by piece, the veil that separates the things of God from the world. Think of our Master, facing death in the Garden—

"NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE, BE DONE" (Luke 22:40).

"*This is the will of God, even your sanctification*"—1 Thess. 4:3

—A.J.

Wisdom Is Profitable to Direct

"To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment and equity"—Proverbs 1:2

THIS is the preamble of the book, outlining its purpose (which it accomplishes with great power to all who submit to it, for it is the inspired Word of eternal life). At the very beginning the essential foundation is laid: the basis of all wisdom and understanding—

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (v. 7).

"The fear of the Lord is the *beginning* of knowledge"—any learning or activity that does not include, or is not based upon, the fear of God is foolishness, ignorance, blindness—regardless of its pretensions or apparent accomplishments, for its ultimate end is *death*.

Any accumulation of knowledge that is not founded on the fear of God is like putting new, precious wine in fragile old bottles—in a very short time the vessel perishes, and the laboriously stored-up knowledge is lost, and the effort is wasted, and the misguided labourer is shown to be a short-sighted fool. This is the destiny of all the wise of the world. It is like building an imposing edifice, costing all one's treasure, on shifting sand.

And it is doubly foolishness because it is being done *when something infinitely more important should be done*. Worldly knowledge is not always of itself foolishness, it may be factual and temporarily useful, but the *pursuit* of it is foolishness because it has no lasting value to the pursuer: it ends in death, while a similar expenditure of time and effort in the right direction will bring eternal life.

We haven't begun to build anything permanent or valuable or sensible until we wholeheartedly acknowledge the fear of the Lord, and our position in relation to Him. He is the centre of all reality: nothing worthwhile can be built that is not built on Him.

"Remember thy Creator *in the days of thy youth*" (Eccl. 12:1).

This advice, this command, is not just for children. It is the *now* as against the vague, future *then*. Start now, this moment, to do what should and must be done, to put intention into action, to put first things first: tomorrow may be too late. Remember Him *now* in the bright daytime of your active opportunity. Realize the folly of earthly pursuits

before decrepit impotence and failing powers of old age force upon you the realization of opportunities for ever lost. There is no treasure like the memory of time well used for God.

Of those who scorn wisdom and pursue evil, Solomon says (v.18):

"They lay wait for their *own* blood; they lurk privily for their *own* lives."

Little do they realize this deep and fundamental truth, but it is undeniably so. Everything we do is really done to, or for, ourselves. In the ultimate, we ourselves are the recipients of all our actions—

"If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for *thyself*: but if thou scornest, *thou alone* shalt bear it" (Prov. 9:12)

We each determine our own judgment. Solomon says later—

"He that diggeth a pit shall fall therein; and he that rolleth a stone, it shall return upon him"(Prov. 26:27).

And Jesus confirms this divine law of righteous retribution—

"With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matt. 7:2).

If only we could clearly *realize* this!—could keep it ever in the forefront of our consciousness, and frame each act by it. Wisdom is facing these immutable *facts*, and getting our lives into harmony with them. When we mete out faithfulness and kindness and mercy and love, we are meting them to ourselves. When we mete out selfishness and severity and worldliness and folly, *that too is to ourselves—inevitably and inescapably*. We cannot outwit God, or turn aside His all-powerful hand. All will come back at last, like bread upon the waters. All will return in the end either to bless or curse us, though we may have long forgotten it. Unheeding though God may seem to be of our folly, the day of reckoning will surely come—

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, THAT SHALL HE ALSO REAP"(Gal.6:7).

Therefore, concludes Solomon —

"Wickedness is folly, and foolishness is madness" (Eccl. 7:25 RV).

Wickedness is folly because a course contrary to divine law is self-destruction. We cannot mock God. We either accept His love, or we receive His anger. Self will is suicide, though it rides high and feels delicious for the present moment. Solomon in the 2nd chapter of Proverbs likens the desires of the flesh to the appeals of a strange woman enticing the simple to their own destruction (v.19)—

"None that go unto her return again; neither take they hold of the paths of life."

On the other hand, wisdom is a friend, safe counsellor and companion: faithful handmaid of God and instructor of His children (1:20):

"Wisdom crieth without: she uttereth her voice in the streets."

The excellence of wisdom over folly is such that verily *shouts* at us from every hand—

"She crieth in the streets, in the chief place of concourse, in the opening of the gates" (1:20-21).

At every turn, in letters of fire, it is proclaimed that—

"Wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness" (Eccl. 2:13).

And what is wisdom? Something far beyond us, difficult to attain? No. It is simply a facing and recognition of the eternal facts, and acting in harmony with them; a perception of things *as they really are*; a discernment of relative values and true perspectives, all founded on an enlightened "fear of the Lord."

