

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.

**For the present, please send all Berean communications to:
Bro. G. V. Growcott, 13308 Denver Circle, Sterling Heights, Mich. 48077, U.S.A.**
Australia subs. may go to bro. R. Hodges, 2 Emily St., Esperance 6450, W. Aust.

**Please send all personal correspondence for bro. Gibson to:
Bro. G. A. Gibson, 33 Bellairs Road, Kardinya, Western Australia 6163**

“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.

CONTENTS

ECCLESIAL NEWS: Lethbridge, Southern California	218
June Answers: Who Killed?	218
Fraternal Gatherings: Hye, July 30-August 6; Canton, Oct. 7-8	218
'SCIENCE' AND TRUTH (Bro. Thomas):	
The Foolishness of Man, and the Wisdom of God	222
COME WITH ME, MY SISTER-BRIDE! (Song ch.4)	224
THE GOOD CONFESSION (Bro. Roberts):	
A Conversation between a Christadelphian and a Believing Stranger Desiring to Be Immersed Into the Name of Christ	229
CURRENT WORLD EVENTS FULFILLING PROPHECY:	
Massacre in Zaire; Moro's Ordeal Over; Afghanistan's Red Coups; Sadat in Trouble; Africa's Grim Warning to Carter; The Shah Cracks Down; So. Africa Strikes at SWAPO	245
In the Beginning (verse)	250
100 YEARS AGO: Disraeli's Plan to Annex Turkey; British-Israelism; Expedition to Midian; Cleopatra's Needle; Death of bro. Alex Packie; Birmingham Tea Meeting	251
Bible Questions: Identify Site	252

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.

Anything herein may be used freely by any one in any way. No credit needed.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

LETHBRIDGE, Alta.—633 Seventh St. S—Memorial 11am; S.S. 12:30pm; Lecture 7:30 pm; Class Wed 8 pm. Bro. Wm. Blacker, 1225 Sixth Ave. S., T1J 1 A3; Phone (403) 327-5663.

LOVING Greetings in the Master's Name.

We of the Lethbridge ecclesia are pleased to announce the examination and immersion of sister IRENE PRICE, of Claresholm, Alta. Sister Price was immersed at our meeting room on Sun., Jan. 8. She is the niece of our bro. N. Aldred, also of Claresholm. May God bless and guide her in her walk to eternal life.

Your brother in Christ Jesus,

—bro. Wm. Blacker

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA—Memorial 11 am, followed by Bible Class—Home of bro. Wm. Sharp, 140 Princeton, Claremont, CA 91711; phone (714) 626-0490, or home of bro. Jim Phillips, 1139 E. 2nd Ave., Apt. D, Escondido, CA 92025; phone (714) 741-9763.

LOVING Greetings in the bonds of the Truth to our fellow-pilgrims in this world of vanity. May our Father in heaven keep us from all evil, and aid us in directing our steps in the Way of Life, that we may each one come forth from the tribulations of our present existence as gold which has been tried in the fire.

While life in the main can be perplexing at times, as afflictions beset us, we have a great deal to be thankful for in the comforts and associations of the Truth.

Since our last report we have been favoured and encouraged in our sojourn by the company and fellowship of the following brethren and sisters—

Bro. Fred & sis. Jean Higham of Detroit were with us on Aug. 14, 1977 for our memorial service. On Sept. 4 our bro. Dale Sleeman of Portland attended our breaking of bread. And on Sept. 25 & Oct. 2 bro. John Randell of Portland visited with us. On Jan. 8, 1978 we had the pleasure of the company of our sister Carolyn Thompson of Houston. Bre. Higham, Sleeman and Randell all encouraged us with the words of exhortation.

As of Mar. 12 we have a new member in our ecclesia, sis. Kay Phillips (formerly sis. Kay Wolfe, daughter of bro. & sis. Ross Wolfe of Lampasas, Tx.). Sis. Kay is now the wife of our bro. Jim Phillips. They were married Mar. 5 at Lampasas, and are now residing in Escondido, some 90 miles southeast of Claremont. We are at present alternating our meetings between Escondido and Claremont.

May our Heavenly Father's blessing be upon our bro. Jim and sis. Kay in their new relationship as husband and wife in the bonds of the Truth; and may their united endeavours in working out their salvation result in their attaining the glorious prize which is promised to the faithful.

With love to all, from your brethren and sisters in So. Calif.,

—bro. Wm. Sharp

JUNE ANSWERS

WHO KILLED?—

1. Elah—Zimri
2. Joab—Benaiah
3. Abel—Cain
4. John—Herod
5. Agag—Samuel
6. Ahab—An archer
7. Zimri—Phinehas
8. Judas—Judas
9. Uriah—David
10. Joash—His servants
11. Eglon—Ehud
12. Cozbi—Phinehas
13. Rezin—Tiglath-Pileser
14. Sisera—Jael
15. Pekah—Hoshea
16. James—Herod
17. Amon—His servants

18. Josiah—Necho
19. Zebah—Gideon
20. Abner—Joab
21. Nadab—Baasha
22. Asahel—Abner
23. Amasa—Joab
24. Shimei—Benaiah
25. Hamor—Levi/Simeon
26. Haman—Ahasuerus
27. Jezebel—Jehu
28. Naboth—Jezebel
29. Amnon—Absalom
30. Goliath—David
31. Ahaziah—Jehu
32. Shallum—Menahem
33. Jehoram—Jehu
34. Athaliah—Jehoiada
35. Absalom—Joab
36. Gedaliah—Ishmael
37. Shechem—Levi/Simeon

38. Pekahiah—Pekah
39. Adonijah—Benaiah
40. Zachariah—Shallum
41. Zechariah—Joash
42. Benhadad—Hazael
43. Zalmunna—Gideon
44. Seed royal—Athaliah
45. Ahimelech—Doeg
46. Ishbosheth—
Rechab & Baanah
47. Chief Baker—Pharaoh
48. Ahithophel—Ahithophel
49. Adonizedek—Joshua
50. Sennacherib—Adram-
melech & Sharezer
51. An Egyptian—Moses
52. His eldest son—King/Moab
53. Ahab's 70 sons—
Samaria elders
54. His 70 brothers—Abimelech

If the Lord will

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS

HYE, Texas: Sunday to Sunday, July 30-August 6

Bro. Carwyn Smith, 335 E. San Augustine, #75, Deer Pk., Tx. 77536, 713/479-6565

CANTON, Ohio: Saturday & Sunday, October 7-8

Bro. Braden Edwards, 3700 Lincoln St. E., Canton OH 44707, ph. (216) 488-1356

The Beginning of Knowledge

"Where is the wise? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"—1 Corinthians 1:20

ONE cannot read the Bible with thoughtful and reverential care without discovering that *knowledge of God* is essential to salvation. Jesus brings this to our attention with arresting conviction when he says—

"This is life eternal, that they may *know Thee* the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

Knowledge of God is, therefore, the foundation or rock upon which we must build our hope of eternal life. It would be impossible for us to devotedly love, and faithfully serve, God if we did not possess a well-founded and comprehensive knowledge of Him, and His purpose with the earth and man upon it.

How can such knowledge be attained? Some think they can get it from nature, by observing the growth and beauty of flowers, or walking and meditating among the mighty trees of the forest. But this is a mistaken concept. They can, of course, see the beauty and the evidence, and admire God's creative work, as the Psalmist has said (19:1)—

"The heavens declare the glory of God & the firmament showeth His handiwork."

But nature does not go beyond the point of observation. Therefore we must look elsewhere to learn of His *character*, His *purposes*, and *what He requires* of those who love Him and desire to please Him. All this has been revealed in the Bible, where the wisdom of God and the glory of His Name are exhibited in all their fulness and beauty. We are told—

"The fear of the Lord is the BEGINNING of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7).

We usually think of fear as being afraid or terrified of something, but the word rendered 'fear' here means *reverence, profound respect mingled with solemn wonder*. The same word occurs in Proverbs 9:10—

"The fear of the Lord is the BEGINNING of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

The beginning of knowledge and of wisdom: that is, nothing short of this can properly be called knowledge or wisdom. Some works of modern man are very clever and ingenious, in a tinker-toy way, but they are not knowledge and wisdom. Man's works all end in sorrow & the grave. Knowledge and wisdom relate us to joy and eternity.

As we study, and continue to learn of God, we acquire *faith* in Him because of what He has done in the past. Scriptural faith is thus defined:

"The ground of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

Throughout this chapter, Paul cites many cases of faith. If we read them carefully, we better understand what he says in v. 6—

"Without faith it is *impossible* to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, & that He is a Rewarder of them (only) that *diligently* seek Him."

The possessor of such a faith looks back into the past, and ponders the things which have been testified by the prophets and apostles. He finds the evidence so convincing that he becomes fully persuaded of its truth. Turning to the future, he considers those great and precious Promises that God made to Abraham. Knowing that He is able to perform those things He has promised, *he anticipates with all confidence their literal fulfilment*.

Such a faith cannot be attained by a casual reading of the Bible, or mere portions thereof. There must be a *persistent application of the mind to ALL that is written* in the Scriptures of Truth—

"If thou *criest* after knowledge, and *liftest up thy voice* for understanding: if thou *seekest* her as silver, and *searchest* for her as for hid treasures—

"THEN shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God" (Prov. 2:3-5).

There is only one way to put into effect such a plan, and that is to *read the Bible DAILY*—all of it, not just parts. There is no better plan to be found than in the *Bible Companion*, by which the Old Testament is read once, and the New twice, each year. If the reader will do that faithfully, it will be possible for him to (2Peter 3:18)—

"Grow in grace, & in the KNOWLEDGE of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ."

The supreme importance of the knowledge of God is brought out in Hosea 4. V. 1 calls to Israel to hear the Word of the Lord—

"For the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor *knowledge of God* in the land."

They had neglected the only *Source of knowledge*, and had turned to the ignorance and worldly wisdom of the nations around them, & because of this, God declares in v.6—

"My people are DESTROYED for *lack of knowledge*."

Being a portion of that which was 'written for our instruction,' the stern and impressive lesson is obvious. For many years, there has been a tendency to water down the Truth, and blur the line that separates the Body of Christ from the things & thoughts of this evil world.

One would think, as we view the gravity of the days in which we live, that there would be a reanimation from this state of worldliness that would develop a clear, sound, radiant faith and fervent zeal among those who have the infinite privilege of knowing the Truth.

But it is apparent that *intellectual 'education and worldly 'wisdom'* are sapping the strength of Christadelphia, & causing many to doubt some of the fundamental things that are written in the Scriptures of Truth. But *no amount of these worldly things can compensate for the lack of knowledge of God*. Rather they trammel and confuse it. This is evident from what God said to Israel by this same prophet—

"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice: and the KNOWLEDGE OF GOD more than burnt offerings"

(Hosea 6:6).

Let us not think these things do not concern us. They concern us *vitality*; for if we would be among those mortals who would put on immortality, we must be very careful to conform to God's requirements. Therefore it is our wisdom to strive earnestly (Col. 1:9-10)—

"That we might be FILLED with the *knowledge of His will* in ALL wisdom and spiritual understanding:

"That we might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being *fruitful* in every good work, and *increasing in the knowledge of God*."

It will be noted that the apostle combines with the knowledge of God the matters of (1) *worthy walk*, and (2) *fruitfulness in EVERY good work*. It is essential it should be so, for—as mentioned—knowledge of God is the FOUNDATION and 'beginning' on which a faithful lifetime superstructure of 'well-doing' must be built.

When Solomon constructed the Temple at God's instruction, examination has revealed that the foundation was sunk to an astonishing depth, and was composed of stones of singular magnitude which were closely mortised into the rock itself with great ingenuity, thus forming an imperishable basis adequate to the support of the finished structure. Paul reveals the antitype when he says the Household of God—

"... are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Cornerstone, in whom all the building fitly framed together GROWETH unto an holy Temple in the Lord" (Eph. 2:20-21).

It is manifest, therefore, that there must not be any flaw in our Foundation; and the Cornerstone must be well & truly laid, and our building that rests upon them must be correctly joined in all its parts.

The work to which we are graciously called is a wonderful and glorious one, that should ever fill us with excitement & joy. We must continually, day by day, strive to elevate our minds above the mundane things that surround us, so that we will always be fully conscious of the beauty and greatness of the eternal Purposes of God.

Out of conviction will come *action*; and action will lead into a 'patient continuance in well-doing' which will end in glory, honour and immortality in the Age to Come, when—

"The earth shall be filled with the KNOWLEDGE of the glory of Yahweh as the waters cover the sea"—Hab. 2:14.
—G.A.G.

