

The Berean Christadelphian

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

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

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

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

\$4.00 Yr. (only for those who desire to pay. Free to others).

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Ecclesial News

WORKSOP, England. Bro. & sis. Eric Moore, who have been standing aside from fellowship for the past few years since some left us on the divorce question, have expressed the desire to be reunited with us.

We believe all will be very happy and encouraged by this news. We recognize it has been a difficult time for many who have sought to follow the right path, and we pray we all may be guided in the way of righteousness.

We feel confident none will have any reason or desire to object, but we are publishing this request in a tentative way that all may know of it and consider it. If nothing is said to the contrary, we will assume in a month or so that this is acceptable to all.

The few who were with them, to whom they had taught the Truth, have drifted away—some to an erroneous group and some to no faith at all.

Bro. Eric and sis. Lillian are desirous of renewed fellowship and communication with the Berean brethren and sisters. They are still at the same address—15 Lincoln Street, Worksop, Notts. S80 2NA, England

They would be very happy to hear from any of us.

WORCESTER, Mass.—Vasa Hall, 1 Ekman St.; Phone (617) 753-4492-S.S.9:30 am; Memorial 10:30 am (10am July & Aug.); Lecture monthly; Classes in homes —Bro. E. Sargent, S Proctor Street, Box 296, Ashburnham, Mass. 01430; Phone (617) 827-5890.

LOVING Greetings to all those in fellowship around the one table of the Lord.

Time waiteth for no man, and consequently much has transpired in this corner of the Vineyard since our last communication with you in this manner.

We have been saddened by the resignation of our sis. Sundquist after a prolonged absence. Our pleadings to encourage her to continue walking with us toward those precious promises were to no avail. It is our continued prayer that she will realize the help we can be to each other as we journey onward, and encourage us by her return around the table.

Much joy was brought to us when we assisted one of our Sunday School scholars, BRENDA SARGENT, in becoming a sister of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, on Sept. 11, 1976. May she be guided and strengthened to walk in that straight and narrow way so as to receive that crown of righteousness soon to be bestowed upon those who find favour in His sight.

Bro. Marshall Sr. and sis. Sargent Sr. were with us during the summer, but have again returned to warmer climates.

We have been encouraged by the attendance of strangers at 2 of our lectures. It is hoped that this response will continue.

The Fraternal Gathering in October was another joyous highlight for us this year. The theme was *The Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy*, with subjects of *The Outer Court*; *The Most Holy*; *The Waters, the Prince and the Eastern Court*; *Our Walk Toward the Kingdom*; *Christ Our Altar*; and a lecture on *A House of Prayer for All People*. Most of the talks were illustrated by slides and charts, and all the brethren handled their subjects very well. All who were privileged to attend felt as Peter at the Transfiguration, "*It was good for us to have been there.*" And we also remembered the comments by Cleopas describing his walk to Emmaus— "*Did not our hearts burn within us . . . while he opened to us the Scriptures?*"

And as we parted one from another, we remembered the comments of the brethren at Ephesus when bidding farewell to Paul—

"*Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake.*"

—for in this scattered day we do not meet as frequently as we would desire. We again thank the speaking brethren who laboured for us, those who assisted with temporal necessities, and all who travelled from far and near to be with us.

It is with sorrow that we must report that mortality has claimed our sister Helen Buchanan on Jan. 2, 1977. Her life was full of trials and tribulations, and her sufferings this past year were more than most of us realize, yet she seemed to forget not her Creator. Bro. D. Sommerville assisted us in laying her to rest. The signs of the times indicate her sleep will not be long, and they remind us to "*Lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh!*"

Visiting brethren and sisters, including those at the Gathering, have been: Brethren & sisters Clubb, Edwards, Gilbert, Gwalchmai, Higham, Philip, Phillips, Pyne, Sommerville; Brethren Braden Edwards Jr., Fabris, Gibson, Growcott, John & Billy Phillips, Torres and Van Pelt; Sisters Margaret, Lois, Becky, Mary & Sharon Sommerville, Tina & Wonda Frazer, Phyllis & Shirley Jones, Baines, Bere, Connie Clubb, Connell, Crone, McConnell, Roberts and Smith.

The following brethren gave us the word of exhortation: bre. Gibson, Gilbert, Gwalchmai, Wm. Phillips, Sommerville. Bre. Higham and Sommerville lectured for us.

He that has given us hope saith, "*Surely I come quickly,*" and so we echo, "*Even so come, Lord Jesus! Amen.*"

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EDITORIAL

We Count Them Happy Which Endure

INSPIRING EXAMPLES OF FAITH AND PATIENCE

"Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy"—1 Peter 4:13

JAMES CHAPTER FIVE

THERE were at least 3*, possibly 4, men by the name of James said to be followers of the Lord: 1) the son of Zebedee, 2) the son of Alphaeus, 3) James the less, son of Mary and Cleopas, and 4) the James of Acts 12,15 & 21 to whom Paul refers (Gal. 1:19) as "the Lord's brother." Among the reasons given by brethren for believing the James of the epistle is the Lord's brother is the similarity of expression in Acts 15 and in the epistle. * (Nos. 2 and 3 may be the same person.)

The purpose of our weekly assembly is threefold—

That we may worship God in the beauty of holiness.

That we may remember His beloved Son, whom "God hath highly exalted, and given a Name which is above every name."

That we may exhort one another: and so much the more as we see his Day approaching.

In this 5th chapter, after speaking of the violent injustices the brethren had to suffer from the rich and powerful, James says—

V. 7: "Be (long) patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain."

To illustrate his appeal for faithful patience under the hand of the Lord, waiting upon God's promise of eventual relief and blessing, James uses the farmer as an example. He does not sow his seed, and then expect the harvest the next day. He waits with long patience and confident expectation until the far-off day of harvest, which does not come until after the early and latter rains. Then James repeats his appeal—

V. 8: "Be ye also patient. Stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

This and other parts of the Scriptures teach us that we should not become discouraged by troubles which come upon us, and apparent delay in prayed-for deliverance, for, said Peter (1:4:12-13)—

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but *rejoice* inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be *glad also with exceeding joy.*"

The present bitter time of trial is essential to the development of our character and the ultimate glory and joy. We must with wisdom and maturity realize this, and therefore *rejoice* in the loving operation of God upon us. And Paul adds to that thought, saying—

"Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Leader (Beginner) and Perfecter (Finisher) of the Faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, disregarding the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. 12: 1-2).

As Paul in this exhortation seeks to stir us to patient endurance by calling attention to the accomplished victory and achieved glory of our great Forerunner, and the faithful cloud of witnesses who have preceded us and who surround us in the recorded Word, so James says here—

V. 10: "Take, my brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the Name of the Lord for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience."

There may be times when we fail to realize and remember just what the prophets endured. It takes a deep love and a strong effort of the mind to keep the present from crowding these things from our consciousness and memory. It takes a strong eye of faith. It will be well to often refresh our minds with what Paul has said of them—

"Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented. They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth" (Heb. 11:36-38).

A moment's reflection on these words of Paul should deeply and humbly impress upon us the fact that our trials at worst are but petty in comparison. Any discouragement or complaining is unworthy of our high calling, and a reflecting upon our Father's love. We must not overlook what Paul says about their reaction to these trials—

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off: and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (v. 13).

That is why James asks us to—

"Take the prophets for an example of suffering affliction and patience."

And yet, in view of all this, he says—

V. 11: "Behold, we count them happy which endure."

How is it possible that men who have suffered such terrible things can be counted *happy*? The answer comes to us from 2 sources we have already mentioned. In the case of the prophets, they were persuaded that—

"What God had promised He was able and faithful to perform."

And in the case of Jesus it was—

"The joy that was set before him."

When that is condensed into one word, the answer is FAITH. If we were asked to define faith, we would have to go to Paul, for he has given the best definition that can be found. He says—

"Faith is a confident anticipation of things hoped for: a full persuasion of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

He also impresses us with the vital importance of a profound, unshakable faith—

"Without faith it is *impossible* to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that *diligently* seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).

Bro. Thomas in *Elpis Israel* comments on these statements of Paul—

"This is the faith without which, he tells us afterwards, God is not—and cannot by any possibility be—pleased. It is a faith which lays hold of the past and future. The person who possesses it knows what is testified concerning Jesus by the apostles, and is fully persuaded of its truth. He also knows the exceeding great and precious Promises which God has made concerning things to come, and he confidently anticipates the literal fulfilment of them.

"Laying hold of these things with a firm faith, he acquires a mode of thinking and a disposition which are estimable in the sight of God."

If we follow Paul carefully through Heb. 11, we will observe that all of those whom he gives special mention accomplished and endured by, or through, faith. In his Mt. Olivet prophecy Jesus speaks of the time of the end, and makes special mention of endurance—

"Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of (the) many shall wax cold. But he that shall *endure unto the end*, the same shall be saved" (Matt. 24:11-13).

Now to endure means to hold out against, to bear with courage and fortitude, to suffer without yielding—and to do it *with joyful patience*, comprehending its purpose and divine origin. This is the manner in which we are to meet the various kinds of tribulation that come into our lives. And Paul reminds us that (Acts 14:22)—

"We must through much tribulation enter the Kingdom of God."

In the wisdom and love of God, it is an essential part of the divine purpose. It cannot be done any other way. It is not useless, or incidental, or accidental, or merely capricious. It is a basic ingredient of the final eternal joy. This is confirmed in the Apocalypse where the apostle sees the culmination of God's purpose in the earth—

"After this I beheld and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands" (Rev. 7:9).

In vs. 13-17 we have the explanation of this scene—

"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they?

"And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest.

"And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His Temple. And He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

All the prophets that Paul mentioned in the letter to the Hebrews, and those referred to by James, are included in this company, for, said Jesus to the people of his day who rejected him—

"Ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God" (Luke 13:28).

Therefore James could truly say—

"We count them happy which endure."

The things written in the Scripture of Truth concerning these prophets are comprehended in Paul's declaration that (Rom. 15:4)—

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

These records are read by us day after day, month after month, and year after year. But *how*? Do we discern the lessons they teach? If so, do we apply them to ourselves? Do we know *why* we are reading them?—what we are trying to accomplish. To what extent do we check ourselves for *results*?—a constant growth in knowledge and spiritual grace. If we apply these lessons to ourselves, in what measure are we joyfully enduring the chastening of the Lord, for we must remember that—

"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth" (Heb. 12:6).

It is abundantly testified in the Scriptures that God permits suffering to come upon His people in various degrees. If we ask why, Peter gives a satisfying and encouraging answer—

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:7).

He puts His children in the furnace to try them as gold, that the dross may be consumed away, for no character is complete until it is tried. However, if severe trials do come upon us, and we be inclined to become discouraged, we must remember Paul's words—

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

If we could only have this so deeply impressed upon our minds that it would never leave us, what marvellous things it would accomplish for us! When trials afflict us and we feel as though we would break down under the burden, let us remember Paul's words—

"God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love" (Heb. 6:10).

Of course we must make sure there is such for Him to remember.

If we look back in Bible history, we shall find that tribulation has been the experience of all of whom God's approval has been recorded. Take for example him to whom James refers as "The Friend of God," and who is also described as "The Father of the Faithful." If ever a man was pressed beyond measure, Abraham was.

He was called to leave his homeland, and directed to a far-off land of which he knew nothing. He obeyed and came into Canaan.

"By faith (says Paul) he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise" (Heb. 11:9).