There are things that remain, and things that perish. There are passing pleasures, and eternal satisfactions. Wisdom distinguishes between them, and chooses the lasting things. Wisdom leads us to ask ourselves why we do things, and insists on a satisfactory answer. Wisdom demands a conscious and candid examination of our activities and interests in the light of the things that are eternal.

Are we spending our substance for that which is not bread? Are we foolishly throwing our efforts and labours into a bag full of holes? Present possessions and accomplishments and pleasures seem so big and real now, *but what are they really worth?* What will it all mean 100 years from now?

"Whoso findeth wisdom findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against Wisdom wrongeth his own soul. All they that hate her love death" (8:35-36).

"Let every man examine himself" counsels the apostle (1 Cor. 11:28). And again, "Let no man deceive himself" (1 Cor.3:18). For wilful self-deception—closing of the eyes—there is little cure.

"In many things we offend all," says James (3:2), and there is always hope—if we are prepared to meet the verdict of conscience and wisdom. But if we refuse to face a self-examination, to test all our actions and pursuits by the light of Wisdom—*if we will not recognize at least to ourselves how miserably short our best efforts are, and how much God's service in simple reason demands—then where is the possibility of improvement? Where any hope of life?*

April Answers

WHAT DID (WILL, SHOULD) HAPPEN WHEN—

(1 Chronicles through Proverbs)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. I awake—I shall be satisfied | Temple building prospered |
| 2. Thou heard—He sent his son | 31. Hear sound of going—Smite Philistines |
| 3. King saw her—He held out sceptre | 32. Thine enemy falleth—Rejoice not |
| 4. Baasha heard—He left building Ramah | 33. He prepared heavens—I was there |
| 5. He bowed not—They told Haman | 34. Syrians came to help—David slew 22,000 |
| 6. Ezra read Law—The people wept | 35. Inquisition was made—Both were hanged |
| 7. Her turn came—She required nothing | 36. Jehoram became king—Slew all his brethren |
| 8. Desire cometh—It is a tree of life | 37. Lord turned captivity— |
| 9. Zechariah died—Said, Lord require it | We were like them that dream |
| 10. They departed—Egypt was glad | 38. We remembered Zion—We wept |
| 11. 3 friends heard—Made appt. to mourn | 39. Amaziah became king—Slew father's killers |
| 12. They were sick—My clothing sackcloth | 40. Manasseh was afflicted—He humbled self |
| 13. Necho came up—Josiah went against him | 41. I am old & grayheaded—Forsake me not |
| 14. Sanballat heard—He mocked Nehemiah | 42. Came to threshingfloor—Uzzah put out hand |
| 15. Asa heard Obed—He took courage | 43. Artaxerxes' letter came— |
| 16. Jeroboam heard—He returned from Egypt | Temple building stopped |
| 17. His sons feasted—Job offered sacrifices | 44. Philistines came to strip—They found Saul |
| 18. I go down to pit—What profit in my blood? | 45. Thou doest self well—Men will praise thee |
| 19. Ezra heard of sin—He plucked his beard | 46. Solomon ended praying—Fire came down |
| 20. He hath tried me—Shall come forth as gold | 47. Lord shall build up Zion— |
| 21. Josiah heard Law—He rent his clothes | He shall appear in His glory |
| 22. He goeth his way—He boasteth | 48. She saw Ahaziah was dead— |
| 23. No man pursueth—The wicked flee | Athaliah destroyed seed royal |
| 24. Your fear cometh—I will mock | 49. Rehoboam was established—He forsook law |
| 25. Sennacherib came—Hezekiah stop waters | 50. I saw prosperity of wicked—I was envious |
| 26. Uzziah was strong—Went in to burn incense | 51. Rehoboam entered Temple— |
| 27. Ezra opened book—All people stood up | Guard brought shields |
| 28. I consider heavens—What is man? | 52. Jehoshaphat came for spoil—took 3 days |
| 29. His heart was merry—Called for Vashti | 53. Singers lifted up voice—Cloud filled house |
| 30. Darius' decree came— | 54. Father/mother forsake—Lord take me up |
-

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS

If the Lord will

HYE: Monday to Sunday, July 26 - August 1

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

WORCESTER: Saturday & Sunday, October 9-10

Bro. Edgar Sargent, 8 Proctor St., Ashburnham, MA 01430, Ph. (617) 827-5890

Workers Together With God

It is the personal relationship of baptism that gives it all its meaning. It is not baptism into a moral code, or a set of laws, or a way of life, but *into God through Jesus Christ*.

"The gift of God is eternal life." But bare eternal existence alone would be a terrible destiny. The eternal existence is just the necessary background for the *real* gift—

"God will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev. 21:3).