THE 1978 HYE, TEXAS, FRATERNAL GATHERING

Sunday, July 30 to Sunday, August 6

GREETINGS to the brethren and sisters of like precious Faith.

God willing, we are again planning to have our yearly Hye Gathering, this year for 8 days, beginning with Memorial service on Sunday, July 30, & ending with Memorial service (followed by lunch) on Sunday, August 6.

The accommodations consist of basically the same as in past years: cabins on the grounds, space on the grounds for campers, trailers or tents, motels at Stonewall (5 miles), Johnson City (15 miles), Fredericksburg (20 miles).

We try to meet all accommodation preferences, but are not always able.

Meals will be served 3 times a day on the grounds: \$1.50 for adults per day, \$1.00 for children per day—for those who can and wish to pay.

There are rest rooms & showers on the grounds. Please bring towels & wash cloths (and linens, if you are able).

Please notify us as soon as possible of all who are coming (adults & children), and of your accommodation preferences.

We welcome all to come & partake with us in these 8 edifying days.

—bro. Carwyn Smith, 335 E. San Augustine, #75, Deer Pk., Tx. 77536, 713/479-6565

PEACE, happiness & joy (& of course we speak of true, Divine peace, happiness & joy—not self-deceived or fleshly counterfeits) are the result of one thing, and one thing only: an enlightened AND pure conscience. That is, a justified confidence that we know what God desires of us, & that we are—to the very limit of our ability—striving & straining to perform it.

Unfaithful stewardship, of time or money—expensive houses, expensive cars, expensive clothes, expensive 'toys' of any kind, any childish self-indulgence or pleasure, any waste of time & effort on daily labour beyond reasonable necessity—makes true, divine peace & happiness impossible. It is the cruellest way of robbing ourselves of the one thing that is worth anything at all, present & future.

There can be no peace or joy in unfaithful stewardship of either time or money. If you truly WANT peace & joy with God above everything else, get down to bed-rock in your thinking: face the stark & ultimate & glorious realities of life.

Back issues of the Berean (to about 1950) are available free to any who would like them.

'Science' and Truth **THE FOOLISHNESS OF MAN, AND THE WISDOM OF GOD**

"Let no man deceive himself. If any among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God"—1 Cor. 3:19

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

THE Gospel of the Kingdom and its Mystery were proclaimed under the unerring inspiration of the Spirit of the Father, by Jesus and the Apostles. These were guided into 'all the truth'—John 16:13, and delivered to their contemporaries:

"The righteousness of the Deity witnessed by the Law and the Prophets" (Rom. 3:21).
—pure & simple: therefore styled 'the simplicity that is in Christ'—2 Cor. 11: 3.

Those who were 'taught of God'—John 6:45 by the enlightening influence of the Word preached, & had the good sense to rest satisfied with the Truth 'once for all delivered to them'—Jude 3, were nourished by it, & grew to be strong young men and fathers in Christ—1 John 2: 12-14; 1 Cor. 11: 3. These were 'not wise after the flesh' in the general, but 'foolish, weak & base' in the estimation of the 'wise, mighty & noble of the world'—1 Cor. 1: 19-31.

The Flesh, or the Devil, denounced the wisdom of the Deity; & the Deity, through His inspired servants, retaliated the charge.

This then was the issue in the beginning: *The Wisdom from Above* vs. *The Wisdom from Beneath*—James 3: 15. On one side was illiteracy, weakness, humbleness, poverty, AND THE TRUTH. On the other side, learning, power, pride of life, all the feelings and sympathies of the flesh, riches, and worldly wisdom.

Science and Philosophy, backed by all that the world calls 'good & great,' marshalled themselves against the Fishermen of Galilee, whose strength and power in the controversy was—

"The unadulterated (*adolos*) milk of the Word" (1 Peter 2:2)..

This they preached, and by this, as a 2-edged sword, they made war in the spirit of death or victory. But a current correspondent says—

"One who hasn't a knowledge & belief of the sciences cannot understand the Bible."

This is downright nonsense. What are called 'the sciences' were unknown to the 'wise and prudent' of Paul's time, & also to the 'babes.' Yet those babes are said to have understood the Scriptures. Paul tells us Timothy understood Moses & the Prophets from childhood. Yet he was ignorant of Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, Electrical Science, etc.

"I thank Thee, O Father, (said Jesus) that Thou hast not revealed these things to the wise & prudent, but to babes; for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (Matt. 11:25).

It is these very sciences, in which smatterers are constantly dabbling, that obfuscate their unskilled intellects, so as to make them unimpressible by the Word. They catch a glimpse of a scientific principle, and with this imperfectly understood, & all their scientific stock in trade, they set up their theories in judgment upon the Bible; and command it to speak thereto. Such is the folly of the wise in their own conceit.

'Science' is all very well in its place, if it be true science, & not babbling about science. Truth natural and revealed all originates from the Deity. Natural truth discovered and systematized by human observation is called *Science*. And Truth that cannot be discovered experimentally and inductively—but comes to us by the will of God through 'holy men' specially moved to speak and write it by His Spirit—is *divine science* or system of knowledge called *revelation*. This is ALWAYS THE SAME. Time changes not its facts, purposes, testimonies or reasonings.

But not so with human science. What passes for science in one age is repudiated in another. Hence the science of Paul's age is an old wife's fable in ours. *And much of what now passes for first rate science will be exploded in less than 50 years as vain babblings.**

The natural sciences cannot expound 'the things of the Spirit of God.' The profoundest knowledge of chemistry, astronomy or physiology cannot answer the question "*What has God prepared for them that love Him?*" The answer to this question cannot be read 'in trees and stones and running brooks.' All nature is dumb and silent as the grave upon it. Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Euclid to Leibnitz, Davy & Faraday with all their 'principles & facts,' couldn't approach within the shadow of a shade of 'the things prepared.' This is the testimony of Scripture, whatever speculators in science may say to the contrary.

All the prophets and apostles could answer this question, and have done so, though ignorant of what is called 'science' in our time. But with all their ignorance of this, they were better physiologists than any now extant, for none of *these* can demonstrate the motive power of the animal machinery called MAN; & he that is ignorant of this is a mere quack.

The Bible has well defined the nature of man's disease, & prescribes a remedy which is the only true one, of which theologians & scientists are alike ignorant. Paul, *teacher* of the Gentiles (including scientists), says:

"Avoid profane, vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so-called, which some professing, have erred concerning the Faith" (1 Tim. 6:20).

Paul's interpretations were independent of science, which he pronounced 'false' when all the world protested it was the true wisdom. Paul declared that it was *folly*, and his judgment has been endorsed as true & altogether right by all the real lights of the 'science' of today. His interpretations were true, and only true, yet he knew nothing of modern 'science.' So the truths of revelation are perfectly intelligible to all unsophisticated, unspoiled, childlike inquirers after them, without any aid that 'science' can afford.

The mere man of science is a fool in the 'deep things of God,' in which the unscientific man of an intelligent faith is as the sun in mid-heaven to a lightning bug, compared to him. Our friend is welcome to the bugs, big and little, light and dark. *Give us the 'fools' whose science is the Word of God which lives and abides FOR EVER.*

—Herald, June-Nov. 1860

*How true this has ever been, & ever must be! But each current generation thinks it's infallible.

"Sorrow is better than laughter, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better" (Eccl. 7:3). *What infinite divine wisdom lies in these words!*

THE Proverbs are all about wisdom & folly .the infinite wisdom & beauty of wisdom, and the tragic foolishness of folly. Perhaps this is one of the biggest lessons we have to learn, & self-changes we have to make. Once

'in the Truth' few of us are in great danger of what we would call 'wickedness'; but ALL of us are naturally very, very prone to folly. It takes many forms. All natural thinking is folly.

Anything light or childish or silly or 'funny' or selfish or unkind or fleshly or worldly—in short, anything below the ideal level to which we strive, of perfect unity & harmony with the Divine Mind—is folly. May God in His love grant us the inestimable blessing of increasingly perceiving & overcoming our follies and growing out of them—up & into full spiritual wisdom and maturity.

COME WITH ME, MY SISTER-BRIDE!

"Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister-Bride: thou hast overcome me with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck."

SONG OF SOLOMON CHAPTER FOUR

This chapter is about Love and Beauty. In fact, this is the subject of the whole Song. These are the qualities that are eternal. Love and Beauty are inseparable, and are essential to each other. There cannot be Love without Beauty. There can, of course, be love in the sense of kindness and compassion and desire to help, but not in the sense of affection and communion and unity of heart.

There can be no true mutual Love without spiritual Beauty on both sides. We speak of course of *spiritual* Love. All that is natural and animal will fade and wither and pass away. That which is spiritual will endure forever: Love and Beauty: Affection and Perfection.

The Song of Songs is unique in Scripture. It portrays Christ's intense, overflowing love for the Ecclesia (and hers for him) expressed intimately in the first person. It is so different from Psalms, which are largely Christ's feelings toward God: his struggles, his overcomings. Some Psalms come close, like Psalm 45, but with far less detail and intimacy—and expressed more distantly in the third person.

The Song expresses Christ's *need* for the Ecclesia: the motivation that his great love for her gives him. Does Christ have need? Does God have need? Are they not perfectly satisfied and self-sufficient? God is love, and the fullness of love requires an object worthy of it.

This is what God is creating, in infinite divine patience, through the travail of the ages. God loves all His creation. Not a sparrow falls unnoticed by Him Who lovingly oversees immensity and eternity. Ninety-nine percent of all the beauty of Creation— even on earth, let alone the vast universe is for Him alone, and is never seen by human eye. Snowflakes fell in untold myriads of trillions for thousands of years before the microscope revealed to man that each one is a glorious treasure of delicate, intricate beauty. And a snowflake is but for a moment. But the pure and holy perfection of the Redeemed will be the crowning beauty of all the works of God. The multitudinous Christ will be the most beautiful of all the beauties of the universe: the richest of eternal beauties, formed out of common clay.

This Song is the Song of Songs: the Supreme Song: the Song of Moses and the Lamb: the Song of the 144,000 on Mt. Zion.

Song—the outbursting and overflowing of rejoicing—is the inevitable product of Beauty and Love. The more we develop these spiritual qualities, the more irresistibly will our hearts be filled with rejoicing and song. This is a marvellous contrivance of Divine Wisdom. This Song is for teaching and/or for comfort. It is to teach us that these two spiritual qualities are what we must devote our lives to developing—

"Let us be glad and rejoice ... the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Bride hath MADE HERSELF READY" (Rev. 19:7).

The true Bride will have made herself ready. She will conform to the Beauty and Love herein portrayed. There will be a ready and prepared Bride, perfect in beauty, without spot or blemish, waiting to welcome her Lord. We see her

in this Song being greeted and praised and embraced by the Bridegroom, and invited to be with him for ever. If we fit into the picture; if we are in full harmony and compliance; if this is where all our heart and interest and labours and efforts centre, then this Song is for our joy and comfort. If, however, this is not so, and our minds and time and interests and activities are turned elsewhere, then this Song is for warning and instruction, and not for comfort at all. There is no comfort to be taken unless we are faithfully labouring to the utmost of our ability. There will be a Bride of perfect Beauty and Love. Whether, in that great Day, we are part of that Bride, or part of the vast multitude turned weeping away, depends entirely upon what we devote our life to.

The two characters of this Song are Solomon, the Peace Giver, and Shulamith, the Peace-Receiver. Both names are related to Peace. Peace is of one fabric with Love and Beauty. He is the Prince of Peace: that "*Peace of God*" transcending comprehension (Phil. 4:7); the "*Great Peace*" that they alone enjoy who manifest in all their lives that they "*love His law*" (Psa. 119:165); the Peace that none can take from them "*Peace with God*": life's ultimate consummation (Rom. 5:1).

The purpose of this Song is to develop the mind of the Spirit. This will not come naturally, however long we are just "in the Truth." It requires intense effort and study and meditation and practice—just like anything worthwhile does. What time and labour and trouble and care people will so eagerly put into getting the things of this life! — and then expect the infinitely greatest thing of all to be handed to them without effort. What blind and pitiful folly! This Song is to show what God requires of us: what the true Bride is, and must be, like. It is, like all Scripture, given—

"That the man of God may be perfect; thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:17).

If we feel we have already reached that point, then perhaps we can afford to give it less than our supreme effort and attention.