Ur, from which he came out, was a place of comfortable homes and high civilization, as recent excavations have revealed. 100 years in a tent is a weary pilgrimage. It was a long and trying time. He had been promised the

whole land for an everlasting possession, both for himself and his promised Seed. He had no information as to *when* the promise would be fulfilled. He was just required to wait and wait in faith and patience. It was many years before his son Isaac was born.

When Isaac became a young man, and Abraham was well advanced in years, the greatest trial of his faith came upon him—a trial the average man could never bear. The record of God's command to offer his son Isaac seems to pierce our very heart when we read it, and we marvel at Abraham's great faith, for all his faith and love, and all the promises of God, were centred in this boy—

"Take now thy son, *thine ONLY son Isaac, whom thou lovest*, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell thee of"(Gen. 22:2).

When we read this account slowly and carefully, we are deeply moved with the calm beauty of his faith. We observe that he rose up *early in the morning*, and went obediently without question to the place of which God had told him—and we realize the full import of Paul's words—

"Abraham *believed* God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. 4:3).

James, commenting on this, gives us the true harmonious relationship between Faith and Works: both of which—each in its proper, divinely-appointed place—is essential for salvation—

"Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect" (James 2:22).

Joseph is another example of patient endurance. Here was a godly young man of excellent character: loved of his father, but hated by his brothers who, on a certain occasion when their jealousy had reached its peak, stripped his special coat off him which his father had given him in love, and cast him into a pit intending to leave him there until he died. Later they changed their minds and sold him to a passing company of Ishmaelite traders, who took him to Egypt and sold him as a slave. The record of how he served his master faithfully, and was put in prison through false accusation, and later rose to be ruler over all the land of Egypt, is one that we are all familiar with, and our hearts burn within us every time we read it.

Joseph was severely tried for many years, with no explanation to him why it was so, but he remained steadfast through all the dark years of adversity, and patiently *endured to the end*.

David is another supreme example that we cannot allow to pass without a brief review. Although he had been anointed king of Israel, yet before receiving that power and honour he was for many years like Joseph severely tried. As a result of the jealousy of Saul (whom he served faithfully and well), he became an outcast and was hunted like a wild beast. It affected him so much he finally said—

"I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul" (1 Sam. 27:1).

This bitterness was a severe trial to David, and the extent of it is only realized when we consider some of the psalms that reflect it. They are, of course, prophetic of Christ, and show beforehand his great suffering; but we cannot but feel they also reflect the deeply afflicted spirit of David himself. But through it all he patiently endured to such an extent that God calls him a man after His Own heart.

And now we come to Jesus. What an example of *patient* endurance! Behold him. Was ever sorrow like his? Was ever tribulation like his?—

"He came to his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11).

They mocked and despised and rejected him: his gentle appeal, his life of good deeds, his manifested love. He was oppressed and afflicted by those he sought to bless, but he opened not his mouth in complaint. All during his suffering we see him exhibit unshaken patience, even when he was cruelly beaten and viciously spat upon; called a glutton and a wine-bibber, deceiver of the people; taunted and mocked and insulted in every way. After his travesty of a trial—

"When Pilate had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified" (Matt. 27:26).

Just a few words, but what a story of agony they tell! Scourging was a severe torture by lashing. Jesus would be made to kneel, and have his hands tied to a short post. His back would be bared, and he would be lashed with a whip of leather thongs with spiked ends. The suffering was excruciating, and the body frightfully lacerated. The severe pain would last for many days thereafter, intensified by each slightest movement. After the scourging, a crown of thorns was roughly pressed down upon his head, and he was led once more before Pilate. When the trial was over, he was brought to the place of torture.

Oh, what torture it was as he hung on the cross in the heat of the day, suspended by huge spikes driven through the flesh. And he hung there until he died. Think of it: not just a few minutes, not 1 hour, but 6 long hours our beloved Lord suffered the agonizing torment of the barbarous death of crucifixion.

Why did God permit all this to this wonderful, obedient, loving man? He not only permitted it, but planned it. Jesus said (John 18:11)—

"The cup which my Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?"

Then we remember the words of John the Baptist—

"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

This was the method by which it was accomplished —

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that *through death* he might *destroy him that hath the power of death*, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14).

At first glance the word 'might' may seem indefinite or only indicating possibility, but the Greek word from which the translation was made is clear and positive.

Bro. Roberts explains this crowning transaction of the divine love in a plain and understandable and beautiful way—

"It was the condemnation of sinful flesh, through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all, as a propitiation to declare the righteousness of God, as a basis for the remission of sins.

"It was the condemnation of sinful flesh, through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all, as a propitiation to declare the righteousness of God, as a basis for the remission of sins.

"All who approach God through this crucified, but risen, representative of Adam's disobedient race are forgiven. Therefore, by a figure, his blood cleanseth from sin."

Thus a way was opened by which men and women could come to God through Jesus, and be made nigh by his shed blood. That is why we are here this morning. But do we fully appreciate what he has done for us? Is it ever the most prominent thing in our hearts and minds—overflowing thanksgiving and joy for God's wonderful love? Or are we so obsessed with our own petty little troubles, or so absorbed in our own petty little interests and affairs, that we cannot look *up* and see Jesus, as he hangs on the cross and looks down upon us with piercing eyes—look up to him as he now is, in glorious majesty and power at God's right hand.

We are not our own. All belongs to him. We owe him everything: our whole life, our every moment, all we possess, must be devoted wholly to his service. Realizing this, Paul says—

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice: holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12: 1).

Let us therefore remember Abraham, and stagger not at the promise of God, but be strong in faith, and fully persuaded that what He has promised He is able to perform.

We have looked briefly at the sufferings of Jesus, and now let us look briefly at the joy that was set before him, and *our* relation to it. It is described in Rev. 5:12, 9-10—

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing . . .

"Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

How true it is that (1 Cor. 2:9)—

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

Therefore let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works, patiently and joyfully enduring our trials and tribulations.

If we do this, we too shall be called "happy."

—Editor

NOV. ANSWERS

PAUL'S JOURNEYS

Connect event with place

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Viper—Melita | 17. Jason security—Thessalonica | 37. Assault /ware /fled—Iconium |
| 2. Basket—Damascus | 18. Titus sent to—Dalmatia | 38. Derbe/Lystra area—Lycaonia |
| 3. Ship of —Adramyttium | 19. Great is Diana—Ephesus | 39. Philippi/Berea area—Macedonia |
| 4. Gaius of—Derbe | 20. Unknown god—Athens | 40. Fetched compass to—Rhegium |
| 5. On foot to—Assos | 21. Haven of Crete—Phenice | 41. Passed thru to Thessalonica |
| 6. Head shorn—Cenchrea | 22. John left them—Perga | 42. 1st stop, 1st journey—Amphipolis |
| 7. More noble—Berea | 23. 400 soldiers to—Antipatris | 43. Neither sun nor stars—Adria |
| 8. 4 daughters—Caesarea | 24. Paul's province—Cilicia | 44. Spirit suffered not go—Bithynia |
| 9. Hired house—Rome | 25. Beat Sosthenes—Corinth | 45. |
| 10. Winter there—Nicopolis | 26. Gallio governed—Achaia | 45. 1st landing in Europe—Neapolis |
| 11. Left cloak at—Troas | 27. Port of Antioch—Seleucia | 46. When I journey into—Spain |
| 12. Left Titus at—Crete | 28. Called for elders—Miletus | 47. Paul advised stay here |
| 13. Crescens to—Galatia | 29. Withstood Peter—Antioch (S) | —Fair Havens |
| 14. No mean city—Tarsus | 30. Paulus governed—Cyprus | 48. Salute bre/stay 1 day—Ptolemais |
| 15. Expelled Paul—Antioch(P) | 31. 4 men with vow—Jerusalem | 49. Went to from Damascus—Arabia |
| 16. Took courage—Appii Forum | 32. Oxen & garlands—Lystra | 50. Change ship for Rome—Myra |
| | 33. Let those men go—Philippi | 51. Scarce come over against—Cnidus |
| | 34. Onesimus' home—Colosse | 52. Change ship for Phenicia—Patara |
| | 35. Kneeled onshore—Tyre | 53. Julius courteously |
| | 36. Child of the devil—Paphos | entreated—Sidon |
-

ONLY ONE STANDARD: PERFECTION

There is no room for the contention that Christ's case is no standard for us to go by. Christ's case IS the standard, and the ONLY standard. Those who speak of it as "too high" are speaking against the Word.— Bro. Roberts

The Adoption

The Present Brotherhood of True Believers With Christ

"For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" —Hebrews 2:11

A letter to one in Edinburgh in connection with bro. Thomas' pending visit to Britain, written in 1869. The addressee had been an earnest fellow-worker in the past, but now vehemently opposed bro. Thomas concerning the name "Christadelphian" and the conception of present brotherhood with Christ. It is another interesting example of bro. Thomas' courtesy, affection, and painstaking concern toward those who manifested *sincere* opposition, even tho antagonistic.

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER: Your letter to hand, and notwithstanding what I would term its critical adversities, I thank you for it. I accept them as the outpourings of a friend who, though he may be mistaken, is jealous and zealous for what he believes to be the Truth. From such a one, much should be borne. Previous character always goes for something in mitigation of the verdict. Upon these principles I desire to deal with friends whom I believe to be good and honest friends of the Truth, though they may not see eye to eye with me in all its details, and in the liberty of Christian friendship may feel called upon to dissent from my statements of doctrine, and even to rebuke me for them as you have done.

I do not deal thus however with pretenders who never manifest any zeal till an opportunity seems to present itself for them to obtain notoriety by doing all the mischief they can under a cloak of contending for the Truth, or against what they style "heresy."

I sincerely thank you for the "Peace and joy" you wish me and my household, and reciprocate the same to you and yours.

I am glad you can "cordially agree with the whole of my statement of things in the February *Ambassador* with only one exception," and were "refreshed by them very much."

But your epistle reminds me that the times of refreshing under Salisbury Crags are not altogether free from weariness of spirit. I had learned from the *Ambassador* with sincere regret that the news from Edinburgh was not good; but until your epistle arrived (by which I frankly confess the 'peace and joy' to me and my household it evangelized were by no means increased) I knew nothing about the cause that had driven asunder those who ought to

be nothing but the firmest and fastest of friends. Which party is to blame I know not; perhaps both may be blameworthy. How can I tell, seeing that I have only your own testimony, dear brother, against yourself and against me, for no one else has communicated with me on the subject.

But what was my surprise, or I may say my inexpressible astonishment, when on reading your epistle I found myself (though quietly reading by my own fireside over 3000 miles away) implicated in the disruption of your good fellowship to the extent of being threatened with personal repudiation if I fostered and built up something you term 'Christadelphianism,' which I learn for the first time is the bone of your contention in Edinburgh, and said to have done great mischief in Britain generally! Well, this is my fate!

In 1848 the Campbellite organ in Nottingham under the inspiration of a message from America, warned the British public that I was coming to England, and that being a dangerous character who had done great mischief by his doctrine, they should not hear me.

But this defeated itself in creating a desire to do what was forbidden, and instead of no one hearing me the people turned out to hear me by 1000s. The result was the publication of *Elpis Israel* by 1100 subscribers, and the origination of congregations in Nottingham, Birmingham, Devonport, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen. This was the beginning of what has since developed into what, dear brother, you term 'Christadelphianism,' and which you have conceived, somehow or other, a distaste for.

However, the elements of things generated in this beginning, aided by the silent influences of the *Herald of the Kingdom*, continued to grow until they were well nigh choked by the thorns and briars of what, for want of a better name, has been styled DOWIEISM. The Truth superficially and smatteringly embraced fell into the hands of the Samaritans, by whom it was traditionized, and converted into a fiddle for "jolly companions every one!"