Again, being with someone is not so much being in their presence as being in their *thoughts and heart*, with the assurance that the relationship is *mutual and permanent*.

And still it does not stop there. Being with them is still not complete if it is static. It must have life and movement or it inevitably palls. Being with someone in its fullest sense involves a unity of effort and direction—*labouring together in joyful harmony* toward the accomplishment of a common purpose.

Paul expresses all this in that wonderful phrase,

"WORKERS TOGETHER WITH GOD."

There is no closer term of intimacy than that which he uses in his epistle to the Philippians, "*true yokefellow*"—

"I entreat thee also, TRUE YOKEFELLOW, help those women which laboured with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and other my **fellow-labourers**, whose names are in the book of life."

This is how he describes his closest friendships—"true yokefellow," "fellow-labourer," "*Timotheus my work fellow*," "*Epaphras our beloved fellow servant*," "*These only are my fellow-workers unto the Kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me*" Often labouring alone and far apart, but always together in every true and real sense of the word.

Jesus said, when he left his disciples (John 14:23)—

"If any man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."

We seek naturally for companionship. And wisdom and experience teach that the only companionship that fully satisfies our needs is that offered by God through His Son. This does not exclude the companionship of others, but it does set the *pattern and purpose of it*. When Jesus reduced the rules of life to their simplest form, it was this: "*Love God*." Centre all your life and hopes upon one Person, and make that Person the loveliest and most inspiring you can find. Let your mind dwell upon the infinite desirability of His personal companionship, so that an intense longing will be created within you to be with Him.

The companionship of God alone, the sense of nearness, oneness of mind and mutual affection, is sufficient. But any additions to it which are in full harmony with it are further blessings and intensifications of its pleasures, and strengthening of its bonds.

God alone is sufficient, but a consistent appreciation of His proximity and reality requires a high degree of spiritual perception, and this does not come easily to the natural man. Adverse conditions place heavy strains upon this desirable frame of mind—sometimes by sudden impact, sometimes by slow attrition.

Therefore, in the wisdom and mercy of God, He has recognized the need of manifesting Himself more concretely to us, that the natural senses may be permitted to buttress the eye of faith. John brings this necessity into sharp relief in his opening words—

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us) . . .

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you that your joy may be full."

John, of course, is speaking here of the manifestation of God through Christ. Christ is the visible and understandable link whereby we can know God and realize His personality and reality.

"No man knoweth the Father save he to whom the Son revealeth Him."

It is His *personality* above all else that God manifests to us through His Son—the fact that He is Someone between Whom and ourselves there can be *mutual affection and companionship and pleasurable association*, satisfying all our longings and needs, and supplying a never-failing source of incentive and power.

Our companionship inevitably moulds our character. Therefore the great message of Scripture is, "*Draw near to God.*"

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO (From the Christadelphian, May 1876)

This issue contains an 18½-pg. article by bro. Roberts on "Trine Immersion," a crotchet that was causing growing dissention and harm in the Brotherhood in America, leading many astray. At the end he lists 12 "winds of doctrine" that had already disturbed the Body and blown away some, from a personal devil to possession of the Gifts of the Spirit.

There are 5½ pages of letters back and forth concerning the arrangements for the debate with the famous infidel Bradlaugh, which was now planned for 6 nights in June, 2 in Leicester and 4 in Birmingham.

Publication of the Index to Eureka is announced. It was the work of a sis. Hodgkinson, published by bro. Hodgkinson. It is an extremely useful work, entailing much careful labour, and greatly enhancing the value of Eureka as a treasury of reference.

There is an article by bro. Thomas, reprinted from the 1854 Herald, concerning the necessity of a partial restoration of Israel to the land, before the descent of the Russian hordes and their subsequent destruction by Jesus Christ, newly re-appeared on the earth.

An increase of Jews in Norway is noted, mentioning that it was only 20 years since Jews had been allowed into Norway at all. We may today tend to regard Norway as an "enlightened" Protestant country, but until after the middle of the last century no Jews were permitted to live there.

Britain was using its diplomatic power (which was then very great) to get better treatment for Jews in Persia and Turkey.

The Palestine Exploration expedition, under Conder, had "identified several new sites, throwing much light on the wanderings of David when a fugitive from Saul, and greatly elucidating his history."

The Moabite Stone (found in 1870) had just been put on public display in the Louvre Museum. It describes the victories of Mesha, king of Moab, against Israel (2 Kings 1:1; 3:4-5). The language & lettering is similar to Hebrew. It dates from about 850 BC, & at the time it was the oldest inscription in the world that had been deciphered.