Chapter 4 is Christ's description of the Bride. All who fit this picture are of the Bride. All who do not are not. This is how he will meet her at the judgment seat:

"Come, ye blessed of my Father!" (Matt. 25:34)

As we examine this chapter, we are impressed with the intense minuteness of the inspection. For the Redeemed, it is a loving inspection that lauds every aspect of beauty, but for the rejected and unworthy it will be very much otherwise. The Bride is multitudinous. We must bear this in mind. It is addressed to each, individually—but only insofar as they recognize themselves as small parts of a great whole. We must be a unity: a harmonious, loving unity. Any lack of love, any petty-minded tendency to carping criticism of our brethren destroys the Beauty and Love, as far as the critic himself is concerned. There will still be the Bride, but those who criticize habitually and by nature write themselves off from participation in her beauty. Truly there must be faithful rebuke, when faithful rebuke is called for; but it must be by divine method and motive. The fleshly critic is outside of both.

"Behold thou art fair, my Love, behold thou art fair!" (v, 1)

Repetition: for surety, and emphasis, and importance. "Fair" is archaic English for beautiful. "Love" is rayah: fellow, companion, associate, friend—emphasizing unity of mind and purpose and character, for this is absolutely essential in Bride and Bridegroom. The Bridegroom goes on to praise seven features of the Perfect Bride: eyes, hair, teeth, lips, temples, neck, and breasts.

"Thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks."

This comes first. Eyes are light and understanding, discernment, perception. The dove is the symbol of the Spirit (Jn. 1:32), of purity, gentleness, harmlessness. It was the only sacrificial bird. Here is clarity of spiritual insight; discerning of the Truth; seeing with gentleness and understanding, and sympathetic desire to help and not destroy. It would appear that "*locks*" (*tzammah* "something fastened on") should be "*veil*": submission and modesty, the opposite of boldness. The Redeemed are represented as a woman, the wife and helpmeet of Christ the Head, because the ideal female characteristics are more suitable to the Redeemed than those of the male.

"Thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Mt. Gilead."

As specifically distinguished from the sheep, the goat is waywardness. But of itself, it was a clean and sacrificial animal. Here a flock of glossy, long-haired goats seen descending a hillside is a symbol of beauty and animation, as hair ripples and shines in the light as the head is moved. Long-not short-hair is the glory of the female (1 Cor. 11). Hair, like the veil, is covering and submission: but it is much more. It is personal beauty; it is glory; it is multitudinous unity with the Head. In Samson, it was strength. In the Nazarite, it was separateness and dedication. In the two women who ministered to Christ (Lk. 7:28; Jn. 11:2) it was loving, humble devotion and service. "Gilead" connotes fruitfulness and health. The name means "heap of witness" (Gen. 31:47). It was a place associated with balm and physicians: healing and ministration (Jer. 8:22).

"My teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing..." (v. 2).

Teeth have both great beauty and great usefulness. They are the aspect of eating the spiritual food that develops the spiritual mind: mastication, assimilation, rumination. Beautiful teeth indicate health, care, wise diet, and cleanliness. The word "shorn" (*kahtzav*), does not seem exactly correct. It is never so translated elsewhere, and is not the normal word for shorn. A fully shorn sheep does not give the impression of beauty. This word means "formed or cut to uniform shape and size." Its close variant is translated "of one size" as applied to the Cherubim in the Most Holy, and the Temple lavers (1 Kings. 6:25; 7:37). The idea is uniformity and balance.

The beauty of the Bride is in the balanced evenness of her eating of the Word, and of the balanced result in her character and conduct. How hard it is to keep a proper balance in our studies, in our judgments, in our treatment of others! How rare is balance: how rare is intense zeal without hyper-criticism: how rare is gentle kindness without weakness and compromise! But how important to the Bride's beauty in the eyes of her Lord. It can only come by balanced assimilation of the Word, day in and day out, eschewing crotchets. The "washing" is quite self-explanatory: washing in the blood of the Lamb, washing by the Word. Cleanliness in every aspect of mind and body is one of the primary and fundamental lessons of the law of God. "Be ye holy even as I am holy" is the urgent, constant theme.

". . . whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them."

The sense seems rather to be

"Whereof every one is twinned, and none is bereaved."

This word for "twin" (*tah'am*) is rendered "coupled together" of the boards of the Tabernacle (Ex. 26:24); and "barren" (*shakkool*), is always elsewhere translated "bereaved" or "robbed" (Jer. 18:21; Hos. 13:8; etc.).

It seems to further emphasize the balanced completeness of the full, even set of teeth: none missing: all perfect pairs. Gaps in the teeth destroy the beauty and unity, and impair the chewing process—denoting wasted time, insufficient attention, and unbalanced, crotchety study.

"My lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely" (v. 3).

Here certainly is speech, a very vital aspect of the Beauty or otherwise—of those who would be the Bride. "Thread" may seem too thin a conception for full, rounded lips of beauty; but the thought seems to be rather the delicate outline of form and shape. "Scarlet," like the lips themselves, can be used in two very different ways. Scarlet is sin (Isa. 1: 18); but throughout the sacrificial ordinances, scarlet is rather salvation from sin by the shedding of blood. Scarlet wool was used in the cleansing of the leper, and in the preparation of the red heifer water of purification (Lev. 14:4,9; Num. 19:6). And we remember Rahab's "scarlet thread" of salvation (Jam. 2:18). The mouth is both the primary source of sin, and the means of escape from it—

"With the mouth, confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10).

"The lips of the righteous feed many" (Prov. 10:21).

"By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:37).

The beautiful mouth of the Bride gives forth only *"the law of kindness"* (Prov. 31:26), for she is the Virtuous Woman, the Ideal Wife. Criticism is a very easy habit, and it is usually indulged in by those who do little, speaking about those who do much. It is a miserable device to obscure our own shortcomings. But the beautiful Bride's speech is *"comely,"* both in content and in manner, for she knows that *"every idle word"* will be called to account at the last great Day, as Christ warns (Matt. 12:36). What a dreadful Day of reckoning we may be preparing for ourselves!

"Thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks (veil)."

The temple is the seat of thought, judgment, character, and resolution. God said He would make Ezekiel's forehead strong against his adversaries (Ezek. 3:8). The forehead is where the sealing of God's servants must occur (Rev. 7:3; 22:4)—the transforming of the mind, and the stamping of it with the indelible impress of that which is pure and holy and divine. The veiled temple is modesty: not bold or brazen. Again, it may be the beauty of the Spirit beneath the veil of the flesh. Pomegranate is fruit, and it is a very special fruit in the divine imagery: the essence of all fruit. It was on the border of the High Priest's robe (Ex. 39:24), with the golden bells of salvation and praise. And four hundred brazen pomegranates capped the two great pillars of Stability and Strength—Jachin and Boaz—at the entrance of the Temple (1 Kings 7:42). Cut through transversely, the pomegranate has twelve sections, arranged around the centre like the camps of the twelve Tribes around the Tabernacle. It is full of white, pearl-like seeds in a red fluid, and seems to represent a multitudinous unity purified in the blood of the Lamb.

The eastern pomegranate is light golden brown with a tinge of pink, and would not unfittingly represent the temple of the Bride. But the word *"piece"* (*pelakh*), which implies "to break, pierce or cut," points rather to the interior of the fruit. At first consideration, it may not seem appropriate to compare the temple to an opened pomegranate, with its bright red and white; but the thought is not a direct comparison of appearance, but rather the impression of the beauty of the brilliant, jewel-like shining freshness that is revealed within when the pomegranate is opened up. This is especially fitting in that the temple represents the mind within. Again, reverting to the veil (of the flesh?), the pure white forehead showing through the heavy meshes of a red veil could have the striking appearance of a freshly opened pomegranate.

"Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armoury" (v. 4).

The idea is grace and stateliness and firmness and strength: labour and steadfastness in the Truth's warfare: honour, freedom, and joy. The neck is used in various symbols. A stiff neck is obstinacy; a stretched-forth neck is wantonness; a bowed neck is servitude. To put the neck to the work is zeal and faithful labour, and that is part of the picture here. An erect neck is freedom and joy; and chains about the neck are glory and honour, again parts of this picture. The neck connects the Head to the Body, therefore, above all things, it must be firm and strong like the tower of David. The word for *"armoury"* (*talpeeyoth*), appears only here, and is given many interpretations. It seems to mean "tall and slender."

"Whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men."

It was customary to hang rows of brilliantly-polished shields on the central defence tower of a city: often trophies of victory from conquered enemies. From a distance they would appear as chains of gold about a neck. Here is the aspect of both spiritual and actual warfare. Victory is the hall-mark of the Bride: it marks her past and her future

"To him that overcometh (that is, overcometh himself, sin, the flesh) will I give power over the nations" (Rev. 2:26).

The victor shall have the victory.

"Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, that feed among the lilies" (v. 5).

The breast is the seat of the emotions. It also represents sustenance and fruitfulness, and nurture and care of the young and helpless. Perhaps maturity, and gentle, concerned, loving consideration and provision for others, are the principal indications here. And motherhood: the New Jerusalem, mother city of the Millennium, nurturing all the

earth in the law of the Lord. Isaiah's glorious closing picture is—

"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem... that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations" (Isa. 66:10-11).

The two-fold aspect irresistibly points to Jewish and Gentile components of the Bride. In fact, the whole natural body is almost entirely two-fold and symmetrical: though its fundamental unity is emphasized by its most vital elements—the mind and heart—being single. There must be just one mind and heart in the multitudinous Body. Lilies are the Temple flowers, the divine flowers, as pomegranates are the corresponding fruit. Lilies appear to have been purple. The name (*shohshahn*) means "shine," or "to rejoice."

"Roe" is *tzvee*. This same word is usually translated "glory" or "beauty." The animal is apparently so named because of its striking beauty of appearance and motion. It indicates speed and grace and sure-footedness in high places: the army of the Redeemed who will *"tread down the wicked"* under their hooves, or *"straight feet"* (Mal. 4:2-3; Ezek. 1:7). Roes truly are not warlike animals, but neither is a lamb, symbol of their Commander. These are clean and peaceful animals, warring to establish righteousness and true, permanent peace.

"Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense" (v. 6).

Myrrh is red. It means "bitter." It is medicinal and purifying. It symbolizes sorrow and sacrifice. It was associated with burial. Frankincense is white, and symbolizes prayer and praise. Christ's custom was to go up at night into a mountain to pray. In its fullness, Calvary and Moriah comprise historically the "mountain of sacrifice and hill of prayer." It was a going up from the valley of the flesh to the mountain top of the Mercy-seat and Shekinah Glory.

"Thou art all fair, my Love: there is no spot in thee" (v. 7).

Are we part of the Bride? Is it our utmost and constant effort to be WORTHY to be so, to the exclusion of everything else? If not, why not? Where is wisdom? Where is plain ordinary common sense? There IS a Bride, and she IS ever spotless. She was made white and pure in the blood of the Lamb, and she is kept spotless by dedicated, loving obedience; and striving, and repentance, and prayer. The wise will give their whole lives and energies to becoming and being part of this glorious and joyous community. That is what manifests that they are the wise. All who do not are the foolish.

"He sanctifieth and cleanseth it by the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Ecclesia, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be HOLY AND WITHOUT BLEMISH" (Eph. 5:26-27).

"Keep yourselves in the love of God ... Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you FAULTLESS before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 21-24).

"Come with me from Lebanon, my Bride, with me from Lebanon" (v. 8).

Repetition again: sureness and urgency. A new name for the first time in this Song: My Bride. And a wonderful, eternal, intimate invitation: Come with me! There are two views of interpretation of this verse. Is it "from" Lebanon, as away from something to be abandoned, as the high places of the earth? Or is it, as in the latter part of the verse, "Come look from Lebanon": an ascending to, and viewing of, the inheritance?

It would appear to be the latter. Lebanon was part of the promised inheritance. God says—

"I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon" (Zech. 10:10).

And in two other places in this chapter (vs. 11, 15) Lebanon is spoken of as part of the beauty and the blessing: *"the smell of Lebanon," "streams from Lebanon."* Lebanon means "white and pure."

"Look from Amana (Truth) and Shenir (Light) and Hermon (the 'Holy Mount')."

Hermon was almost certainly the "holy mount" (2 Pet. 1: 18) of the Transfiguration. In Psalm 133 the "dew of Hermon" is associated with "life for evermore" and unity among brethren. These are the new and purified "high places of the earth" to which the Bride is exalted: the New Heavens.

"From the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards."

These are the former dominions of the evil beast nations, the present Sin-Powers of the world— for ages the ravenous marauders of the earth— but now subdued and pacified under the "straight feet" of the Lamb and the Roes, when the meek inherit the earth. Truly—

"Mt. Zion is more glorious than the mountains of prey" (Psa. 76:2-4).