Among this jovial company, you and some 10 or 11 others found yourselves walking, as you rightly conceived, not after the Spirit. Becoming disgusted, as well you might, with the Bohemian laxity, and the uncertain sounding of the doctrinal trumpet, it was thought that an importation from abroad into your Macedonia would aid the cause of truth and righteousness. It was therefore proposed by certain that an invitation should be sent to me to come over. The proposition was opposed by the ruling craftsmen, who apprehended that their fiddle might be damaged and their jollity impaired. But somehow or other the invitation came in 1861, and I accepted it, to the no little vexation of the Samaritans, some of whom would not come to hear me.

Before I had arrived in Edinburgh, the original 12, of whom you were the leader, could stand the Bohemian practices of the Samaritans no longer. In the fulness of their disgust they came out from among them, and resolved themselves into a distinct and antagonistic society. This was a good beginning, the nucleus of what I was in hope had now grown into an enlightened and devoted ecclesia of Christadelphians, walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit. I found you meeting in a schoolroom, where I spoke for the first time in 1862. From thence you removed to a hall, where I spoke often, and had the satisfaction of leaving you much increased in number, and I hoped in scriptural understanding likewise.

Well, in 1869 I am coming among you a third time; and according to my fate, I am greeted with a threat, or something like it, if I do not run in a groove marked out for me in the following words—

"Now, dear brother, I shall be happy to see you here, and assist your efforts for the Truth. But if they are to foster and build up Christadelphianism, I will have nothing to do with it. I write you thus plainly, so there may be no misunderstanding when you visit this country. I am sorry to inform you that this new creation of Christadelphianism has done great mischief among your friends, and will mar your visit in this country with those who love and esteem you for the Truth's sake."

These words show there is something underlying the surface of things of a very peace-disturbing character. It is very remarkable that such 'great mischief' should have been done among my friends in Britain, and yet that not one of my friends should ever have breathed a syllable to me about it. Your epistle is the first intimation I have had affirming the existence of any dissatisfaction with the name Christadelphian, or the idea it represents. I supposed that it was generally acquiesced in as expressive of an unquestioned truth; *that all in Christ are the brethren of Christ Jesus*; and that only such could object who—calling themselves believers—were doubtful of the fact of their being in him. Conscious unworthiness of the name might prompt to hostility to it; but I had yet to learn that anyone intelligently believing "the things of the Kingdom of God and Name of Jesus Christ" could deny, or not comprehend, that all who obey the Gospel of the Kingdom are, from the necessity of the thing, the brethren of Christ.

But, as I have said, your epistle testifies against you as well as against me. These are your words—

"My present object in writing to you is regarding your statements in the February Ambassador, pg. 44, regarding Christadelphianism, with which I am sorry, sorry indeed, that I cannot see with you, nor agree with them."

In fact I have no sympathy with them: and did I not know you, I would not have troubled myself nor you with this letter.

"I have read almost everything you have written with pleasure and profit, and have borne all you have said about Christadelphianism till now; but I think that you have now severed the tie that bound us, by making me, and all others who cannot see our way to take this name, ungentle Christians. They cannot be genuine Christians (you say), and be ignorant of the thing imported by the word."

Now this is your testimony against me. It accuses me of saying in effect that *none are genuine Christians who cannot see their way to adopt the name Christadelphian*. I have never thought or uttered any such sentiment; neither will my words bear that construction. The words following the text quoted expound the sense in which it was penned, for I continue—

"Can such a Christian (a genuine one) be adduced who is yet ignorant that he has the high honour of being a son of the Lord God Almighty, and therefore a brother of Jesus Christ? This is the import of the Anglicized Greek name Christadelphian."

This name is accepted by the ecclesias in Worcester, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Norfolk, Chicago, Springfield, Ohio, Hayfield, Detroit, Ogle, Penn, Milwaukie, Sweetwater, and other places in America. But its non-acceptance makes no trouble between those who adopt it and those who do not. Our friends in Richmond, King William and Lunenburg, Virginia, I think, continue to call themselves *Nazarenes*. We do not, however, quarrel with them because they style themselves thus. I believe all, both Christadelphians and Nazarenes, understand that they are *Christ's brethren* in fact, by adoption in him.

But, furthermore, your testimony against me is more grievous still—

"Why should you, a man so able and enlightened in the Scriptures, create, import, and insist that believers should take this name; and thus 'add to his words' and put a yoke upon and test your brethren, which I think you have no authority for whatever? And if Christadelphianism in America is like what it is in Britain, then I am sorry indeed! I like to see people earnest about the truth; but when it becomes such a thing as Christadelphianism, I cannot tolerate it."

In answer to this indictment, I file the objection that I did not create the name, or noun, which is 'the name of anything that exists.' The thing existed in the days of Jesus, which you admit in your epistle, saying—

"I can see the force of the name here, and exactly as you have placed them (Jesus and his relations and disciples) and it."

Very good. As to the pre-existence of the *thing*, then, and the terms used to express it—pre-existence as to the name Christian first given to *Christ's Brethren* at Antioch by way of reproach—there is no issue between you and Christadelphians. I need therefore say no more on this count. Your words quoted are an admission that I did not create this element of what you term Christadelphianism, and of which you say, "I cannot tolerate it!" I only *gave it a start* under the pressure of circumstances arising in the progress of the late American Civil War. I admit that my writings gave it prominence in Britain, but I did not 'import' the *thing* there, unless it can be shown that I was the original importer of the New Testament preaching of "*The Mystery of Christ*" to the ancient Britons, some of the "creatures under the heaven" (Col. 1:6,23) over 1800 years ago.

Furthermore, I do not, and never have, "*insisted* that believers should take this name." I can appeal to all Christadelphian ecclesias in America in proof of this. The name has only recently been adopted in Norfolk, Va. A brother there writes to me—

"It was agitated by what name we should be called in case we bought, as suggested, a lot to build a meeting-house upon, and took the deed. 'Christadelphian' was proposed; but some said that should that name be adopted, it would split the body. Consequently, we had a full meeting, and the question of a name was discussed and voted upon, and decided in favour of 'Christadelphian,' only a few against, and no visible split as yet."

In reading this to a beloved brother, he informs me that one has gone, who says he is no 'Christadelphian.' The matter rests with him; let him alone. I do not 'insist,' but say, Let every man be persuaded in his own mind. If he be truly one of *Christ's brethren*, he may call himself by what scriptural name or phrase he pleases. I shall not quarrel with him, nor sever the ties of fraternity and amity with him for a few syllables. You will perceive, then, I do not "add to his words," nor do I "put a yoke upon and test my brethren," which I agree with you, I "have no authority for whatsoever."

Whatever may be the faults and shortcomings of Christadelphians in America, I have no hesitation in saying that, as a body, they are the salt of the land. No doubt there are, or have been, in the body what Paul terms in Gal. 2:4,

pseudadelphia, or PSEUDADELPHIANS, "unawares brought in? They swamped the apostolic ecclesias at last, and triumphed over the "*Mystery of God and the Father of Christ*" by the "depths of Satan as they teach."

There have been many such here—wayside and stony and thorny-ground professors of the Word of the Kingdom (Matt. 13:4-7,19-22). But, from want of deepness of earth or the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches or some other private considerations, they become offended and go out from us, proving thereby that they are not of us. Their fancies are legion, generating great wrath, which sooner or later culminates and breaks forth against me!

A man faithful to the Word must lay his account with the detraction and treachery of mean and wicked professors. This is their day. When the Lord comes, he will reckon with them and us. If we are Christ's brethren indeed, we can afford to wait.

Now I suppose that among *Christ's Brethren* in Britain, as in America, are some good, some bad, and some indifferent. It would be unreasonable and without Scripture precedent to expect that all the sons and daughters of so large a family as God's upon earth should be all "precious stones, gold and silver," and none of them "wood, hay and straw." In a great house there are vessels of gold and silver, wood and earth, some to honour and some to dishonour. Uniformity of excellence was not the rule in the days of Christ and the apostles when the Spirit dwelt among them in all wisdom, knowledge and power. It has never been the rule in all the ages since; nor will it be till the Lord comes to "make up his jewels" and to purge out from the Body the refuse and the vile.

We have arrived now at your testimony against yourself. And here I would first premise that I have no *disposition* to find fault with you, or to prove you wrong in anything. But you have put the unsought-for necessity upon me. Till your epistle came to hand, I was under the pleasant delusion that you were all right, firm, and sound in the Faith; and that—whoever might wander out of the way—you would always be found well-harnessed with the armour of God, and with the sword of the Spirit, bright, sharp and well-tempered, ever ready upon your lips, to do earnest battle for the Faith once for all delivered to the saints. I hope I may still find this to be the case, and that this ill-omened epistle is only a hasty ebullition, caused to boil over by the too abundant caloric of local excitement.

This threatening epistle warns me, upon pain of your repudiation, not to come to Edinburgh unless I am prepared to advocate what you indicate; and what I know to be unsound doctrine, as I shall show. But first I will quote your words—

"The thing imported by 'Christadelphian' is only a few years old—3 or 4 at most—and therefore we were not 'genuine Christians' until we became 'Christadelphians.' I believe the statement you make is correct, that 'The apostles themselves were Christadelphians before they were called Christians at Antioch,' because they were in truth his brethren by the flesh some of them individually, and all of them as being of the seed of Abraham.

"I can see the force of the name here, and exactly as you have placed them and it, but not as Jesus the Christ NOW, 'the Lord the Spirit.' We have not this nature. We hope to be so, and patiently wait, and endure all things for his sake and his glory, that we may be partakers of his spirit—the divine nature. At present we are only what we are by faith and obedience.

"I never find one of the apostles, after his resurrection and assumption, call Jesus their brother, but describe themselves as 'bond-servants of Jesus,' etc. Now I ask you to produce ONE proof where the apostles and first Christians call Jesus—the Lord the Spirit—their brother, either in Greek or English. And why should you?"

Now I assure you that I do not wish to put the shade of a signification on your words that they will not fairly bear. I understand you to affirm that Jesus and the apostles were 'brethren' simple and exclusively because they were of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh. Now this I deny, because Jesus repudiated relationship based upon flesh, and substituted for it relationship founded on the moral principles of faith and obedience. This is evident from his declaration that "*the flesh profits nothing*"—John 6:63; that the fleshly seed of Abraham are not all the sons of God, but many of them are the sons "of father devil"—John 8:44; and that those of Abraham's seed that are sons of God become so by an exceptional right granted to them, based upon *believing in his Name*. John says (1:11-13)—

"He came to his own, and his own (the Jews) did not receive him. But as many (of the Jews) as received him, to them he gave the right to become sons of God; to them believing into his Name, who—not of bloods nor of will of flesh nor of will of man—but of God have been begotten."

—begotten, says James—

"Of His Own will by the Word of Truth" (1:18).

—which, says Peter is—

"Incorruptible seed, which lives and abides forever, the Word which is evangelized unto you" (1 Pet. 1:23-25).

Jesus, I say, repudiated the relationship based upon the accident of fleshly begetting and birth, for when one who "judged after the flesh"—as I am sorry to perceive you do—exclaimed also as you in your words quoted, pointing to them "individually" and saying—

"Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to speak with thee."

—he in reply stretched forth his hand toward *his disciples*—not toward his fleshly brethren of Abraham's seed: the scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, lawyers and priests, but to his *disciples*—and said:

"Behold *my mother and my brethren!* For whosoever shall [whether Jew or Gentile, for the rule applies to both] do the will of my Father Who is in heaven, the same is MY BROTHER AND SISTER and mother"

(Matt. 12:46-50).