Bro. Roberts records, "Prospects for the latter-day colonization of the Holy Land are opening up in all directions. A new society has been formed for the promotion of the good work by those who have little idea of supplying an element in the signs of the times & the latter-day situation."

Turkey was in great financial difficulties. Many Jews throughout the world held Turkish govt. bonds, & there was a strong movement underway (supported by British govt.) to endeavour to exchange the bonds for land in Palestine. Turkey had promised to consider the matter.

The Editorial refers to the "enormous & ever-increasing armaments of Europe," and moves that were in hand to try to reverse the trend. Bro. R. truly points out that the trend could not be reversed, for it was a sign of the last days that the nations should "prepare war" and beat their plow-shares into swords. But how little anyone then alive dreamed of the terrible lengths of diabolical destruction that men would go in their war preparations, & still as they feverishly build they are, 100 years later, yet proclaiming pious platitudes about reducing armaments. The "enormous armaments" of that day were but pea-shooters & pop-guns, and the famous battles but little ballet dances, compared to WW I & II, when 10s of millions died, all the world was involved, & the violence & destruction infinitely beyond anything 1876 dreamed of. And far worse is yet to come.

The proposed Turkish reforms that were to revitalize her Empire had "passed away like smoke." The 3 Empires (Russia, Germany & Austria) who had proposed the reforms were bickering among themselves. The Balkan revolt against Turkey was growing stronger & gaining successes. All believed the collapse of Turkey imminent, & impossible of postponement.

The Birmingham ecclesia numbered 240. They decided to adopt the plan (from the Leicester ecclesia) of having the Bible Companion readings at the Sun. am meeting, & base the weeknight meeting on the Daily Readings.

The ecclesias appeared able to frequently get audiences of several 100 strangers at lectures. There is a description of one lecture where there was "a good deal of interruption" and a disturbance by a group of youths "talking, laughing, whistling & stamping." The Truth in those days was very much "the sect everywhere spoken against."

Bible Questions

KINGS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL

Answers are in order of beginning of reigns

Bold type, indented answers = Israel kings

JUDAH	6. Josiah	12. Athaliah	18. Zedekiah	ISRAEL	33. Jehoash
1. Asa	7. Amon	13. Amaziah	19. Manasseh	24. Elah	34. Ahaziah
2. Saul	8. Abijah	14. Jehoram	20. Jehoiakim	25. Jehu	35. Shallum
3. Ahaz	9. Uzziah	15. Solomon	21. Jehoiachin	26. Omri	36. Jehoram
4. Joash	10. Jotham	16. Hezekiah	22. Rehoboam	27. Ahab	37. Pekahiah
5. David	11. Ahaziah	17. Jehoahaz	23. Jehoshaphat	28. Zimri	38. Jehoahaz
				29. Pekah	39. Menahem
				30. Nadab	40. Zachariah
				31. Baasha	41. Jeroboam I
				32. Hoshea	42. Jeroboam II

Rejected

Poet, musician, shepherd

Wisdom and folly

Forsook old men's counsel

Solomon servant; made Israel sin

Slew 500,000 of Israel

Defeated Zerah; diseased in feet

Wicked; slain besieging Gibbethon

Slew whole house of Jeroboam

Drinking self drunk in Tirzah

Ruled 7 days, died in palace fire

Prevailed over Tibni; mighty king

Foreign wife stirred to evil

Ships broken at Ezion-geber

Fell thru lattice, sought Ekron god

Shot in back while fleeing

Slew all his brethren; Edom revolted

Son of Athaliah; visited Israel; slain

Drove furiously; slew Ahab's seed

Killed seed royal; "Treason! Treason!"

Slew High Priest's son; servants slew him

Syria oppress; sought Lord; given saviour

Broke down Jerusalem wall; Elisha/arrows

Worshiped Edom gods; slain at Lachish

41 yrs; restore Israel; take Damascus/Hamath

Loved husbandry, offered incense, became leper

6 mos; murdered; last of line as promised

Killed king; reigned mo; slain at Samaria

10 yrs; taxed wealthy to buy off Pul

2 yrs; evil; killed by Pekah

With Rezin against Judah: Isa. denounced

16yrs; built cities/castles/towers; no bad listed

Shut Temple; served Syria gods; fought Pekah

Served Shalmaneser; conspired with Egypt

Babylonian embassy, heart lifted up, humbled

Captive in Babylon, humbled self, restored

2 yrs; served idols; servants slew in own house

Good king; held Passover; died of war-wounds

3 months; wicked; taken captive to Egypt

11 yrs; rebelled against Babylon; burial of an ass

Captive to Babylon; "Write this man childless."

"Profane, wicked prince," sons slain, blinded

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