"The leopard shall lie down with the kid ... the lion shall eat straw ... they shall not hurt nor destroy in all My HOLY MOUNTAIN, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:6-9).

"Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister-Bride" (V. 9).

Literally, "hearted me"— that is, given me heart, or taken away my heart: probably including both thoughts. Strength of heart and oneness of heart are the basic ideas. Here is overflowing intensity of affection and emotion of Christ for his brethren and sisters. This is the satisfaction of the travail of his soul (Isa. 53:11); the "joy set before him" for which he endured the suffering and the shame (Heb. 12:2). It is the Bride's beauty that overcomes him. Let us note this well. If there is no beauty, there can be no love. Sympathy, perhaps, and pity, and kindly sorrow for what might have been. But no eternal, spiritual Love. That is only for those who concern themselves above all else to develop the Beauty.

Another new name. "Bride" alone is inadequate. Their relationship is far more wonderful and intimate and joyous than any human relationship. "Sister-Bride" approaches closer, for it combines two of the deepest forms of human love. He is not only the strong and glorious Bridegroom: he is the protective, caring Elder Brother. And elsewhere the Redeemed are called his "children" (Heb. 2:13), and his "seed" (Isa. 53:10)— drawing into the type the beauty and tenderness of a third deep form of human love: a triple bond, a three-fold cord: Bride, Sister, Daughter. The same family and background and parentage.

"Thou hast overcome me with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck."

In the fullness of their intimacy and mutual understanding and heart-harmony, the slightest loving movement of eye or head is sufficient to arouse overflowing affection. How little is needed to convey the deepest meaning when heart is wholly knit to heart! The Bride's beauty overcomes Christ. Are we part of the Bride? — the select few chosen from the ages. Do we realize the effort and devotion required?

"How beautiful is thy love, my Sister-Bride: how much better than wine" (v. 10)

How infinitely more reviving and gladdening and satisfying is the spiritual than the natural! This is "pleasure for evermore" (Psa. 16:11): no brief, passing, cheating excitement whose tinsel is soon faded and dull, but eternal permanence: well worth waiting for.

"And the smell of thine ointments than all spices!"

Ointment in Proverbs (27:9), is the sweet intimate counsel of soul to soul. "Ointment" here is the common word for "oil"— *shemen*—the oil of gladness, of light, of praise, worship and thanksgiving: purifying, healing, dedicating, consecrating. Sacrifice, praise, worship, and thanksgiving are the sweet savours unto God.

"Thy lips drop as the honeycomb" (v. 11).

Her lips always overflow with golden sweetness, because that is the pure and serene state of the heart within: kindness, encouragement to others, true spiritual counsel and guidance. We are not appointed judges. We are constantly warned against habitual, unnecessary judging. Truly there are times we must judge, but very humbly and

reluctantly—not by steady, thoughtless, unfeeling fleshly habit.

Honey does not just happen effortlessly. It is the precious product of prodigious diligence and labour. A bee travels hundreds and hundreds of miles in its industrious lifetime, just to gather a total of a small spoonful of honey. The bee doesn't make the honey. It is the free and gracious gift of God. But the bee has to collect it, and prepare it, and dispense it. It brings no nourishment and sweetness just left in the flower.

"And the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon."

Aromatic trees abounded in the verdant mountains of Lebanon. God says through Hosea, of these coming, joyful days—

"I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall blossom as the lily ... his branches shall spread: his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon" (Hos. 14:5-6).

It is the life-giving dew from God that brings forth the fruition of all His Creation, to His glory:

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13).

The aromatic garments of the Bride are her *"adorning for her husband"*: righteousness, holiness, kindness, gentleness: worship and obedience and loving service—

"The King's Daughter is all-glorious WITHIN. Her clothing is of wrought gold. She shalt be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework" (Psa. 45:13-14).

"A garden enclosed is my Sister-Bride, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed" (v. 12).

A garden is the epitome of organized beauty and productiveness and fruitfulness and new life, and is a perfect type of the glorified Bride. An area is carefully selected for site and favourable conditions, separated, marked off and protected with a wall or fence, cleared, levelled, the soil tested, enriched, broken up, worked over, sown, watered, weeded, tended, sprayed, pruned—to bring forth at last to the patient gardener an abundance of beauty of sight and smell and sound (for living creatures are part of a garden), and bountiful provision of food and healing medicines. The Bride is enclosed, shut up, sealed: not selfishly, but for integrity, and purity, and eventual universal blessing. Safe, guarded, separated, made secure, sealed, and identified as belonging to Christ, and Christ alone.

"Thy plants—SHOOTS, OFFSPRING—are an orchard of pomegranates" (v. 13).

The original for *"orchard"* is *pardais*: a "paradise of pomegranates." Constant emphasis is on fruitfulness, productiveness, bringing forth bountifully for the sustenance and benefit of others: healing, sustaining, giving nourishment and joy. This is the essence of the Truth, and of those who are truly in it. Are we of the Bride?

"With pleasant fruits, camphire, spikenard, saffron, calamus, cinnamon, frankincense, myrrh and aloes, with all chief spices."

These all have their memory-stirring connotations in Scripture, and bring many things to mind. *Camphire* is *kopher*, the same word that is translated *"atonement"*— actually meaning "cover" or "cleanse": the golden Ark-cover or Mercy-seat. It is apparently so named because from it was extracted a beautiful golden dye or "covering." *Spikenard* takes us to quiet Mary's loving ministrations, when the odour filled the house (Jn. 12:3); she alone of all that company seeming to realize the significance and solemnity of the occasion. *Calamus* and *cinnamon* were ingredients of the holy anointing oil, by which kings, priests, and prophets were consecrated to the service of God: consecration and service: divinely bestowed authority and dignity. *Myrrh* and *aloes* were then needed, loving contribution of the once-fearful but suddenly bold Nicodemus, in an hour of darkness and sorrow.

"Awake, O north wind; come, thou south wind: blow upon my garden that the spices may flow out" (v. 16).

The north wind may be pleasantly cooling, or it may be bitterly cold. The south wind may be comforting and warming, or it may be burning and scorching. Cold and heat, affliction and comfort, smiting judgment and loving

care, all have their place. Plants need the strengthening and variety of extremes of weather—up to a point: to stir up, to activate, to bring to life and fruition. God giveth the increase.

"Let my Beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruit."

So ends the chapter, and so similarly ends the whole Song—

"Make haste, my Beloved!" (8:14) ...

"Even so come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:14)

"Let him eat his pleasant fruit." Will he find fruit? We know he will: but shall we have participated in providing for his joy the "*pleasant fruits*" described in this chapter? Can we join in this appeal?

Verse 1 of chapter 5 actually belongs at the end of this chapter

"I am come into my garden, my Sister-Bride. I have gathered my spice. I have eaten my honey. I have drunk my wine. Eat, O friends! Drink abundantly, O Beloved!"

Here is the climax: the consummation: the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. May we all have the wisdom to choose the narrow, lonely, but glorious path that will safely lead us there!—G.V.G.

The Good Confession
ELABORATED IN
A CONVERSATION
BETWEEN A CHRISTADELPHIAN & A BELIEVING STRANGER
DESIRING TO BE IMMERSSED INTO THE NAME OF CHRIST

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS
Printed in the Christadelphian (Ambassador) Magazine, June 1868
Published as a booklet, July 1869

Prefaced by a few remarks in defence of the practice of
EXAMINING CANDIDATES FOR OBEDIENCE

NO one admitting that the validity of immersion depends upon a *belief of the Gospel preached by the apostles* can consistently deny the propriety and necessity of an endeavour on the part of those to whom the application for immersion may be made, to ascertain whether this pre-requisite qualification actually exists.

It is a mistake to draw a parallel between the apostolic era and our own time, as to the *particular method* of arriving at this knowledge. The circumstances are so totally different as to preclude a comparison.

The apostles came on the ground with a fresh, and (among those receiving it) uncontested doctrine concerning Christ. There was a direct issue between them and all who opposed them. The question was one upon which a wide and palpable difference existed, and in reference to which an individual's position could be defined in a word. The apostles proclaimed that *Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ*, on the strength of his having risen—of which they declared themselves the personal witnesses. The enemy contended that Jesus of Nazareth was an impostor, and that his alleged resurrection was a contrivance by which his dead body had been stolen. There was no middle ground in such a controversy.

A man was either a friend or an enemy. If he were a friend, few words were needed to define his position. The simple statement that he *believed Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God*, covered all the ground occupied by the Gospel as amplified in the apostolic definition (Acts 8:12)—

"The things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ."

The case stands very differently now, when nominal believers associate with their historical belief doctrines subversive of the scheme of truth with which the name of Christ was—without question or the possibility of mistake—identified in apostolic days. It ceases to be sufficient for a man to say he believes in Christ, unless he is able at the same time to define what is the *truth concerning Christ*.

The simple confession of belief in Christ does not bring with it the guarantee it did in apostolic times, that the *doctrines* embodied in Christ are received. It had ceased to be sufficient so early as the close of the apostolic era, for we find John, in his old age, laying it down as a necessity to—

"Try the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world"
(1 John 4:1).

—and insisting upon it as a duty to receive no one in fellowship who did not bring with him the *truth involved* in the profession of faith in Christ (2 John 10)—a direction which had reference to those professing a *nominal* belief in Christ.

In our day, the necessity for acting on John's principle is imperative. The apostasy has held sway for centuries, and still reigns with undiminished power. And through its influence there exists around us a state of society in which (while so far as words go there is universal profession of belief in Christ) there is an absolute & virulent rejection of the *truth* of which Christ is the centrepiece & embodiment.

We must, therefore, dispense with mere forms and phrases, and address ourselves to the work of gauging the actual relation of things. We must find out the truth of a man's profession when he claims fellowship with us, and the genuineness of his faith when he asks to be immersed. And this nowadays cannot be done without crucial test; for words have become so flexible' and mere phrases so current, that a form of words may be used without any conception of the idea which it originally and apostolically represented. The principal pains must, therefore, be taken to ascertain the *substance* of a man's belief, rather than to get him into a set form of expressing it.

But some hold that examination is altogether unscriptural, & that it is a practice savouring of priestly arrogance. Those who think so look at the matter from a wrong point of view. If the position taken up by the examining party implied the assumption that the efficacy of the candidate's immersion depended on the administration or sanction of the examiner, the objection would hold good; but this would never be the attitude of enlightened believers of the truth. They would say to anyone asking to be baptised—

"We are under the law of Christ. That law requires a man seeking baptism to be a believer of the Gospel; and it requires of US not to receive into our fellowship those who do not believe the truth, on the pain of being held responsible for their guilt.

"You ask us to baptise you. As a matter of allegiance to Christ, and defence of our own position, we must ascertain whether you believe the truth. We cannot be parties to your baptism if you do not receive the truth. We should be misleading you, and implicating ourselves."

We cannot impart validity to immersion by compliance, nor can we vitiate it by withholding countenance. But, as a matter of the commonest order and self-protection, we are bound to ascertain whether a man applying for immersion believes the truth of the Gospel or not.

Jesus associates baptism with belief (Mark 16:16); and it is our duty to him to see that this association exists, so far as we are called upon to sanction a profession of his name. Philip is recorded to have observed this precaution in the case of the eunuch (Acts 8:37). Paul at Ephesus re-immersed 12 men, on *putting their faith on a right footing* (Acts 19: 3-5). In ALL recorded cases of baptism BELIEF PRECEDED IT, and it is an outrage on common sense to suppose that the parties immersing took no steps to ascertain the existence of that belief. The dictates of common sense coincide with apostolic example and scriptural induction.

Pentecost (when 3000 were baptised in one day) will be instanced by the objector as a case in which the pre-immersional examination we contend for could not have taken place. It is true there was no examination on that occasion, but it was not necessary. Examination is herein contended for as a *necessity*,

not as a *ceremony*. Where special circumstances rendered it superfluous, it would not be enforced by wise men.

The special circumstances in the case of Pentecost were of this character. In the first place, the 3000 were composed of—

"JEWS, *devout men* of every nation under heaven" (Acts 2: 5).

—who had come to Jerusalem to worship. They were men grounded in the elements of the Law and the prophets, in a state of reverent appreciation to the extent of their understanding. They were, therefore, men in whom constitution & culture conspired to make them ready & fruitful recipients of the good seed.

Secondly, the only question on which their minds had to be changed was the identity of the Messiah. They looked for the Messiah, and in great part believed the truth concerning the Messiah. But they did not know the Messiah had come.