Furthermore, I remark that Jesus declared that the Eternal Spirit was his Father. And because he was not begotten of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of Deity, he claimed to be Son of God. And because he was born of our flesh, also Son of man. And because in the line of David, Son of David likewise.

Now when his disciples asked him to teach them how to pray, he taught them to call *his* Father *their* Father, saying—

"When you pray, say, *Our* Father Who art in heaven, etc." (Luke 11:2).

Now I would ask you a simple question: If the Prince-Consort Albert be the father of the Prince of Wales and of his brothers and sisters, are not all these brothers of the Prince of Wales? And doth the fact of his now being at the right hand of the British throne destroy or put in abeyance the brotherly relationship?

So God being the Father of Jesus *and* the Father of all Jews and Gentiles "believing into his Name," these—all being the Sons of God—are of necessity the brethren of Jesus Christ, the Crown Prince of Palestine. The relationship results from "*the Adoption*," the spirit of which enables all the sons to call God "Father," and His Son Jesus "brother" (Rom. 8:14-15).

(To be continued next month, if the Lord will).

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee"—Isaiah 26:3.

The Wisdom of This World

TRUE WISDOM IS DEVOTION TO THE GREATEST GOOD

"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes"—Matthew 11:25

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

Our meeting this morning (as every meeting we hold in pursuance of scriptural objects) is a compliance, in a certain way, with the divine injunction which says:

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."

We meet under the auspices and for the further attainment of wisdom. But what is wisdom? We may profitably ask this question, and spend a few moments in the contemplation of the full and certain answer which the truth supplies. To appreciate the value of the answer, let us look at the state of the subject apart from the truth.

The word wisdom has, of course, many minor applications. It may be spoken of in connection with any state of circumstances calling for action. In such and such a line of action we may say there is no wisdom, or that there is great wisdom in such and such another line of action. Wisdom, in this case, is limited to the particular interest or object involved in the circumstances—as in taking steps to avoid the plague or stave off a riot, or in smaller matters, to preserve health or secure a good business. But this morning we look at a larger application of the word. We look at it in relation to the ultimate, the eternal results of a man's life—1, as affecting God; 2, as affecting the man himself; and 3, as affecting a man's neighbour. The question is, What is wisdom in this broad relation?

The world has always made considerable pretensions to the possession of wisdom in this particular and important bearing. It is a pretension by no means peculiar to our day. The apostolic age was pre-eminent in this respect, as is evident from the allusions in Paul's epistles and in some other parts of the New Testament. He says his preaching was "*not with enticing words of man's wisdom.*" He admits having set forth wisdom, "*yet not the wisdom*

of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to naught.” He recognised that *“the Greeks sought after wisdom,”* but what had it all come to?

“Where is the wise?” he asks.

“Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?”

He plainly says,

“The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God,”—

And makes this very incisive application of the fact:

“If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.”

Many will be prepared to admit the force of all this as applicable to the false science and philosophy of 1,800 years ago, who may have a reservation in favour of the world’s wisdom in the nineteenth century. They may suppose that Paul would not have written of modern science as he wrote of Greek speculation. They may have a feeling to the effect that, in our day at all events, it has ceased to be true that the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. In this there is greater mistake than may at first sight appear. There is doubtless an accurate knowledge of the constitution of nature in all her aspects which did not exist in Paul’s day. Science is more truly knowledge in our day than then, notwithstanding a wonderful amount of speculation in its higher applications. Still “wisdom” is no more a characteristic of the experimental schools of modern times than of the speculative schools of Athens. Wisdom is more than knowledge. It comprehends knowledge but it is the right use of knowledge rather than knowledge itself. A man might understand the chemistry of farming, and be the vagabond of the village. Another man, with less knowledge, who industriously tilled the soil, would be the wiser man of the two.

The question is, what is scientific knowledge capable of doing for us, and how is the scientific knowledge used? The answer to this will bring modern learning as much under Paul’s disparagements as the wisdom of the Greeks. In the first place, it has no power to deliver us from the evil state in which we live. A man might understand all the mysteries of the universe without being a whit nearer salvation than the ignorant. His knowledge would merely be a knowledge of what exists, and a knowledge of this may be of service as regards present convenience and health; but it cannot be turned to any account in changing a man’s own constitution and averting the law of death, which overshadows all life, as at present manifested in the world. Professor Clifford died a few weeks ago at 35 or 36. He was a rising man; but his great natural knowledge and popular estimation were powerless to turn away the dishonour of death, or stay decomposition that compelled sorrowing friends to bury the pale corpse out of sight.

Wisdom may be defined as the doing of that which is for the best. But let us understand this. It is not doing that which we may intend for the best, but that which is for the best. A man’s intentions may be amiable enough, but —
“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Prov. 14:12).

And by the best we mean the best possible, and not that which we may think best. This involves the question, what is the best possible? Notions on this subject will vary with every human whim and fancy. Obviously, we want a fixed standard. We have it in Christ. He exemplifies to us, and instructs us by his apostles as to the best possible. He shows in himself, and offers to us the perfection of being, intrinsically, and in all its relations. He shows to us that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested in the Son to the apostles, and by them reflected to us, through their teaching. We need not discuss whether he is true. The question is in reality not an open one. It stands in one position only—a self-manifest position of undeniable truth. Our assembly this morning around the emblems of a crucified Saviour shows that we recognise this. What if others falter and doubt and deny and blaspheme? There have always been such, and they usually and largely include such as are high in the wisdom of this world. Jesus actually gave thanks on this behalf:

“I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.”

Instead, therefore, of feeling perturbed at the scepticism of the learned, we ought to recognise it as a necessary feature of the situation. The *“wise and prudent,”* while sharp enough in natural things, are *“too wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight”* to discern the final goodness of God on the conditions which He requires—conditions which humble man and exalt God. The simplicity of belief, the dependence of faith, the humility of obedience, are all repugnant to their intellectual modes and instincts which lead them to prefer ways and thoughts that involve human headship, and provide scope for human importance and gratification. Such men are unfit for the final goodness of God, which requires that God may be glorified, and God’s way hides it from them.

We are here this morning rather as *“the babes,”* to whom Jesus says the Father hath revealed His precious intentions. It is ours to humble ourselves as little children, accepting in gratitude and rejoicing in the proffered goodness of God. But though children, Paul says, *“in understanding, be men.”*

In the exercising of our understanding, then, we look at the fact that the best that is possible, and the only permanent good that there is for any, is the gift of an immortal nature at the appointed time of Christ's return to the earth, and incorporation in a system of society in which intelligence, faculty, health, wealth, and opportunity will combine to confer the conditions of perfectly blessed existence on the basis of permanence. We look also at the fact that this is attainable only in the channel of faith in what has been revealed concerning Christ, and obedience to what he has commanded. We then turn to the scientific systems of the day, and we ask whether they are not as lacking in wisdom as ever Paul pronounced the philosophies of the Greeks to be? If wisdom is the attainment of the highest good, where is the wisdom of a system that not only has no power to bestow good, but that would actually turn away our regard from that which has? Knowledge is all very good in its place; but it is possible to have a knowledge that the process of time will deprive of all value; and the time bestowed in the acquisition of it is thrown hopelessly away. And especially is this true of modern systems of science that tacitly deny Christ. "*One thing is needful*" in this matter, as Jesus said to Martha. There is knowledge that a man can do without; but there is a knowledge that a man must have. A man must know God and the Lord Jesus Christ; and he must know and engrave upon his mind the knowledge of what line of thought and action will commend him to their approbation. Time spent in obtaining this knowledge is valuably invested. Ultimately, it will include even all that the children of this world's wisdom pride themselves on. Their knowledge is all on the surface of things. They are content to know natural phenomena, but to natural phenomena there is a foundation. They admit this foundation, but call it "unknowable." So it is, to human investigation. But this great and unsearchable foundation—the Rock—the everlasting Power—has revealed Himself, and the gospel connects us with Him. Here is where a simple believer of the gospel is far wiser than the man laden with the technicalities and the honours of science. He stands inside creation, so to speak, while the man of science is on the outside. The man in Christ is related to the power that can affect and effect the developments of the universe; while the man of science, rejecting Christ, merely sees what exists for the time being, without any power to affect it, or any relation to what God means to effect. The man in Christ may be ignorant of the technicalities of human knowledge; but he possesses a knowledge of far more value in knowing God, and having a place in His love, for this is the ultimate source of all knowledge and power.

Where are the Greeks who disputed with Paul, saying, "*What will this babbler say?*" You would search creation in vain to find them. In due course they went the way of all flesh. If they were not burnt to ashes according to ancient modes of sepulture, they were laid in the all-devouring grave, and by this they have been eaten and so thoroughly digested that not a fibre could be discovered of which you could say, "This belonged to them." Their knowledge and their presumption have perished with them. But Paul sleeps "*in Christ,*" which is a very different thing. Paul is in the grave, to be sure, but Christ is in heaven, and Paul is a reality to the mind of Christ; and when Christ, endowed with all-controlling power in heaven and earth, arrives in this part of the boundless dominions of the Father, who has "*given him power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as*" belong to him, the exercise of his power will reorganise the scattered dust of Paul, and Paul will step forth unhurt by his long sleep, to realise the result of his faith and labour in a physical invigoration which he never experienced in the days when he groaned, being burdened. Gladsome power will come with his investiture with immortality, and to him, in due course, will be opened that storehouse of knowledge at the doors of which the children of this scientific world are merely clamouring in vain. He will then "*know even as he is known.*" He will know as God knows. He will see nature from its divine side; he will recognise all its phenomena; discern the aim of its operations; measure its forces—estimate their play, and be able to regulate their action as God may permit. He will look round in vain for the philosophers who encountered him, saying, "*What will this babbler say?*" For it is written,

"The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead."

With a new force Paul will be able to ask:

"Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

And what will be true of Paul will be true of ourselves if we walk in wisdom's ways. We shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, when the scientific glare of the age in which we live shall have been eclipsed in the glory of Christ.

To walk in these ways requires that a man make up his mind meanwhile to be considered a fool; because the wisdom of God is esteemed foolishness by the world, and the man a fool who embraces it. A truly enlightened man will be able to bear the reproach gladly, because he knows that in becoming a fool in the estimation of the wise of this world, it is as Paul puts it, "*that he may be wise.*" True wisdom is all on the side of those who submit to God. When Paul speaks of the "*foolishness of God,*" it is not that he admits foolishness as attaching to either: it is an accommodation to the language of men who think so. When he says, "*Where are the wise?*" he means the wise so-called, but who are really foolish; for as he quotes from the Scriptures,

*“The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain.”
 “He brings to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”*

When his advice concerning a man is, *“Let him become a fool,”* he means a fool so-considered—not a fool in reality, for the man who becomes a fool in the estimation of the world by submission to the requirements of God as revealed in the Gospel, becomes, in reality, a wise man for the first time. Let the scorners scorn as they may, it is a fact that—

*“The fear of the Lord is **the beginning** of wisdom.”*

The man who does not fear God is a fool, however much he may know of the works of God; for his knowledge of the works of God is of no use to him if he know not God himself. To God, he is merely a presumptuous gossip about God’s property. His disappearance from the face of the universe is only a question of time—and that a very short time. Whereas, the man who knows God in the affectionate submission He requires, may be ignorant of the works of God in nature (and where is the man who knows the millionth part of these?) and he is yet a very wise man, for he is on the high road to the highest good. Even the things on which the wise of this world plume themselves will become his unbounded possession. Endless life and boundless opportunity secured in Christ, he will have ample time in the ages to come to learn all the marvels of the universe, great and small, while he will have power to study and understand them to an extent that the wisest of mortals has not even dreamt of, and capacity to apply them, and develop their objects and resources in the delights of truly efficient life, such as mortal has never yet tasted.

Meanwhile, wisdom and folly are not palpably manifest. The one seems the other. Be it ours to discern the one from the other. It is not difficult to do this when a man is in earnest. Christ is wisdom concentered for us, so to speak. To let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, is to let wisdom dwell. To get Christ is to get wisdom. Let us write this down, each man for himself, once for all, as a thing not to be questioned or deviated from in the least degree. It will supply a simple and safe rule of action in all circumstances. A man will be able to say to himself, “If I get Christ, I get all—health, life, riches, honour, knowledge, joy, and every conceivable and (to us meanwhile) inconceivable good.

How can I get him? I read and I find my answer. I am to love him and obey him. To do this I must adopt that course of action that will help me to do so, and avoid that course of action that will interfere with my doing so. I cannot love him if I forget him, nor obey his commandments if they fail my memory. I must therefore read of him continually, and call to mind his commandments always. I must consider him in all I do. I must keep the company of his friends. I must avoid the friendship of his enemies. I must suffer with him in the self-denial he requires. I must refuse to enjoy the pleasures of sin, which constitute the pursuits of the present evil world. I must spend the time of my sojourning here in fear. I must speak of him and show him forth in my day and generation even as a lit candle at night gives light to the house. I must live as his steward, and consider his interest and mine identical. He prayed: I will. He did always the thing that pleased the Father: I will try. He went about doing good: I will strive to follow his example.

The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister: aspiring to a place among his many brethren, conformed to a common image, I will endeavour to act on the same principle, to follow the same rule. And if the way be narrow, and the labour toilsome, and the endurance trying to flesh and blood, I know it is not for long; for life is but a speeding shadow, a short story, a vanishing flower; and if I make use of it to obtain a place with Christ in the eternal and blessed ages beyond, I shall act the part of wisdom, which says to me,

“He that saveth his life shall lose it; but he that loseth his life for my sake, the same shall find it.”—1879

Questions

Questions	Connect event with Chapter in Genesis		
1. Sarah dies	10. Serpent—Fall	19. Jacob to Egypt	30. Dinah & Shechem
2. Isaac born	11. Circumcision	20. Tower of Babel	31. Wrestle with angel
3. Cain—Abel	12. Isaac deceived	21. Noah makes ark	32. Jacob blesses sons
4. Joseph sold	13. Eden—Woman	22. Call of Abraham	33. Esau meets Jacob
5. Cup in sack	14. Judah—Tamar	23. Pharaoh dreams	34. Abraham, Lot part
6. Melchizedek	15. Ram in thicket	24. Dream at Bethel	35. Rainbow covenant
7. All flesh dies	16. Six days' work	25. Hagar runs away	36. Jacob meets Rachel
8. For 10's sake	17. Crossed hands	26. Joseph—Potiphar	37. Benjamin to Egypt
9. Raven—dove	18. Money in sacks	27. Rebekah brought	38. Generations of Esau
		28. Jacob flees Laban	39. 1/5 part for Pharaoh
		29. Sodom destroyed	40. Abimelech & Rebekah

Suggestion: Either write the identification (not just the number) in the right place so as to build up a visual sequence for a guide. OR write the 4 numbers appropriate to each section beside that section till all the numbers are used up and grouped; then put each group in order.

1.	13.	25. Jacob, Esau born	38.
2.	14.	26.	39.
3.	15. Horror of darkness	27.	40. Butler & baker
4.	16.	28.	41.
5. Enoch translated	17.	29.	42.
6.	18.	30. Joseph born	43.
7.	19.	31.	44.
8.	20. Abimelech & Sarah	32.	45. Joseph made known
9.	21.	33.	46.
10. Table of nations	22.	34.	47.
11.	23.	35. Rachel dies	48.
12.	24.	36.	49.
		37.	50. Joseph dies

Paul's Labours in Europe

AND THE COMPANIONS WHO LABOURED WITH HIM

"His bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible"—2 Cor. 10.10

WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THESSALONICA

THE purpose of our associations week by week is that we may call to mind the love and mercy of God, that we may be deepened in our understanding, that we may conform our characters more closely to the beauty of holiness, and that we may be more closely united together in our service to our Heavenly Father. We learn by this fellowship that we share together our joys and sorrows as we walk toward the Kingdom. Let us keep these purposes firmly in our minds, and ever press toward them.

By the Scripture portions which we read together daily, we have journeyed with the apostles in the laying of the foundation of our faith with the first century ecclesias. We now unite with those same ecclesias in receiving the exhortations which Paul, through the Spirit, determined were necessary for their spiritual wellbeing.

From the Acts of the Apostles we observe the necessary trials and tribulations which would fall upon those who would be proven worthy of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

As we turn our attention to the message to the believers at Thessalonica, we observe that it was probably the first letter we have by Paul to any of the ecclesias he established. It is one of the most inspiring epistles he has written. He speaks as a father to his children, as of a very close affinity and bond, of their being knit together with him in love through those things which they alike were enduring.

This is the exhortation we should seek to draw from the great apostle, as we read of his journeys from place to place, and apply it in our own lives, endeavouring to draw ourselves likewise together in oneness of mind and purpose in God's will. Sorrow is not pleasant, but rightly used it has wonderful power to strengthen mutual love.

As we continue our reading according to the Bible Companion, we shall come to the letters to the young disciple Timothy, messages of a more individual nature, yet full of spiritual meat for our walk and conduct today. These letters appear to have been among the last of Paul's writings, the 2nd being penned from prison in Rome as he awaited the executioner, recognizing that his labours for God were at an end except for final messages of love and encouragement for the servants of God who must still carry on.

* * *

The background for the messages to Thessalonica is found in Acts 16 & 17. Paul set out with Silas from Antioch in Syria on his 2nd journey, to establish and confirm those who had accepted God's mercy during his first travels in Asia Minor. On the way he chose as an associate and assistant a young man named Timothy. The name means *Valuable to, or Beloved of, God*. This faithful companion endured many of the tribulations that accompanied service to the Truth, and to the end was a comfort and help to Paul, holding up the hands which laboured in the Lord.

Paul and his company were directed by the Spirit to Troas, on the shore of Asia, facing Europe. Though Paul had proposed differently, God in His wisdom was directing their steps toward further fields of endeavour, resulting at last in the spread of the Truth to the confines of the known world. And from which, after many centuries of tribulation for faithful witnesses, we in our day have been presented with the life-giving grace.

It was at Troas that Paul received the vision of the man of Macedonia—Macedonia being northern Greece, that part of Europe immediately facing Troas and Asia Minor. The pleadings of the vision were to the effect that people in Europe were seeking help, and needed Paul's Spirit-inspired guidance. And Paul and his company were not disobedient to the heavenly vision. Responding immediately, these ministers of the Gospel set sail for Philippi.

This city being a Roman colony, no Jewish synagogue was in evidence. Therefore Paul sought out the devout, God-fearing residents who met together on the banks of the river nearby for their devotions and prayer. Paul's normal course was first to seek out the Jews at their usual meeting place, and then to incorporate the Gentiles. As he wrote to the Romans (1:16)—

"The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, *to the Jew first*, and also to the Greek (Gentile)."

It was on the banks of this river that he met Lydia, the seller of purple from the city of Thyatira in Asia. It was there that she listened to the great apostle, accepted the Truth, and responded with genuine hospitality, accepting Paul and Silas into her household.

There followed the incident of the healing of the damsel possessed with a 'spirit of divination,' which brought the wrath of her masters upon the disciples, because they lost the source of monetary gain. By false report, Paul and Silas were roughly cast into prison and restrained in cruel stocks, after severe and lacerating stripes had been laid upon them.

But from these terrible tribulations there was manifested the supreme faith and confidence of these 2 men, as they sang hymns and prayed to God in the night—bringing forth the exercise of Divine power in the shaking of the foundations of the prison, the loosing of the prisoners' bonds, and the opening of all the prison doors.

These events were conducive to the faith and belief of the jailor and his family, vindication of the apostles, and the giving of praise and honour unto the Creator. After further strengthening of the brethren and sisters at Philippi—the first ecclesial family in Europe—the company of ministers of the Gospel departed south and west, experiencing once more that it is through much tribulation that we shall enter the Kingdom of God.

And so they came to Thessalonica, carrying in the flesh of their bodies "the marks of the Lord Jesus"—Gal. 6:17. "Mark" here is *stigma*, from *stizo*, 'to stick or prick' (as a mark incised or punched for recognition of ownership, a scar of service). We would use the term "brand" in the same sense: an identification made with a branding iron. The disciples were, by their physical sufferings, branded with the stigma of bond-service to Christ: his identifying marks were now in them. The dreadful physical abuse they so often received would leave permanent imprint: a stigma to the world, but a badge of honour in service to Christ. Are we their fellows in painful service?

To the 2 who had set out on this 2nd journey, 2 more had now been added. Young Timothy Paul had enlisted at Lystra, and Luke who appears to have joined the apostle at Troas, increased the company to four. There is no mention of the occasion of Luke's acceptance of the faith of Christ: the Spirit did not consider it necessary. His work as the scribe of the company is his mark, and the loving references by Paul in the numerable epistles are indications of Paul's high estimation of him. Paul's reference to him as 'the beloved physician'— Col. 4:14 may imply that he was of help in ministering to the ailments and disabilities that Paul's faithful course brought upon him, but there is no mention of either Paul or Luke relying on such mortal strength to prosecute the work of God. Constantly through the record of Luke and Paul, confidence is expressed in God alone—

"In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. 11:27).

Such was the daily lot of the apostle Paul. To a degree it would be the portion of all who assembled under his banner; and there were no illusions concerning present comfort by his companions. Paul's last words to Timothy show this—

"Thou hast fully known my manner of life . . . persecutions, afflictions which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra, what persecutions I endured. But out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecutions" (2 Tim. 3:11-12).

What was it then that would draw people to the Truth with such a prospect? There was nothing about Paul physically that would draw the natural man. He describes himself to the Corinthians as—

"In presence base among you . . . rude of speech" (2 Cor. 10:1; 11:6).

—and as estimated by them—

". . . bodily presence weak, and his speech contemptible" (2 Cor. 10:10).

Indeed it was in entire harmony with what Isaiah had prophesied of Christ:

"He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men: a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:2-3).

Yet with such a prophecy, and its realization in the Christ, the whole world has been and will be revolutionized to the glory of God. God sees not as man sees. He looks on the heart—

"God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty. And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are" (1 Cor. 1:27-28).

The apostle Peter later wrote in the same strain to exhort his brethren not to consider it strange concerning the fiery trials which were to try them, as though some strange thing happened, but rather—

"Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings . . . If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth on you . . . on your part He is glorified"

(1 Peter 4:12-14).

There had to be something beyond poor weak mortality to accomplish God's purpose, that no flesh should glory in man. The Gospel was the—

"Power of God unto salvation unto everyone that believeth" (Rom.1:16).

The Gospel would draw its true recipients, provided it were not obscured by human self-seeking.

Thus we find this seemingly insignificant company approach the river bank at Philippi; and the outpoured words of God's grace find lodgement in the heart of a woman prepared by meditation and prayer. In some way—Jewess, Gentile or proselyte—she was a worshiper of God before the arrival of Paul. Her attitude speaks wonderfully of her character—

"If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there" (Acts 16:15).