They did not believe that the Nazarene, publicly executed as a criminal some weeks before their arrival in Jerusalem, was he. Hence, the point aimed at was to convince them that Jesus was the Christ (Acts 2:36)' This was successfully accomplished by the visible outpouring of the Holy Spirit, combined with the testimony of the apostles. And their confession of faith was limited by the circumstances of the moment, to the admission that the man whom the nation had 'crucified & slain' was 'Lord and Christ.'

Thirdly, we read that Peter with '*many words*' taught & exhorted them (Acts 2:40). His words were words of authority, and therefore the implicit reception of what he declared stood in the room of the examination which—in the absence of authority—is forced upon us in our deserted times.

These were so many circumstances which excluded the examination contended for under present conditions. They made such examination unnecessary and, indeed, highly out of place. But what was unnecessary then may be necessary now. None of the circumstances of the Pentecostal triumph attend the proclamation of the truth today. If our case had been the apostolic case, the apostolic practice would not have been the Pentecostal method. They would have advertised, and lectured, and examined. The apostles always showed a sensible regard to exigencies (Acts 6:2—appointment of deacons).

Good sense consists in the adaptation of means to ends. In the hands of good sense, methods are flexible. Pedantry adheres to forms and methods, to the sacrifice of the practical object involved. We cannot, in matters of pure expediency, imitate the apostles *without* the circumstances and gifts of the apostles.

What was the necessity then may be impracticable now, and vice versa. "All things common," for instance, was a necessity among a multitude of disciples in one city at a time of persecution; and it was practical *with inspired men at the head*. But now it is neither necessary nor practicable.

On the other hand, critical examination was not necessary in the days when the issues of truth were simple, and when the voice of authority was present to decide them. But now, with a change on both points, there is of necessity a change of attitude on the part of those contending for the Faith.

The answer given to the case of the Pentecostal believers applies to every case that may be cited. Philip taught the eunuch *minutely* (Acts 8:35), & all the eunuch had to do was to believe what was taught him, and signify his belief in an intelligible fashion, however short. 'Examination' would have been out of place. But there is no Philip now to teach with divine dogmatism, so we have to 'examine.'

The same with Cornelius. Peter was aware he and his friends *knew the truth* (Acts 10:37). All he had to do was to direct them how to do under an arrangement which—for the first time—admitted Gentiles to a covenant relation with God. And all Cornelius and his friends had to do was to obey the directions given. Examination would have been absurd. But there is no Peter now whose word will be taken with unquestioning faith. And so we have to examine, to see if people comprehend the written truth.

In apostolic days, there was divine authority present in every case to direct, and perfect submission to authority on the part of those who were obedient. This constitutes the great difference between that time and

our time. And with a difference of circumstance, there is of necessity a difference of method of procedure in the matter, *but the result aimed at and secured is THE SAME*, the induction of men and women into Christ *by the belief and obedience of the truth*.

The mode in our day found effectual for ascertaining whether an applicant for immersion is qualified by a scriptural apprehension of the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ is exemplified by the following—

CONVERSATION

1. So you have come to the conclusion that the doctrines believed by the Christadelphians constitute the truth of the Gospel? I have.

2. What effect does this conviction produce in your mind? A desire to be immersed.

3. Why do you desire to be immersed? Because Christ has commanded it.

4. But what do you think immersion will do for you? It will unite me to Christ. I believe it is the way appointed for men to put on the name of Christ, and obtain the remission of their sins.

5. Then you do not think you have any connection with Christ at present? No. I consider I am in Adam in my present position, and therefore under condemnation to return to the dust for ever.

6. Do you suppose baptism will unite an ignorant person to Christ? No; we must believe the truth.

7. Then it is not the mere act of immersion in water that does anything for us? Oh no. It is its connection with our belief in the truth.

8. But even where the truth is believed, you don't suppose there is any virtue in the water of baptism? No; I look on it as an act of obedience which God has appointed as the ceremony by which a believer may be united to Christ. The union I believe to be one to be effected in the mind of Christ and of God, as the result of their recognition of the obedience rendered.

9. Do you believe union in Christ can take place in our dispensation without this ceremony? No; I believe whatever God appoints is essential.

10. The importance of such a matter you would consider to arise from the fact of God's requiring it, and not on account of any inherent quality in the process or the element employed? Precisely so. Whatever God might appoint I should consider necessary. I believe as Paul says, He appoints foolish things in the working out of His purposes toward men. Baptism I believe to be the way He has appointed for the believer to pass out of Adam * into Christ, and it is for that reason I desire to be baptised.

** It will be noted that bro. Roberts uses expressions that later were given a different, mechanical interpretation to support an unsound theory. Bro. Roberts repudiated the incorrect meaning charged against his words, & later was careful to express himself in different words to avoid giving the appearance of supporting the new theory.*

(See footnote, 1978 Berean, p. 193)

11. You use the term 'believe'. What do you mean by it? I mean a person who believes the Gospel.

12. You are aware that the orthodox bodies of religious people profess to preach and believe the Gospel? Yes.

13. Do you think they do so in reality? No; I thought they did, at one time.

14. Then the question for us to consider on the present occasion will be: What is the gospel that a man must believe to make baptism of any use to him? Certainly; that is what I desire to come to.

15. To assist you in coming to it, allow me to call your attention to the Gospel that men & women believed in apostolic times before baptism. I suppose that you would admit *that* to be the Gospel we ought to believe in our day? Certainly.

16. I refer to what is said of Paul when a prisoner in Rome: that he "preached the Kingdom of God, and taught those things that concern our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 26:31) &, as showing that faith in these 'things' was pre-immersional, we read (Acts 8:12) that "WHEN the people of Samaria believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God & the Name of Jesus Christ, THEY WERE BAPTISED BOTH MEN & WOMEN."

Now, do you recognise the necessity for believing 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God & the Name of Jesus Christ before immersion? To follow apostolic guidance, which I believe to be the only safe guide in the present day, I am bound to say I do.

17. Then the object of our conversation will be to ascertain whether you, desiring immersion, believe these things? That is what I desire to be put to the test.

18. Do you suppose that a man can believe what he does not know? Certainly not.

19. So the enquiry tonight will necessarily be as to the state of your knowledge? I have come here tonight with that idea.

20. To proceed to this enquiry: you will have observed there are 2 classes of 'things' in the summary of the Gospel given us in the apostolic record? Yes: 'the Kingdom of God' and 'the Name of Jesus Christ.

21. Now suppose we take these 2 departments of Gospel truth separately? I should think that would be the better plan.

22. You will observe the things concerning the Kingdom of God are put first? Yes, always.

23. What idea is represented to your mind by the phrase 'Kingdom of God'? Suppose any of your former religious associates were to ask you such a question, how would you answer?

Of course, I have been accustomed to look upon the Kingdom of God very differently from what I do now. I used to consider that it meant the reign of God in the heart, & had no reference to the state of affairs existing among mankind. If I were asked by my former religious associates what I understand by it now, I should say that I expected God to set up a Kingdom on earth, at the coming of Christ, that should destroy all other kingdoms, & last for ever.

24. You understand the Kingdom of God to mean a political institution by which all the earth will be divinely governed when it is established? Precisely: that is my idea; that it will be a real literal administration of divine authority in political affairs, &, indeed, in all matters that affect the well-being of man and the glory of God.

25. This idea you have formed from reading the Scriptures? Yes. If necessary I could refer to portions of the Scriptures which plainly teach it.

26. There will be no necessity. The object of this conversation is not to try if you can demonstrate the truth, but to find out if you believe it. For once. assertion without proof will be conclusive. You may well say 'for once,' for assure you I don't find it so among my friends, who think I have gone wrong in my head for embracing such doctrines.

27. Our next enquiry must turn upon the 'things concerning the Kingdom of God,' which of course can only mean the particulars about it, or the details that God has been pleased to disclose on the subject? Yes, I presume the 'things concerning' can have no other meaning.

28. On that presumption, let me ask to begin with: Has the Kingdom of God any relation to anything God has done in the past? Do I quite understand the question?

29. Is there any connection between what God is going to do, and what He has already done? I understand the Kingdom will be quite a new thing in the earth.

30. You will understand me better, perhaps, if I ask if God has at anytime in the past, in any part of the world, interfered in the affairs of men? Do you refer to His dealings with the Jews?

31. I do. Oh Yes, I believe He formed them a nation for Himself by calling Abraham & multiplying his posterity, suffering them to be enslaved in Egypt, & afterward redeeming them from the bondage of Pharaoh, & putting them through a 40 years' discipline in the wilderness, & settling them in the Land of Promise, under laws delivered by the hand of Moses.

32. Were the Israelites obedient to the laws thus given them? For a while they were, but afterwards they were disobedient, observing the manners & customs of the heathen nations.

33. What was the consequence? God gave them over to great calamities of famine and war.

34. Did these calamities destroy them? Not all at once. They were many times delivered on becoming repentant. For 100s of years, God had patience with them, chastening and succouring them according to their condition.

35. What ultimately became of them? After the rejection of Jesus, their nation was entirely broken up by the Romans and they were scattered to every part of the globe.

36. While they occupied the land of Canaan as a nation, under the constitution of things delivered to them by Moses, how would you describe their Kingdom? The 'Kingdom of Israel,' wasn't it?

37. I mean, would you consider it was a human kingdom? It was a Kingdom composed of human beings, but I should certainly consider it a divine Kingdom, seeing its laws, and origin, and kings, and people, were of God.

38. Then it would be a Kingdom of God on the earth? Certainly. I now see your meaning. It would be that to which Jesus refers when he said to the Pharisees, "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

39. Now my question is: Will the Kingdom of God to be set up at the coming of Christ have any connection with the Kingdom of God that has already existed? Certainly. The Kingdom of God to be set up at the coming of Christ will be the Kingdom of Israel restored. I did not at first perceive your meaning.

40. To try you a little: How can the ancient Kingdom of Israel be restored when Paul says that the First Covenant (by which of course he means the constitution of things in Israel based upon the Covenant made with them at Sinai) was to pass away as a thing that had waxed old, and for which there was no more use? There you place me in a little difficulty. Let me think a moment. The Prophets plainly foretell the return of the Jews from their present captivity. It cannot be that Paul would say anything inconsistent with the prophets.

41. No: He quotes the prophets as his authority for the statement I have referred to. It is in Hebrews. is it not?

42. Yes: Hebrews 8:7-13; 10:15-17. Oh, I think I see it. The first constitution of things under which the Jews existed as the Kingdom of God has been done away with, & will not be re-established. When they are restored, a New Covenant will be made with them, "not according to the covenant (as God says by Jeremiah) that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt."

43. That suggests another point on which I would ask a question or two. You are aware God made certain Promises to Abraham? Yes, I now see those Promises to be the basis of the Gospel.

44. Can you name the features or points in the Promise? That he should have all the land of Canaan for an everlasting inheritance.

45. **Do you think that it is the literal land of Canaan?** I do, because Paul, referring to Abraham coming into it, calls it the ‘Land of Promise’ (Hebrews 11: 9), & says he should ‘afterwards receive it for an inheritance.’
46. **Did Abraham receive the ‘Land of Promise’?** No, he was a stranger in it all his days & Stephen says (Acts 7:5) that “God gave him none inheritance in it, not so much as to set his foot on, yet He promised He would give it to him for a possession.”
47. **Then what would you say must happen before the Promise can be fulfilled?** Abraham must rise from the dead, & inherit the Land of Promise. Then it is, I believe, that he will be seen in the position depicted by Jesus, when he speaks of many coming from the east, west, north, and south, and ‘sitting down with Abraham, Isaac & Jacob in the Kingdom of God.
48. **What also was promised to Abraham?** It would seem that resurrection & eternal life were in substance included in the Promise of the land.
49. **Doubtless; but my present question relates to what is *expressed* in the Promises?** That all nations should be blessed in him and his Seed.
50. **You are of course aware that his Seed is conjoined with him in the promise of the Land as well?** Yes, I have distinctly noticed that.
51. **Whom do you understand by his ‘Seed’?** Well, Paul leaves me no room for a mere opinion on the subject. He says “Now to Abraham & his Seed were the Promises made. He saith not ‘And to seeds’ as of many, but as of one: ‘and to thy Seed’—WHICH IS CHRIST.” I am, therefore, bound to believe that the Promise unites Jesus with Abraham in the assurance of a future possession in the Land of Israel, & the blessing of all nations in them.
52. **Have you observed the statement in the Promise, “Thy Seed shall possess the gate of his enemies” (Genesis 22: 17)?** I have.
53. **What do you understand by it?** That Jesus should take forcible possession of the power of all who are opposed to him.
54. **Do you see any parallel in it to the statement in Revelation 11: 15: “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord & of his Christ”?** I do indeed. The statement in Revelation seems a very good amplification of the meaning of the pledge given Abraham that his Seed should possess the gate of his enemies.
55. **Can you recall any other feature in the Promise to Abraham?** I cannot.
56. **Anything as to posterity?** Oh yes, that his seed should become more numerous than the sand of the sea. There would seem to be an individual seed & a multitudinous seed mentioned in the Promises.
57. **No doubt it is so, just as there is an individual Christ and a multitudinous Christ in the ‘One Body’ of his people, when perfectly made one with him at the resurrection.** But I suppose that the promise that his seed should become numerous refers to the Jews in the past.
58. **No doubt it *includes* them, in their past increase, but it also extends as far as the Promise itself is intended to reach, & we have seen that that goes into the endless future.** I can see that that must be so, so that the Jewish nation is destined to become a very numerous people.
59. **When you consider the great multitude of them destined to be raised to inherit the Kingdom under Christ, and the great increase that will take place among the Jews after the flesh when their kingdom is restored, it follows**

that the Promise to Abraham of an incomputable progeny will be fulfilled in the absolute sense. This will appear in a still stronger light when we come to consider what will take place beyond the Kingdom.

The immediate question I wished to bring under your notice was this: When Israel was settled in the Land of Promise as a nation, did that settlement have its basis on the Promise made to Abraham? No; I should scarcely say it had, although God did promise that they should be released from the bondage of the Egyptians. Their settlement in the Land took place under the Law that came into force by Moses, and the stability of it was made dependent upon obedience to that Law.

60. You reason rightly in the matter, and I should like to call your attention to the exact coincidence between your reasoning & that of Paul in Galatians 3. He says, "If the inheritance be of the Law, then it is no more of promise, but God gave it to Abraham BY PROMISE." You perceive how completely this proves that the Promises to Abraham are to be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God? Of that I have not now the slightest doubt. I have noticed that Paul says the Gospel was preached unto Abraham, and I can see—with the new view I have received of the Gospel—how the Promises to Abraham are in reality the very Gospel preached by Christ & the apostles, only in a more condensed form.

61. Before going farther, I would call your attention to another Promise—another Covenant, in fact—which has a bearing upon the Kingdom whose establishment we are considering. You have noticed in the New Testament the statement, occurring several times, that Jesus is to sit on the throne of his father David? I have; & before I heard of the Christadelphians, I never could understand it.

62. Have you noticed any connection between this statement & any covenant that God ever made with anybody? I have noticed that Peter says God swore to David with an oath that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh He would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne (Acts 2:30).

63. Are you aware of any Covenant to that effect having been made with David? Yes, I read of it in the history of David, & several times in the Psalms.

64. What do you understand it to mean? Why, that David was to have a descendant who should be Son of God, & who should occupy David's throne for ever.

65. That descendant you understand to be Jesus Christ? Yes, it is so declared, and I believe it.

66. Then what idea is represented to your mind by the proposition that Jesus is to sit on David's throne? The idea expressed by the words. I can give you no better answer: perhaps I don't understand what you mean.

67. You are aware that orthodox teachers explain it to signify the position Christ now occupies at the right hand of God? Yes, I am aware of that; but I no longer receive that view. I understand Jesus will occupy the throne of David in a literal or political sense.

68. You don't, of course, suppose that the actual seat called a throne upon which David used to sit will be occupied by Jesus? No; I do not understand the word 'throne,' when used in a political sense, to apply to a bench or seat of any kind, but to the *royal position*. I believe, as applied to Jesus, that the phrase 'throne of David' has the same meaning that I find it has in other parts of Scripture, where it said Solomon & others 'sat on the throne of his father David.' They did not use the same seat, but they occupied the same position.

69. Then you expect Jesus to occupy the same position as David occupied? I do.

70. What position was it? King of the Jews.

71. Was he king for himself, or by his own appointing? No; he was king for God's nation, & was appointed to that position by God.

72. You are aware of the present position of the Kingdom of David? Yes, it can scarcely be said to exist, The land, of course, is there, & the nation exists in a state of dispersion, but there is no Kingdom.

73. Then what do you consider must happen before Jesus can sit on the throne of David? I consider that in the first place, Jesus must return from heaven and appear on earth, and take possession of the power that belongs to him as a king.

Then there must be a restoration of the Jews, & a reorganization of the ancient Kingdom in the land, which we are told will be reclaimed from the desolations of many generations, & made like the garden of the Lord. Indeed I don't know that I can express it in better language than that which says (Amos 9:11)—

"I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, & close up the breaches thereof, & will build it as in days of old."

74. You consider then that the setting up of the Kingdom of God on earth, of which you spoke to commence with, will be the re-setting up of the Kingdom God had before? Precisely, that is my idea: but, of course, as you pointed out, under a new & different order of things.

75. Can there be any Kingdom of God, then, without the restoration of the Jews? It is not for me to say what God can or cannot do, but it is quite certain that the Kingdom He has promised cannot become a fact in the earth without the restoration of the Kingdom again to Israel, for that is the Kingdom promised.

76. Will Jesus be no more than David was? Well, the son, in this case, I believe, is greater than his father, as is shown by the psalm Jesus quoted to the Pharisees in which David in spirit called him Lord.

77. But I mean with regard to the office he will exercise in the Kingdom when established? Well, David was simply a king. I believe Jesus will be a Priest as well as a King: he will be at the head of the religion of the whole world & officiate between God & the nation of Israel.

78. Will his exercise of the priestly office require the offering of sacrifice? Well, he is a Priest now, & has offered the one great sacrifice in his own death.

79. I will come to that presently: my question relates to the state of things that will exist when the Kingdom of David is restored? With regard to Israel and the nations of the earth, you mean?

80. Yes. I believe the sacrifice of animals will be re-instituted. This is plainly taught by the prophets. It seems a little incongruous with the fact that Christ has accomplished the one great sacrifice, but I have no doubt it will serve a wise end.

81. What will be the object of Christ's rule in Israel? To bless them, I suppose, in everything: to give them good laws, to enlighten them, to teach them the truth, & bring them nearer to God, and make them fit for eternal life.

82. What will be the relation between the restored Kingdom of Israel and the other nations of the earth? I don't think I quite comprehend your meaning. As I take it, there will be no other power in the earth.

83. That was the point I wished to bring out. Do you suppose the kingdoms of the Gentiles will continue to exist after the Kingdom of Israel is restored? Oh no; I believe they will all be destroyed by Christ at his coming & that the nations of the whole earth will be under the government of Christ.

84. Where will be the seat of this government? I believe in Jerusalem, from which we're told the law goes forth to all nations.

85. How will the world be governed by the King of the Jews? We are told that his people will reign with him. Therefore, I conclude, he will send out his people as governors in all the earth, to rule them, and

judge among them, enlighten them as to his laws & the truth, & generally to bless them with the benefits of the Kingdom of God established in Palestine. In this sense I can see that the Kingdom of God will fill all the earth, while in one sense located in the Land of Promise.

86. Are you aware of any law with reference to Jerusalem that will come into force? Yes, I read that the nations will go yearly to Jerusalem to worship.

87. In what condition of nature do you suppose Christ's people will be, when thus ruling the world with him? I believe they will be in the same condition as he is: immortal.

88. Who are Christ's people? All, in every age, who believe the Promises, & are obedient to the commandments of God.

89. As the majority of them are dead, what must occur before they can be installed in the position you have described? They must be raised from the dead, & glorified.

90. What part do you hope to have in the Kingdom? I hope to be accepted by Christ as one of his people, & to share with all the rest the glory & honour of his position as King & Priest of the whole world.

91. You have rightly said the rulers of the Kingdom of God will be immortal. What will be the condition of Israel and the nations in this respect? I believe they will be mortal, & subject to death as we are now, only that life will be longer.

92. How long will this state of things continue? A thousand years.

93. Then the Kingdom of God is only to last 1000 years? It is testified that the saints will live & reign with Christ 1000 years.

94. Then is it so, that our salvation will only last 1000 years? Oh no: it will last for ever. The Kingdom will have no end: only the state of things you asked me about—the ruling of the mortal nations on earth—will come to an end after a 1000 years.

95. Then what will be after the 1000 years? There will be no more death & no more curse. All things on earth will be new. Christ's mission to take away the sin of the world & its consequences, will be accomplished.

96. How will this change be brought about? I believe that at the end of the 1000 years there will be a revolt of nations, followed by another resurrection & judgment, when all who are not found worthy of eternal life will be destroyed; & all others, living & dead, will be made immortal.

97. Do you suppose the earth will then be destroyed? No, it would be strange if it were destroyed just as its redemption is complete. It may be changed in some respects to adapt its condition to the new kind of inhabitant that will hereafter occupy it, but that it will ever be destroyed I do not believe. I believe it is appointed the eternal dwelling place of the redeemed of our race.

98. These then are the THINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM which, you will observe, have mainly to do with the second coming of Jesus? So I clearly perceive.

* * *

99. We have now to deal with the 2nd part of the apostolic summary of the Gospel: THE THINGS CONCERNING THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST. And these, we shall find, have mainly to do with the first coming of Christ. You have observed the statement that there is NONE OTHER NAME given under heaven among men whereby we might be saved? Yes.

100. This you believe? I do.

101. None other name than what? Jesus.

102. Then Jesus is a name given to us as a means of salvation? Obviously.

103. That is, Jesus as a person, as a reality, not as a mere word to pronounce? Quite so: the name of Jesus clearly stands for Jesus himself.

104. That is shown by the fact that what in one place is worded 'the things concerning the name of Jesus' is in another place worded 'those things that concern our Lord Jesus Christ.' So you will perceive that the things concerning the name of Christ are, in plain terms, those things that concern the Lord Jesus in his manifestation as a means of our salvation? I see that quite clearly.

105. Then the way being thus paved, let me ask: For what purpose did Christ come the first time? He came to take away sin.

106. How did there come to be sin for him to take away? Through the disobedience of our first parents in the garden of Eden.

107. The 'things of the name' you see, begin a long way back. So I see.

108. What was the consequence of Adam's disobedience? Death.

109. What do you understand by death? Dissolution of animate being.

110. What was the nature of Adam's being? I believe he was formed from the dust of the ground, & made alive by the breath of life that comes from God.

111. Then you don't consider he was immortal? We don't know what he might have been if he had been obedient, but after disobedience he certainly wasn't immortal, but mortal.

112. Then you no longer believe in the immortality of the soul? Certainly not. I consider that that doctrine is the root & mainspring of nearly all the error that exists.

113. You consider death destroys a man? I do: for the time being, that is, till he is raised from the dead—if he ever is raised.

114. You do not believe he is conscious in any sense in death? I do not.

115. You have discarded the idea that when a man dies he goes to heaven or hell? Quite.

116. You do not believe in the existence of a place of torment? I do not. I believe the hell of the Bible, with one or two exceptions, means the grave.

117. This mortal state, you say, came through sin. Have you considered Paul's statement that the devil has the power of sin (Hebrews 2:14). Yes.

118. And that Jesus was manifested in the flesh & blood of human nature to destroy him through death? I have.

119. And John's statement that for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil? (1 John 3:8) I have considered that also.

120. What do you think is meant by the devil in those places? It means sin in the flesh.

121. Do you believe in the existence of a personal supernatural devil? I do not.

122. You are aware that the word 'devil' is applied in a personal sense in the New Testament? I am. I have considered the matter thoroughly, & am persuaded that all its uses come within my first answer, so far as the origin of the word is concerned. I believe in human devils, political devils, disease devils, but I do not believe in supernatural devils. I believe the great devil of all—the source of all other evil—is the principle of disobedience embodied in the present evil world.

I find no other devil in the Bible, & I believe in none else. This devil Jesus came to destroy. He did it, & the human race will reap the fruits by-&-by, even as Jesus himself now reaps them.

123. How do we suffer the consequences of Adam's transgression? Because that consequence was a physical one, inhering in his flesh, & we, as his descendants, necessarily inherit the qualities of his nature.

124. Are you aware of any other reason why death reigns over us? I suppose you refer to our individual sins.

125. I do. You perceive we are all transgressors from the womb? Yes, I believe all have sinned, & are therefore—as Paul would give us to understand—under the curse of death for our own sins, as well as through connection with Adam.

126. Under these circumstances, how can we escape from death? Christ has opened a way for our deliverance, by death and resurrection.

127. That we may understand the matter, let me ask who was Christ? The Son of God.

128. What do you intend to express by that answer? I derive my idea on the subject from the words of the angel to Mary in which his birth was announced: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

129. Then you mean to say that Jesus was the Son of God in the sense of owing his begetting to the operation of the power of God upon his mother Mary? That is what I mean.