From these humble beginnings sprang an ecclesia of brethren and sisters which had the true spirit of Christ, who loved their elder brother in the Faith, and later contributed to his needs as he journeyed onward—

"Even in Thessalonica ye (Philippians) sent once and again unto my necessity" (Philip. 4:16).

Paul and Silas, subsequent to the beating and imprisonment, journey on with young Timothy; apparently leaving Luke behind to establish the new ecclesia. The personal pronoun change from *we* and *us* in Luke 16:16-17 (Luke being the writer) to *they* and *them* is consistent hereafter through the account till Paul, returning to Jerusalem thru Philippi at the end of the 3rd journey, picks up Luke who again takes up the story in the 1st person—

"These going before tarried for us at Troas" (Acts 20:5).

"It was determined that we should sail into Italy" (Acts 27:1).

Luke appears to have accompanied Paul thereafter to his final imprisonment in Rome—

"Only Luke is with me" (2 Tim.4:11).

* * *

The persecuted little band come to Thessalonica and enter for 3 sabbaths into the Jewish synagogue, reasoning of Christ from the Old Testament Scriptures. Assembled are Jews and proselytes, Thessalonica being the centre of commerce in this part of Macedonia, and apparently no other Jewish assemblies in the region.

Paul did not conceal the nature of the high calling he brought to them. As Jews, they would be looking for redemption on a *national* basis, and for the coming of the Messiah in power and glory—a hope which proselyted Greeks, both men and women, would have espoused, not realizing that the Messiah had first to suffer and die for them.

To their Scriptures—Law, Psalms and Prophets—Paul directs them—

"Opening and alleging that Christ *must needs have suffered* and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ" (Acts 17:3).

This was Paul's entrance in unto them, as he points out in 1 Thess. 1:9. Why would they receive Paul, Silas and Timothy, and accept their words as God's message—a very strange new doctrine to them? We see the hand of God preparing the way. Thessalonica was only 100 miles southwest of Philippi, on the main through road of traffic. The events of their deliverance from Roman authority by earthquake—generated by praise and prayer—and their

liberation and vindication to the glory of God, would become public knowledge through all the region. Their courageous suffering and continuation in the work, undaunted by trial and peril, was the victorious power of God working on every hand. Thus the Thessalonians, both Jew and Gentile — "a great multitude"— esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the Law of Moses now dead, and the idolatry of Greece—

"Some of them (the Jews) believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas: and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few"(v. 4).

General knowledge concerning the apostles, guided by the power of God, had the effect of many Gentiles seeking the Creator—

"Who turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven"

(1 Thess. 1:9).

—as Paul writes to them soon after. We may be inclined to isolate these northern Greek communities from each other, to view them as self-contained and out of communication with one another. But on the contrary, rapid and direct intercourse by the Roman world development was in God's providence the vehicle for the speedy dissemination of His saving grace. Paul thus wrote of the Thessalonian reception of the Faith, and not very long after this (1 Thess.1:6-8)—

"Ye received the Word in much affliction, so that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the Word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad, so that we need not speak anything."

The power of the Truth enabled the believers to endure the afflictions of the Gospel, afflictions generated by unbelieving Jews. The whole city was brought into uproar on the same charge which the Jews brought against Christ (Acts 17:5-7)—

"These which have TURNED THE WORLD UPSIDEDOWN . . . do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus."

Clearly the apostolic preaching was public knowledge, as were their previous Philippian activities—

"These have come hither *also*" (v. 6).

Thus with persecution attending their steps, the little band push resolutely onward. The *Man of Macedonia* was still in process of formation, crying for help in the course of his development: the multitudinous Christ-Man was being prepared to be brought forth. The antitypical aspect of God's words to Eve in Gn. 3:16 are illustrated in the development of the godly seed—

"In sorrow shalt thou bring forth."

But it was not always to be sorrow. There would be rejoicing at the glorious prospect in view, as declared by the Master—

"A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come. But as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

"Ye now have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (John 16:21-22).

"A great multitude" was added to the Macedonian Man at Thessalonica. In their midst were 2 in development who would later stand firmly with Paul through greater trials, one of whom would be imprisoned with him for the defence of the Faith.

Paul, later writing to Thessalonica, impressed them with the pain and anguish he experienced while bringing them to birth—not in regret, but in love — because it gendered a close family relationship, a oneness and communion which could not be developed by an impersonal study of the Scriptures alone. It was a contrast between the cold, calculating Pharisaic exposition of the Law of Moses, and the love and warmth and affinity exemplified in the life of Christ. So Paul manifested the same outlook in walking in the steps of his Master, with the words of Christ through Ananias deep in his heart—

"I will show him how great things he must suffer tor my Name's sake" (Acts 9:16).

He completed his testimony in writing to Timothy with—

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).

These heart-rending experiences are designed by a loving Father to draw us closer to Him in dependence, rather than relying on ourselves, that we as children would truly look to Him in faith. Thus Paul wrote—

"Even after we had suffered and were shamefully entreated at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much contention (*agonia*: anguish, agony)"—1 Thess. 2:2.

The beautiful result of this agony is apparent—

"We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you—not the Gospel of God only—but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us . . . We exhorted and comforted and charged *every one of you*, as a father doth his children" (vs. 7-11).

It is in this spirit we must preach and teach, or we are but sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. We note that Paul appears to have made a point of knowing *each one personally*: "every one of you." Is there not a very important lesson here for us? Certainly this is a vital aspect, and perhaps the major one, in all our associations with our brethren and sisters. We must love and consider each individually, and not as mere masses and groups. It is a full-time, life-time work. We shall be doing everything then possible for one another, agonizing for them. Having presented the Truth is not an end in itself. God, having made us acquainted with His message of grace, does not leave us to fend for ourselves. Does not "even nature itself" teach us?—

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings—so the Lord alone did lead Israel" (Deut. 32:11-12).

The work of the Truth built into ecclesial life with the same loving care shown by God, Christ and the apostle Paul, will yield the reward:

"What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy" (1 Thess. 2:19-20).

Luke uses the same word *agonia* in writing of the suffering of Christ for us, when he besought his Father in Gethsemane—

"Being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44).

The burden of the whole creation rested upon his shoulders. His successful performance of the will of God at that moment was the pivot point of the Divine plan of redemption. Nor did he leave the believers alone after his resurrection. He assured them he would be with them through all ages.

Paul illustrated the same agony and continuing personal interest for all his brethren and sisters as a constant way of life. His final messages from prison in Rome to Philippi and Colosse show this —

"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; having the same conflict (*agonia*) which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me" (Phil. 1:29-30).

"That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I labour, striving (*agonizomenos*) according to his working, which worketh in me mightily. For I would that ye knew what great conflict (*agona*) I have for you and for them at Laodicea, and as many as have not seen my face in the flesh" (Col. 1:28-2:1).

Leaving Thessalonica, again with persecution at their steps, the little band travelled westward to Berea, again entering the synagogue where in this instance they were received cordially by the Jews. With their hearts atune to the words of Scripture, the eager listeners diligently brought Paul's message to the standard of truth, and being convinced:

"Many of them believed: also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few" (Acts 17:12).

This pleasant situation continued for a period, but communications with Thessalonica caused the unbelieving Jews there to visit Berea and "stir up the people." The wording here implies a violent agitation, as of billowy waves on a storm-swept sea. We see here again the close association and communication of these communities.

Rather than jeopardize the life of the ecclesia established there, Paul was taken to Athens, while Timothy and Silas remained at Berea to extend and consolidate the work begun there. The foundation was laid at these 2 cities with affliction and trial. The power of the Word of God—understood, received and believed—was the anchor of their hearts in the face of opposition.

From these beginnings, further additions to the evangelizing company would be made. The apostolic example of faith and perseverance under severe trial kindled a fire in the hearts of some to go and do likewise. With Luke left at Philippi, and with an increase in activity and greater circuit for ecclesial communication, it became necessary for additional faithful brethren to respond to the arduous task of disseminating the Truth. As the work proceeds, and the Acts recorded, and the epistles circulated, these individuals appear by brief references dropped here and there.

From Thessalonica we later find the name Aristarchus appearing. Coupled with him is one brief mention of Secundus of Thessalonica. From Berea another is added to the list: Sopater. And from that area, either Thessalonica or Berea, the name of Gaius is joined to those devoted to Paul's assistance in his arduous and dangerous work.

At Corinth in southern Greece, Paul's next stop after Athens, he becomes associated with Aquila and Priscilla—an acquaintance generated by the banishment of all Jews from Rome (good coming out of apparent evil) and by the necessity of Paul turning to his trade of tent-making to support himself: an occupation shared by Aquila and Priscilla. Without these 2 incidents coinciding, the work and beauty of Paul's ministry would not have been enriched in this respect for our benefit. And from this he could write later to the Corinthians—

"We, as workers together with God, approving ourselves as the ministers of God in much patience, *in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults*, in labours, in watchings, in fastings ... by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich" (1 Cor. 6:1-10).

The circumstances of our lives, and our response to them, our conduct in relation to them, can have a profound effect upon the furtherance of God's work and on our wonderfully privileged position as "*workers together with God*." The faithful who became companions of Paul were more than just workers with Paul. They could see the work of God reflected in Paul's manner of life: therefore they became "*workers together with God*"!

About 5 years after Paul's foundation work in Macedonia, we find he has diligently laboured in Asia Minor, and together with his companions has gospelized all the western part of Asia Minor. It was toward the close of this ministry that the incident of 'Diana of the Ephesians' erupted, bringing the lives of Paul and his companions into jeopardy. Two shining stars blaze forth upon the pages of Scripture as a result of this incident, a brief flash from the record of the book of remembrance for those who think upon and reverence the Name of the Lord. They were publicly known as associates of Paul, and identified with his activities: therefore —

"When the whole city (Ephesus) was filled with confusion [resulting from the incitation of Demetrius the silversmith], they caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, and rushed with one accord into the theatre (Acts 19:29).

"*Men of Macedonia*." The man who appeared to Paul in vision at Troas 7 years before, now appears in development: a help and a defence to Paul with their lives. They had espoused the cause of Christ, and stood with their Master, while the cries of a demented and irrational mob, incited by pecuniary interests, rang in their ears.

"Crucify him, crucify him!" cried the mob around Christ.

"Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" was the battle-cry against Gaius and Aristarchus. Whether they were in danger of fighting with wild beasts in the theatre, or the mob itself, we do not know. Mob violence had caused Paul to be stoned and left for dead at Lystra in Lycaonia. Men without reason are as beasts. They are pictorialized by Daniel as wild beasts, and David often uses this figure of his vicious enemies. The adversary of the apostles was illustrated as a "roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." Both Peter and Jude refer to men of corrupt minds, guided only by the motions of the flesh, as "brute beasts" who shall perish in their own corruption.

We know that the Roman theatres were the scenes of human combat with wild beasts for the sport of the shallow, fleshly-minded citizenry. Paul wrote—

"After the manner of men have I fought with beasts at Ephesus" (1 Cor. 15:32).

This is generally understood as cruel men, though not entirely. Paul's Roman citizenship is advanced as a reason against this possibility. But he did not use this protection except in defence of, and for the furtherance of, the Truth. There are times, as at Philippi, where he did not invoke this protection, but allowed himself to be beaten—doubtless to prevent the venom of the mob being transferred to other brethren not possessing this protective shield. His primary position was:

"Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour" (Phil. 3:20).

—a heavenly kingdom, not related to the earth's fleshly defences. Certainly our defence and protection should be sought on a higher plane than the changeable governments of world economy. Said David—

"My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth" (Psa. 121:2).