130. You do not believe Joseph, Mary's husband, to have been his father? I do not.

131. You are aware of the orthodox view that he was the Son of God from all eternity, pre-existing for ever as 1 of 3 persons in 1 god? Yes, but I have come to see that that is a false view.

132. You do not believe he existed before he was begotten? I do not. I believe his existence as the son of God dates from his birth of Mary. The passages that appear to teach his pre-existence I believe arise from the fact that the Father spoke through him in the days of his flesh, & spoke in parable of the mystery of his origin, and the purpose of which Jesus was the Father's manifestation.

133. You no longer believe in the Trinity? I do not.

134. You believe in one God? Yes, the Father, of Whom are all things'

135. And in Jesus, His Son? Yes, in whom He has manifested Himself by the Spirit.

136. And in the spirit from whose presence we cannot flee? Yes, I believe the Spirit to be everywhere present, & that by this the Father sees, hears, & knows all things; & through it—when He wills—impels men to speak His mind as in the case of the prophets & apostles.

- 137. You do not believe the Spirit to be a separate personal God?** Discarding the Trinity, I do not. I believe in only one great Increate Personality, & that is the Eternal Father. The Spirit is His Power, & His Son is the Mediator whom He hath appointed between Himself & us.
- 138. Though believing Jesus to be the Son of God, you do not deny he was a man?** By no means. I believe him to have been bone of our bone & flesh of our flesh. I believe he was a partaker of flesh & blood through Mary, that he was made in all things like to ourselves, & tempted in all points like to his brethren. I could not conceive of his being our Saviour unless he had been man.
- 139. Why?** Because he could not have suffered the condemnation due to human nature unless he had been human nature under condemnation.
- 140. Could we not suffer the condemnation due to ourselves then?** Yes, but in that case, being sinners, we could not have escaped it. We could not have risen again. We must have perished.
- 141. Then Jesus was no sinner?** No, he was holy, harmless, & undefiled, separate from sinners. Though tempted in all points like to ourselves, he was without sin. He never transgressed, Being the Son of God, he was enabled to continue from the beginning in the path of obedience.
- 142. And yet he died?** Yes, but not for his own transgressions. He died for our sins. God 'laid upon him the iniquity of us all' (Isaiah 53:6).
- 143. Did he continue in death?** No, God raised him from the dead, because He 'could not suffer an holy one to see corruption' (Psalm 16 :10).
- 144. Did he continue after his resurrection in the mortal nature he had before his death?** No; God exalted him and glorified him, changing him from a natural body to a spiritual body. so that he became 'the Lord the Spirit.'
- 145. Did he remain on the earth?** No, he ascended to heaven, & is now in the presence of God.
- 146. What is his function there?** To act as High Priest and Mediator between God and man.
- 147. Is he a Mediator for all the world?** All the world are at liberty to avail themselves of his mediatorship, but actually he is not a Priest for all the world, but only for his own people, who are styled 'his own house.'
- 148. Who are his own people?** Those who believe the Gospel & have been baptized & who are continuing in the path of obedience to his commandments.
- 149. What is the object of his intercession?** That the sins of his Household may be forgiven, & their prayers may be accepted.
- 150. How do we get the benefit of Christ's priestly office?** I understand we get it by connection with him.
- 151. You do not quite understand me. Suppose a believer falls into sin & repents not, & approaches not God in prayer, but abandons himself to heedlessness, do you think such a man will receive the benefits of Christ's priestly office?** No.
- 152. What would be necessary for him to do?** To confess his sin in prayer to God, and ask forgiveness through Christ.
- 153. Do not all believers come short & offend more or less?** Yes, I believe they do.

154. What is their resort for remedy? Prayer & confession through Christ, whose blood cleanseth from all sin.

155. Is there no other subject of prayer? Yes, we ought to pray always, giving thanks for benefits enjoyed, making request for such things as we require, doing homage to the greatness of God, & praying for the fulfilment of His Promises

156. Is any worship acceptable that does not come through Christ? No, God heareth not sinners, & all are sinners that are not covered with Christ's name.

157. Are all who take on the name of Christ by belief of the truth & baptism destined to be saved? No, only those who are faithful & bring forth fruits unto eternal life. Some walk after the flesh & some after the spirit.

158. How will the 2 classes be dealt with? Those who are pronounced acceptable will receive eternal life, & be made to inherit the Kingdom of God; & those who are found unfaithful will be rejected & given over to destruction.

159. When will these decisions be enforced? At the coming of Christ. He will gather together his Household to judge them to give to every man according to what he hath done, whether good or bad.

160. When you say that do you mean to include the dead? Certainly: it is testified he will judge both the living & the dead.

161. Then is it your belief that all amenable to his judgment, whether faithful or unfaithful living or dead, will stand before him for judgment at his coming? That is my belief.

162. Do you suppose anyone will receive eternal life before judgment? I do not, for that would be to supersede the judgment.

163. Then in what state do you suppose will those be who stand before him at that time? In a neutral state, I should say.

164. Mortal or immortal? Mortal, I would say, so far as you can say a person is mortal whose fate is undecided.

165. I mean what order of nature: 'natural' or spiritual? Natural, certainly, for if they were spiritual, the rejected could not die & the accepted would already be judged

166. Then you do not accept a common idea that the resurrected will come forth from the grave in an immortal state? I do not.

167. Coming back to the present bearing of the Christian calling, have you realized the position to which a man is introduced in baptism? In what respect?

168. As to his duty in this life? I think I have. I understand that a man who becomes Christ's ceases to be his own. He is the property of Christ, & as such is bound to give himself to his service. He is the brother of Christ (& therefore a Christadelphian), & as such is bound to place his chief affections on his Elder Brother, Lord, & Master. It is his duty to spread a knowledge of the truth by every means in his power, to regulate his life in conformity with his precepts, to obey him in all things, to do good to all, especially those of the Household of Faith,

169. Has Christ left any command for the assembly of his people? Yes, in the appointment of breaking of bread in remembrance of him, he has enjoined a periodical assembly of those who love him, that he

may be brought to their recollection, & that they may be mutually exercised & strengthened in things pertaining to their most holy Faith.

170. How often should they meet for such a purpose? Following the example of the early Christians, I believe they ought to meet once a week, & *that* on the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday.

171. Should they on such or any occasion fellowship those who deny the truth in any of its material particulars, or who—professing the truth, walk disobediently in their daily life? No; I believe they should have no fellowship with those who either reject the truth, or behave in opposition to the commandments of Christ.

172. Have you counted the cost, & are you prepared to become a Christadelphian, or brother of Christ? Yes! I thank God for having learned the truth in these dark days, & I shall rejoice to offer myself a living sacrifice on its altar, that I may, peradventure, be accepted in the day of Christ, & enter into his everlasting joy.

AN EPITOME OF THE TRUTH

One God, the Eternal Father, dwelling in heaven, in light of glory inconceivable.

One universal irradiant Spirit, by which the Father fills all and knows all, and when He wills, performs all.

One Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, begotten by the Spirit, and of the Virgin Mary, put to death for sin, raised from the dead for righteousness, and exalted to the heavens as a Mediator between God and man.

Man, a creature of the earth, under sentence of death because of sin, which is his great enemy—the devil.

Deliverance from death by resurrection and bodily glorification, at the coming of Christ, and inheritance of the Kingdom of God, offered to all men on condition—

1. Of believing the glad tidings of Christ's accomplishments at his first appearing, and of his coming manifestation in the earth as the King of Israel, and Ruler of the whole earth at the setting up of the Kingdom of God.
 2. Of being immersed in water for a union with his Name, and
 3. Of continuing in well-doing to the end of this probationary career.
-

A SYNOPSIS OF THE FAITH TAUGHT BY THE APOSTLES AS PERVERTED BY THE APOSTASY

A triply-compounded God, without body and parts, defined as "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Jesus Christ, the Son, yet 'very God,' incarnated and killed to appease the wrath of that part of the triune God that remained unincarnate.

The Devil, a fallen but immortal archangel, the enemy of mankind, and great antagonist of the Deity.

Man an Immortal Soul, tabernacling in an animal body.

Face sprinkling in infancy, a means of salvation.

Infants and idiots saved, whether sprinkled or not.

Salvation achieved by good works.

Baptism (immersion) may be practised, but is not essential to salvation.

The heathen will be saved without believing the Gospel .

The resurrection, a reuniting of the body and soul, in order that the souls of the wicked may be brought up from hell, and the souls of the righteous from heaven, for judgment.

The Kingdom of God is 'the Church.'

The Kingdom is a state of bliss above the stars.

Sabbath observance required of Gentiles.

*The One Faith not necessary to salvation; any faith with morality being saving.
'Conversion of the world' by the preaching of the Gospel.*

The Old Testament superseded by the New Testament.

HUMAN DESTINY—

- 1. The translation of righteous immortal souls (leaving the body in the article of death) to kingdoms beyond the bounds of space.*
 - 2. The descent of wicked immortal souls at the same crisis of experience, to a hell of fire and brimstone, to be tormented by devils throughout eternity.*
-

AS BELIEVED BY THE CHRISTADELPHIANS *

One God (personally and substantially inhabiting light unapproachable, yet everywhere present by universal spirit, irradiant from Himself) revealed to Israel and manifested in—
Jesus of Nazareth, in the days of his flesh, a mortal man who was—
Born of Mary by the Holy Spirit, and thus became the Word made flesh.
He was put to death as a 'sin offering,' and—
Exalted to the heavens until 'the restitution of all things,' thus confirming—
The Promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and—
The Covenant made with David, which have realisation in—
The Second (personal) Coming of Jesus to the earth;
The resurrection & Judgment of the whole Household of God (just & unjust);
The bestowal of Immortality on those who are found worthy, and their appointment as rulers of his Kingdom;
The condemnation of the unworthy to the Second Death;
The enthronement in Jerusalem of Jesus Christ as King of the Jews, and Lord of the whole earth; the establishment of—
The KINGDOM OF GOD (the Kingdom of Israel) in the Holy Land, involving—
The Restoration of the Jews from dispersion;
The Destruction of the Devil and his Works, scripturally understood as sin and the lust of the flesh, in every mode and manifestation, and—
The Subjugation of all kingdoms and republics on earth.
The Kingdom, in its mediatorial phase, will last one thousand years, and will destroy 'all enemies,' including death itself.
The human race is essentially mortal, under the law of sin and death.
Jesus, the Christ, through death and resurrection, brought immortality to light.
Salvation is attainable only by the belief of the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ; and—
Baptism (immersion) in water, for a union with that Name.

It is necessary to understand the Old Testament in order to have a correct New Testament faith.

* A name derived from the Greek words CHRISTOU ADELPHOI (brethren of Christ)—Colossians 1: 2; Hebrews 2: 11—and adopted by those acknowledging it, to distinguish themselves from the names of Christendom. It is true of them what the Jewish leaders in Rome said to Paul of the Christians of that time: “Concerning this SECT, we know that everywhere it is spoken against” (Acts 28: 22). They repudiate all the creeds of Christendom.

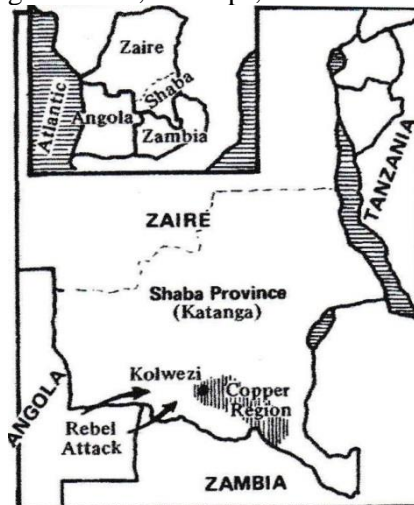
WE must not worry about criticism, or be deterred by it, or be afraid of it. But we must be deeply concerned about it, and consider it all very carefully. Our critics are often our best friends: there is always SOME truth in every criticism, however distorted or unfair. We must thankfully extract the truth, and benefit by it, and discard the residue with compassion and without bitterness. If we are wise, the criticisms of our adversaries can be stepping-stones to the Kingdom, & God's way of opening our eyes to many blindnesses our friends hesitate to mention.

Nazareth Revisited: Work is progressing. It is confidently hoped to have it done by August.

Current Events Fulfilling Prophecy

MASSACRE IN ZAIRE. 5000 [other reports say 2000] Katangese guerrillas, actively supported by Cuban troops, launched a deadly strike last week from their bases in Marxist Angola against Zaire's Shaba (formerly Katanga) province, & captured its capital Kolwezi, slaughtering at least 100 Whites & 300 Blacks.