God in His good time removes the peril, the anxieties and the trials, using in a natural way the powers-that-be, whom He sets up and removes as He wills. He causes that (Rev. 12:16)—

"The Earth helps the Woman (the true and faithful Woman-Bride of Christ)."

And so it was in Ephesus, as the trials were removed by the cool self-possession of the town clerk, who quelled the disturbance and caused reason to prevail, to the liberation of Gaius and Aristarchus. In the process, the Man of Macedonia was being—

"Made perfect (complete, entire) through suffering."

It appears that Priscilla and Aquila were resident at Ephesus during this active and danger-fraught ministry of Paul, assisting in the work. They had accompanied Paul from Corinth to Ephesus—Acts 18:18.

There they were instrumental in expounding the Truth to Apollos, extending his foundation beyond the preaching of John the Baptist. The steady and faithful labour of this devoted pair, though very little mentioned in Scripture, was carried out at Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome. The necessities of livelihood (by tent-making), together with the love of the brethren and sisters throughout the ecclesial world now developing, took them back and forth in the Empire. Paul speaks of them to Corinth (apparently writing from Ephesus)—

"Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the ecclesia that is in their house" (1 Cor. 16:19).

To those at Rome he wrote (about a year later) in a manner that indicated these 2 were then in the capital —
"Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus, who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also *ALL the ecclesias of the Gentiles*. Likewise greet the ecclesia that is in their house" (Rom. 16:3-5).

Somewhere during the close association of these 2 with Paul, some unselfish endangerment of their lives had occurred, for the preservation of the apostle's safety—known and thankfully received by all the ecclesias. Was it in the riot at Corinth, incited by the Jews, from which the Household was delivered by the Roman deputy Gallio? Was it at Ephesus, in the uproar about Diana of the Ephesians? God knows. These brief, bright flashes are to teach us the power of the love of God in Christ Jesus our Saviour. Daily opportunities are extended in each of the lives of God's children, *if they will accept them*. God observes, and their names are recorded in the Book of Life.

The last few words of the great apostle include mention of this faithful couple, words written as Paul awaited the executioner—

"Salute Priscilla and Aquila" (2 Tim.4:19).

Clearly, through their love and faithfulness, they were very special to the apostle. When the books are opened, what a wealth of service will be revealed for all to see, and for which to praise God!

What then of 2 other companions of Paul—Gaius and Aristarchus? Of Gaius we hear no more. Others there were, one here and there, who held up the hands of Paul, or strengthened the feeble knees. In many cases lists of tender greetings are appended to Paul's letters: noble names in the world's true history. Let us ponder the mention of each precious name. They each bore the marks of the Lord Jesus.

But Aristarchus does not fade from the record. Timothy was delegated here and there to build on the foundations Paul had laid. God was using His servants according to their several ability. Luke again appears on the scene in a personal sense—Acts 20:6, among those who would accompany Paul for several years of trial to come.

The gracious offering of the ecclesias of Europe for the help of the poor brethren and sisters of Judea was to be brought by appointed brethren from the ecclesias, among whom was Aristarchus. Naturally we would conclude such a service would receive the blessing and Godspeed of all. It did, but not as man thinks. Jewish opposition came before they left Europe. Ecclesias all along the way spoke of trials, persecutions, imprisonment and chains—Acts 21:4-12. Even Paul's companions tried to dissuade him from his course, but to no avail. He pressed forward to Jerusalem, just as his Master had done, knowing that perils awaited him in God's service. Then they confessed this was not foolhardy, but—

"The will of the Lord be done" (Acts 21:14).

"*Thy will, not mine.*" Undaunted, Aristarchus clave to Paul. He was learning far more fully that—

"Through much tribulation we must enter the Kingdom of God."

To Jerusalem then with the European gift of love they went. Within 12 days Paul stood a prisoner for the Truth before the Roman governor Felix. Two years confinement; an appeal to Caesar: a defence of the Faith before

Festus and King Agrippa; and a journey as a prisoner to Rome. Aristarchus had not deserted Paul. He represented the Man of Macedonia to Paul. With God's help, he would not fail.

The voyage to Rome is undertaken. Aristarchus was at his side, as was Luke. The normal trip to Rome could have been accomplished in a few weeks with favourable conditions. God controls the wind and sea. For reasons of His purpose the Creator called for violent weather, the worst Mediterranean storms, and finally shipwreck and a winter's stay at Melita (Malta), and arrival at Rome the next year.

*"Change is our portion now! The calm and sunny sea
Sleeps when the wildest storm is near: so doomed to change are we.
But faithful is Jehovah's word: I will be with thee, saith the Lord."*

Two more years confinement were required before Paul would be freed, years spent preaching the Truth to all that dared to be associated with his 'stigma,' his position identified by a chain, in the presence of a Roman soldier, while his prison-home was paid for by himself and those who loved the Lord Jesus, such as contributions thankfully received from the Philippian ecclesia.

While confined, Paul did not fret at the limitations. Perhaps those 2 years were the most restful he had endured in about 18 years. His record of trials in 2 Cor. 11 would indicate this. With the association of the brethren and sisters of Rome, who had gone to meet him at Appii Forum as his journey ended, and with the companionship of Luke and Aristarchus, he filled the time in the spirit of his declaration to Corinth. He had—

"The care of all the ecclesias" (2 Cor. 11:29).

From this confinement at Rome it appears he wrote the major portion of his epistles to the ecclesias, letters which we read and digest perhaps without realizing the bleak environment from which he wrote. He who could sing psalms and offer prayers from prison with a lacerated back, has given us his message of love and care. Do we fully appreciate it? Even in confinement he used every opportunity to proclaim the Truth and serve the Brotherhood. He joyfully assures the beloved Philippians, seeking to cheer and encourage them in their sorrow for his afflictions

(1:12-14)—

"I would ye should understand that the things which happened to me have fallen out rather to the furtherance of the Gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace. And many of the brethren waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the Word without fear."

And what of Aristarchus, the *Best Ruler*, for so means his name? In writing to Colosse Paul refers to him as 'my fellow-prisoner.' Perhaps association with his companion had brought about his confinement also. Or it could be he worked so closely and intimately with his elder brother that it was a fellowship of Paul's chains and restrictions.

Paul wrote further to Colosse (1:24)—

"I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his Body's sake, which is the ecclesia."

Were not the suffering and crucifixion of Christ all-sufficient for our salvation? Yes they were. But Jesus Christ was not a substitute: he was a *representative* of the way to life that all must tread. Trial is the avenue to perfection. It is, if endured patiently and humbly, the outward manifestation of our faith in God. The Father knows what is sufficient in trial and preparation for each one of us, if we are His. There must be evidence of our relationship to the Master when we stand in his presence for inspection: otherwise he will say—

"Depart from me, I never knew you" (Matt. 7:23).

Where identity with Christ has been made, where his association has been sought, where we remember those in bonds as bound with them—*there* have the imprints of the sufferings of Christ been made—

"Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me" (Matt. 25:40).

Said Paul, not only by word but by deed—

"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1).

Can we partake of the memorials of Christ's sufferings with the full assurance that we conform to this pattern?

—E.F.H.

THE "LAW AND TESTIMONY" IS THE TRANSFORMER

WHERE the Truth has possession of the sentiments, setting them to work and so forming the thoughts, it becomes the law of God to them; which the apostle styles "*the law of his mind.*" And because it is written there through the hearing of "the law and the testimony," which came to the prophets and apostles through the Spirit, he terms it "*the law of the Spirit*" inscribed on "fleshly tables of the heart; and "*the law of the spirit of life*" because, while obeyed, it confers a right to eternal life.

—Bro. Thomas, *Elpis Israel*, 1910 Ed., p. 89.

Current Events Fulfilling Prophecy

TWO things seem to dominate world news—the unceasing Russian drive toward unquestioned world military superiority, & the weakness of Europe economically, politically & militarily. Russia is on the rise, expanding its world influence, especially at present in Africa. US is timid, & pulling back: the Russian victory & US defeat in Angola would have been unthinkable 10 years ago, before the US catastrophe in Vietnam. With the collapse of the Portuguese African Empire, & its seizure by Russian-backed Communists, the shrinking White power in southern Africa has its back to the wall, & its days seem numbered. Who controls southern Africa controls the West's oil routes.

The oil crisis, caused by the Arabs (in frustration against Western exploitation) uniting & seizing complete control of their oil & its pricing & distribution, is a major factor in the weakness & helplessness of Europe. Europe is held hostage to Arab whims, and has no power to change the situation. Modern war cannot be fought without tremendous and assured oil supplies. Russia has plenty of oil, both in production & in reserve: she is now the world's largest producer & increasingly so, well beyond her own use. US's production is rapidly dwindling, its once-rich reserves have been wickedly squandered on riotous living: it must now import nearly ½ its needs at increasingly burdensome prices. (Although "need" here is a euphemism for "greed"—auto manufacturers cannot make the large, gasoline-consuming cars fast enough to meet demands. US produces more than enough oil for its needs—but lust is never satisfied with simple needs.)

Jimmy Carter, who campaigned on a promise to slash defence spending & increase social welfare, professes to discount the Russian threat, & boasts of US's military superiority. He harbours the illusion of an agreement with Russia that will obviate massive defence expenditure. If the West were not utterly & wilfully blind, it would realize what "agreement" with Russia is worth. But US must have its Chamberlain at the proper time, to prepare the way for Russia's strike for world power. Ford had a more realistic approach toward war preparation: perhaps that is why he was removed.

RUSSIAN WAR POWER. Last week a panel of distinguished private citizens who had been requested to make a survey of Russian military power & intentions gave the most alarming forecast in years, declaring Russia is clearly seeking superiority over US. They say by the 80's Russia will be able to drop its ICBMs within 300 feet of target. Carter says he is not worried, "We're still far stronger than they are." The Kremlin is trying to encourage the "relaxed" faction of US analysts. Brezhnev complains of "noisy campaigns" over an alleged growing military menace from "peaceful" Russia. (Nwk 1:10)

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US air power is falling so far behind Russia that it may have to resort immediately to nuclear weapons in the event of war, the latest edition of Jane's *All the World's Aircraft* said today. It said US preoccupation with nuclear missiles had enabled Russia to build up a vast lead in other key weapons. (DetNws 12:22)

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Strongest evidence yet of evil intention on part of Russia is contained in the CIA's long-range forecast of Russia's strategic program. One CIA official says: "It is more than sombre—it is very grim." The report shows development of new weapons systems "right across the board." Spending of enormous sums on underground civil defence shelters is the work of a nation preparing for war. (DtN 1:1)

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Russia has started massive hardening programs for military & industrial targets—a vast program to protect military installations, key people & industries in a nuclear war. Russia can attack large coastal population centres & industrial concentrations in US with their short-range weapons: US can reach Russian targets only with long-range missiles. With major improvements in Russia's missile accuracy, it is just a matter of time till the survivability of US's fixed Minuteman sites will be "unacceptably low." Russia has the world's greatest capacity to conduct chemical-warfare operations. (USN 1:17)

It's luxurious, decadent Rome & the hardy northern barbarians all over again. US's vast scientific & technical community is dedicated to creating a profit-oriented stream of evermore exotic & expensive lust-catering gadgetry. In Russia, people are secondary, & all is concentrated on muscle & steel. The volunteer US army is mainly those who cannot find work elsewhere: Russia conscripts the cream of its young men, makes

them an elite class, & indoctrinates them with world-conquering dedication for the coming Russian age. The West is like a blind Pompeii as the smoke pours thicker & thicker from rumbling Vesuvius.

WORRIES PILE UP FOR NATO. Coming months could be among most crucial in 27-year NATO history. Russia's across-the-board build-up of nuclear & conventional weapons is giving it a combat capability far beyond its needs to defend its satellites & itself. Increasing economic & political strains within NATO could seriously weaken its military strength.

Foremost on NATO's worry list is the continuing expansion of Russian military might. Russia's aim is to build up such strength that the West will be unwilling to risk resisting any expansion on Russia's part anywhere.

NATO officials warn that paralysis could strike the Alliance if Western leaders, beset by economic problems, continue to prune defence spending even as Russian power grows. Britain is held up as an extreme example of a once-hefty NATO member now perilously close to becoming a military dropout. If others follow suit, NATO will lose all credibility.

In the north, growing Russian naval power imperils the approaches to the Baltic Sea & sounds warnings of danger to the valuable North Sea oil fields.

Even greater trouble is brewing in the south, where NATO is plagued by its own weakness and disarray, centring chiefly on the conflict between Turkey & Greece, & their unhappiness over relations with US.

Possible Russian intervention in Yugoslavia after the passing of Tito (now 84) could present NATO with the worse problem it has ever had to face.

In Italy, the surging strength of the Communist Party is worrisome. They've already gained their most important objective: enough power in Parliament to bring down the govt. any time they choose. Italy's role in NATO would be drastically reduced if the Communists gain a share of top govt. power.

The festering feud between Greece & Turkey arouses bitterness among top NATO officials. Many of them lay the blame on the US Congress, which weakened (& antagonized) Turkey by terminating military aid over Cyprus. (USN1:17)

It is a pitiful & hopeless picture. Democracy—the govt. of millions of cross-pulling individual greeds & selfishnesses—is not able to cope with ruthless & decisive dictatorship able to ignore popular will. Most democracies spend their lives on the unproductive seesaw of evenly balanced oppositions, making decisive action practically impossible. Elections are usually very close to 50-50. Most West govts. even, as at present in Canada, Israel, Britain, France, Sweden, Italy, Portugal, etc., are skin-of-the-teeth minorities, depending for continued existence on the whims of balance-of-power small parties with their own special selfishnesses. US is usually in the absurd & stultifying position of having a President of one party & a Congress of the other, each determined to prevent the other from accomplishing anything & thereby getting public credit. Because of this, the lethal energy crisis, that should have been taken resolutely by the horns 4 years ago, is still a political football.

US NATIONAL DEBT: DEEPER & DEEPER IN HOLE. Carter's plan envisions \$70 billion deficit this year, only moderately less next year. The total deficit for the past 8 Nixon-Ford years was \$247 billion, with 45% of it (\$109 bln) in the past 2 years alone. Total national federal debt now \$650 billion. (USN 1:24)

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Federal, state & local govt. retirement systems are paying out \$25 billion a year, up 350% over 10 years ago. In 5 more years, it will be over \$46 billion. Many funds are inadequately funded or not funded at all (that is, no provision has been made & they must be paid out of current taxes). The completely unfunded military retirement program has a liability of \$185 billion—a "hidden national debt." In past 10 years, govt. pensions rose 156% while the cost of living rose only 80%. (USN 1:24)

Surely nothing could illustrate the folly & incompetence (or greed & corruption?) of man. And this does not include the enormous state & local debts, such as NY City, which itself is billions in the red. Great, wealthy, clever US cannot figure any better method of running its household than by piling enormous debts & endless interest payments on the backs of future generations. Apart from ever hoping to pay off this astronomical burden, in the past 2 years alone the Federal govt. has added \$7 billion to the interest that must now be paid every year of the endless future (humanly speaking). What utter folly! How Russia must laugh, with no such Alice-in-Wonderland absurdity in its system! And it is to be noted that while human legislators are completely unable to devise a better way of running the nation than piling debt on debt, they experience no difficulty or discord in providing for their own future cosy nests. How the world needs a government of righteousness!

THE MIDEAST: Recent developments have been interesting, & appear moving in the direction of some kind of settlement and peace. We look eagerly for something of that nature to create the situation portrayed in Ezek. 38, prior to Russia's attack.

Two months ago, Syria & Egypt weren't speaking. Now they have agreed at another attempt at political union. They were united in '58 & broke up 3 years later. An agreement in '72 to unite was never implemented. (Det Nws 12:22).

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UN Sec. Waldheim says "There is a visible, clear tendency in the Arab world toward the creation of a Palestinian entity in the West Bank & Gaza that would have special links with Jordan &: special commercial ties with Israel. Guarantees for Israel are absolutely decisive, & responsible Arab leaders are now ready to accept guarantees for Israel's security. It is my impression the Palestinians are now ready to accept this solution. This is tremendous progress." (Nwk 12:27)

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The Israelis will insist in any negotiations over the West Bank's future that they be allowed to maintain military posts along the Jordan River. As added protection against the future, they have so far established 68 settlements in the occupied territories, spotted roughly along the geographical lines that Israel hopes will become its borders in the future. (Tm 12:27)

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Sadat & Assad have ended their year-long feud by announcing close alliance of Egypt & Syria. They're coordinating their diplomatic drive to force Israel to the Geneva Conference. Rabin threw Israel into political turmoil by suddenly resigning. Only 20% of Israelis are religious, but the religious parties that represent them are a potent factor in the nation's politics (holding the balance of power). A very small religious party called for a vote of censure because Rabin allowed an official ceremony to run close to the Sabbath sundown. The religious party that forms a coalition with his party (it had 3 ministers in his cabinet) abstained & did not support him, causing the vote to be perilously close. Rabin fired the ministers & broke the coalition, leaving his party 4 votes short of a majority in parliament (the Knesset). This made his resignation, and new elections, inevitable. Elections will probably be in May. (Tm 1:3)

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This surprising move may slow down the peace process. Rabin cannot now make any major decisions, & with the election coming up, US cannot put pressure on Jerusalem. But if Rabin's gamble pays off, a newly-re-elected Prime Minister might be in a strong enough position to make territorial concessions to the Arabs. (Nwk 1:3)

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In the coming election, Rabin is being challenged for leadership of the Labour Party by the hawkish Defence Minister Shimon Peres, who has the support of Moshe Dayan. Rabin is supported by Golda Meir. (Nwk 1:10)

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Israel's inflation rate is 42% a year. Foreign debt is \$11 billion—roughly the same as its gross national product (as if US owed \$1½ trillion to foreigners). Since '49, \$20 billion in foreign capital has poured in: gifts from Jews abroad, German reparations, & US aid. This spurred a growth that gave Israel a gross national product equal to Egypt's, though it has less than 1/10 the people.

Then came the '73 war. Israel lost 100 jets & 800 tanks. Arms purchases abroad since then total \$6 billion. Last 2 years' trade deficit total \$7½ billion. Israelis making over \$13,500 a yr. pay 63% tax. (Tm 1:10)

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Peres (who may be next Prime Minister) says: "I firmly believe we should negotiate with Hussein. My proposal is to create either a federation of Israel and the West Bank, or Jordan, Israel & the West Bank, with 3 economies: Jordanian, Israeli, & a common market in the West Bank." (Nwk 1:17)

* * *

Before Israel became independent, 800,000 Jews lived in Arab lands. Today 35,000 remain. Now that Arab govts. have launched a "peace offensive" for an overall settlement with Israel, many Arab countries are treating their Jews more kindly, & plan to end legal discrimination against them. (Nwk 1:17)

Certainly Israel can ill afford another war. She might win it militarily, but it would destroy her economically & financially. This is equally true of Egypt. The '73 war seems to have taught Sadat that possession of every advantage of initiative & surprise & superior equipment could not enable Egypt to defeat Israel: & if by any possibility he should succeed, he knows US would not permit it. In cutting his ties with Russia, he deprived himself of a sure (though tight-fisted) supplier who had a vested interest in his victory.

One Hundred Years Ago

FROM THE CHRISTADELPHIAN MAGAZINE, DECEMBER, 1876

THE Turks had broken the Servian defences, & had been about to overrun Servia. Russia demanded a 6-weeks armistice & a conference of the European Powers to consider the issues, threatening to herself enter the war if Turkey refused. Turkey submitted, & the conference was being prepared. Britain & Russia were talking very belligerently. Disraeli declared that though Britain was a country of peace, she was 3 times better prepared for war than any other, & if she had to begin a fight she would not end it till her object was accomplished. Russia was mobilizing her armies & rushing troops south. Neither the press nor the Brotherhood expected the Conference to solve the problem & avoid war. Prominent British statesmen were demanding that the Sultan be removed & a British Prince be put on the Turkish throne to save Turkey [and, incidentally, to add it to the growing Empire of very "peaceful" Britain]. Editorially, bro. Roberts says—

"This closes the 13th volume of the Christadelphian . . . We hope the 14th may be arrested in the course of publication by the events now transpiring in Eastern Europe. The Lord comes when the political Euphrates is dry, and the King of the North in possession of the Sick Man's house. At the same time, history shows the divine work to be on a large scale of time. Consequently, while looking for the Lord's re-appearance as a daily contingency, and therefore with "loins girt and lights burning, like men waiting for their Lord," let us guard against impatience should the closing events of this closing era take a longer time than may be agreeable to our ardent wishes for the dawn of Israel's consolation."

Events were to be very exciting for the next 2 years, with Russia at the gates of Constantinople, & Britain guaranteeing Turkey against further Russian advance. It was finally settled with much loss of Turkish territory in Europe, and gains for both Britain (Cyprus) and Russia (around the Black Sea).

* * *

Bro. Roberts had many interesting notes & replies to correspondence, on the covers & elsewhere: some valuable for the historic picture, some for doctrine. Here are some—

"The doctrine of human mortality, as a teaching of Scripture, was first propounded by Dr. Thomas in 1834. His exposition was first accepted in England in 1848, on the occasion of his visit to Birmingham—by some even before then—and the first ecclesias were constituted within the 2 years following."

"It is well to recognize the fact that the principle which isolates us from popular communion isolates us also from the fellowship of all who reject any part of the Truth. Some accept the Truth in part, but are either unable or unwilling to receive it in its entirety . . . What God requires is binding on us all, and the faithful man cannot consent to accept any union that requires a jot or tittle to be set aside or treated as unimportant. Such a man cannot consent to form a part of any community that is not 'the pillar & ground of the Truth'."

"It is written: 'There shall in no wise enter into it (the Kingdom) anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie' (Rev. 21: 27). Men—aye, even such as are called brethren—may forget or be indifferent to this meanwhile, but they will discover at last that the Word of the Lord standeth sure, and that the gate of eternal glory will be barred against every one who conforms not to the divine standard revealed in the Word."

"There can be no doubt that when Christ says 'Many are called but few are chosen' he means many are brought into the Gospel by the hearing, belief and obedience of it, but that of that many, only a few will be found fit for a place in the Kingdom . . . It is because few of the many who are called obey the commandments steadfastly in their entirety that few of the called will be chosen."

"A believer takes a false & dangerous step in uniting in wedlock with unbelief or indifference, & will probably be punished in the spiritual injury that results. But to call upon him or her to annul the marriage as a condition of fellowship is to do that for which there is no warrant in Scripture or in reason."

"The terms of restoration to fellowship in the case of any manner of offence is a confession of wrong-doing, & repentance. If there are any doubts, give the offender the benefit of the doubt, and leave the Lord to judge at his coming. The duty of the ecclesia is done when it washes its hands of the offence. Penitent offenders are to be received and helped till the Lord come."