Responding to an urgent call from Zaire's Pres. Mobutu, France sent 1200 paratroopers. Belgium also sent paratroops, & US supplied the transport & fuel. At week's end the French & Belgians had retaken the city, by now a ghost town, its shops, bank & hotel looted & burned, & clusters of bodies on the streets.



The attack demonstrated the vulnerability of Zaire, a huge mineral-rich land of over 200 tribes that dictator Mobutu has kept together by force. Shaba is essential to Zaire's survival: its copper mines provide the bulk of Zaire's revenues.

Mobutu is one of Africa's less savoury leaders, & Zaire is virtually bankrupt. Corruption at all govt. levels is endemic. Just \$120 million of \$450 million coffee sales last year reached the Treasury. Inflation gallops at over 75% a year.

Every yr. Zaire defaults on about \$100 million of its foreign debt. Foreign experts were banished by Mobutu in 1973. Since then, a country with some of world's richest land has had to import \$300 million worth of food.

There are no illusions in the West about Mobutu, but he's a staunch anti-Communist & a proven friend of the West, while the Cuban-backed guerrillas are Marxists.

There's evidence the Cubans are getting more brazen about their participation in these things. And Shaba wasn't the only part of Africa where Cubans had an impact last week. Ethiopia's Mengistu launched an offensive against the Eritrean nationalists, announcing that Cubans were taking part with him. (Tm 5:29)

* * *

Invasion should not have surprised Zaire. Early last year, about 2000 Katangans invaded from Angola, & were expelled by 1500 Moroccans. A few months ago, they started crossing the border to lay mines & harass govt. troops. Despite such warnings, they apparently took Kolwezi's defenders by surprise. As they attacked, most govt. soldiers ran way, survivors said.

The rebels clearly struck a devastating economic blow to Zaire—and could still confront Mobutu with the most serious crisis of his 13-year rule. Europeans who fled said the vital copper mines had flooded and could take 6 months to reopen, even if there were Europeans to work them, & that seemed unlikely. Most said they'd never return unless Kolwezi was garrisoned by Europeans, & no African country would tolerate such dependency on their former masters. A Belgian paratrooper said, "The Whites would be mad to return. Two weeks after we're gone the rebels will be back." (Nwk 5:29).

* * *

US's Zaire airlift was biggest military operation so far by Carter—and toughest response yet to Soviet-Cuban presence in Africa. For months, Carter had sought 'African solutions to African problems,' hoping the Communist thrust would end.

Since Carter came to power, the number of Red blotches all over the map of Africa has increased dramatically, & they're spreading steadily. In Washington, Zambia's Pres. Kaunda defended the right of Cuba's 40,000 troops to roam the continent. "There's no Cuban in Africa," he said, "not invited by someone."

(What an utterly stupid & meaningless thing to say!)

Kaunda, normally a moderate, predicted a bloody confrontation in Rhodesia & bluntly told Carter that if Rhodesian troops continued raids on guerrilla bases in Zambia, he would consider inviting the Cubans in.

US spokesmen differed over Cuba's involvement. Andrew Young said the incursion was a tribal affair, but an official State Dept. spokesman said the Cubans & Russians 'were in it up to their eyes.' Short of sending in US troops, the US leverage against Cubans & Russians in Africa is minimal. (Nwk 5:29)

* * *

Turmoil in Africa: will Carter act? Conviction growing in White House that Soviet-Cuban challenge to US in Africa is Carter's No. 1 headache. Invasion of Zaire, upsurge of fighting in Ethiopia, disastrous spread of hostilities in Rhodesia—all openly or secretly supported by Cuba & Russia. First order of business is to persuade Congress to ease restrictions on aid: Carter says his 'hands are tied.'

In little over a year, Castro has tripled number of Cubans in 14 African countries—from 15,000 to over 42,000—now ¼ of Cuba's total armed forces. Cubans & Russians involved in 6 of the 8 wars now going on in Africa: Rhodesia, Namibia, Zaire, Angola, Eritrea, & Ethiopia's skirmishes with Somali tribesmen. In the other 2, Libya (supporting rebels in Chad), & Algeria (supporting rebels in West Sahara), receive arms from Russia.

As Russia sees it, West (particularly US) lacks both will & means to check Red advances in Africa. A number of pro-Moscow regimes already in place provide a base for further gains. The Cubans are performing beyond everyone's expectations. African nations seem in no mood to object.

All available evidence points to a totally unyielding Soviet position in Africa—one that's getting tougher as West's uncertainty over how to react becomes clearer.

One of Black Africa's most respected leaders, Zambia's Kaunda, predicted full scale racial war, with Cubans fighting for the Blacks, unless US helps devise formula to transfer power to Rhodesian Blacks. He warns he may turn to Cubans for help if US fails. (USN 5:29)

ANOTHER huge, quick, easy, & (for Russia) painless victory for Russia in Africa. The copper mines, Zaire's life blood, have been put out of action for at least months. The Whites required to run them have fled in panic, vowing never to return. Mobutu's impotence, & Zaire's vulnerability, have been humiliatingly exposed. He has a large army, 22 million people, & millions of \$s to play with (tho Zaire is deeply in debt). But when a couple of thousand Cuban-trained, Russian-armed guerrillas attacked his most vital province after obvious signs of warning, a couple of thousand Whites had to be flown in from Europe to rescue him.

It was very soon over, once they came, but too late to avoid the damage and the striking success of the Russian-inspired strike. Tho Shaba is the key to Zaire's viability, & very exposed & vulnerable, it's clear Mobutu had made no provision for its safety and defence. Next time it maybe (as in Ethiopia) Cuban troops in force, with the latest, heaviest, sophisticated Russian equipment, under a Russian general. Then the West will have to face the issue massively & quickly, or let it go to the Russians. The invaders would only need to take the rich, exposed southern mining area.

Detroit's Black Mayor Coleman Young, to the cheers of a Black audience, belittled the massacre of the Whites by the invaders, claiming that far more Blacks are killed by Whites than Whites by Blacks, without getting any notoriety, or being hand-wringingly deplored as a 'massacre.' He may have a point. Our perspective makes all the difference as to what we see or do not see, & what we call it. The same week a Rhodesian army patrol came upon a few Black guerrillas lecturing a Black village. In the ensuing crossfire, admittedly over 50 'innocent' unarmed Black villagers (the Blacks claimed 100) were killed. But it was a relatively small item in the newsmagazines, & there were no lurid pictures of smashed bodies, as there were of the massacred Zaire Whites. But the Black dead were just as dead as the White dead, & the grief & loss of their survivors was just as great.

MORO'S ORDEAL IS OVER, after 54 days of anguish & humiliation. For Italy, the agony lingered. By killing Moro last week & leaving his body in the heart of Rome, the Communists of the terrorist Red Brigade concluded their taunting object lesson on the decay & impotence of the Italian state. In court on trial, Red Brigade leader Curcio shouted at horrified spectators, "The killing of Moro is an act of revolutionary justice—the highest act of humanity possible."

Day after day, terrorist gunmen sprang from hiding places to shoot business men & politicians in the legs. In Italy & elsewhere, there were gnawing fears of what might come next —fears that political, social & economic decay had gone too far in Italy to be reversed, & that democracy itself was at stake.

Already there were signs of serious party infighting. Even before Moro's death, notables began to manoeuvre openly for his job as party leader, & for the Italian presidency he had expected to get. In addition, Moro left a political time bomb behind him: a stream of potentially damning letters from captivity. Moro knew where the party's skeletons were hidden, & his post-mortem revelations could be vengeful indeed. He wrote in one letter already published—

"With the few loyal friends that remain, it is necessary to sweep away the Christian Democratic leadership that has betrayed me. We must build the party with new leaders." Even if he hadn't written his damning letters, his death would have been an incalculable blow to his party and nation. There were none as effective at holding a fractious party together. A Western ambassador said in Rome last week, "Moro was the glue in the Italian political system. He was what was holding up this whole house of cards." (Nwk 5:22)

* * *

The Red Brigade seeks to destroy the Italian state & create an undefined 'Communist society.' Its young terrorists come from a variety of backgrounds, but most of them have been influenced by 2 of Italy's most rigid orthodoxies: Communism & Catholicism. They are basically religious people who come to politics & violence with all the convictions of zealots.

Sapped by social decay, Italy is a fertile breeding ground for terror. The weakening of religion and the fragmentation of the family have filled the cities with rootless people. The govt. is inept & frequently corrupt. Violence is a way of life.

Nearly 100 terror groups have sprung up in Italy since '68. The Red Brigade proved to be the best organized. Intelligence officials believe the Red Brigade & other groups get help from Libya, Iraq & Russia. Italy was already in an advanced state of decay, & the question is how long democracy there can continue. (Nwk5:15).

* * *

Can Italy survive? When Moro was killed last week, some people pronounced Italy dead as well. "Next to Moro's body lies the body of the First Republic," lamented former President Giuseppe Saragat.

The Italian public administration simply does not work. The pace of implementing government decisions is so slow that it takes years for anything to happen, & by the time it does, it's usually too late, or the problems are different.

"You cannot begin to understand the problem of Italy," says a columnist for a Milan daily, "without understanding the depth of incompetence, blindness, selfishness & corruption of its ruling class."

But Italy's Communist Party—for all its talk these days of political moderation—caused its share of damage. Strikes & street demonstrations led by Communists in the '50s & '60s sapped Italy's political stability. Workers' gains spearheaded by the Party, including spiralling wage rises & staggering social-welfare costs, helped deplete state coffers, & contributed to the end of the boom.

In addition, the Communists infiltrated Italy's police, army, Foreign Service & bureaucracy to such an extent that many senior Italian officials no longer dare confide in their subordinates.

The Red Brigade is a symptom of a much greater problem: the disintegration of society, its common values, its traditional structures, the church, the family.

Some fear that a complete collapse of the govt. & the economy could plunge Italy into civil war. Others expect a right-wing coup by the military & the police. A 3rd scenario—sufficiently plausible to cause deep concern in Washington—is the coming to power of the Communist Party.

"I am asked, What is the solution?" says Luigi Barzini, author of the best-selling 'The Italians.' "There isn't any. It is like interviewing a Byzantine commander as the Turks are swarming over the walls, & asking him the solution." (Nk5:22)

* * *

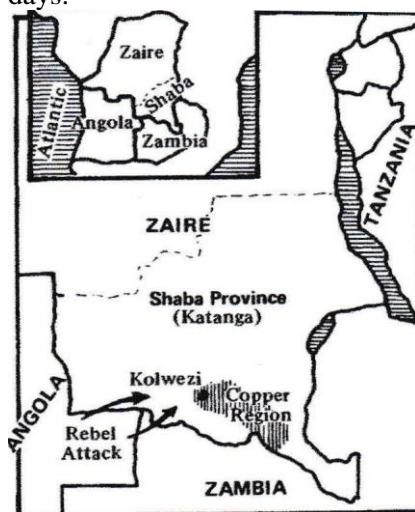
Parliament was so busy with terrorism that little notice was given to an unrelated turning point in Italy's social history. Confirming an earlier Chamber of Deputies decision, the Senate passed a bill legalizing state-subsidized abortion on demand. (Tm5:29)

THIS last item is perhaps the most tragic & significant of all — illustrative of the bestial and moral rot at the core of all mankind today: the exaltation of lust & selfishness over the sanctity of life, & mature acceptance of responsibility to others & to God. Italy is not alone. The whole 'civilized' world is increasingly casting off all respect for divine holiness & divine authority—all restraint upon its unbridled, lust-mad corruptions & abominations. The Red Brigade is merely a sick symptom of a much broader malady.

It is ironic that 2 vicious forces today—Catholicism & Communism—take a much stronger & more wholesome public stand against immorality than do the effete Protestant democracies of the West. The once respected & respectable Presbyterian Church (which we expected would be one of the last to toy with this vileness) has just concluded in conference a weighty debate on ordaining sodomites into the ministry, as teachers of the Word of God & guides to the young. The proposition did not succeed this time (as it has in the Episcopalians & others), but the very fact of its needing to be seriously considered by a body claiming to be based on the Word of God, & that would have rejected this thought with horror a few short years ago, is a shameless travesty. Divine principles have not suddenly changed, nor corruption suddenly become purity, after 6000 years. What HAS changed (& it is ominous & glorious in its implications) is this: *the iniquity of the Amorites is very, very close to full.*

In morality, it is usually the case that govts.—the 'wise,' the powerful, the 'educated'—take a much more animal & bestial position than the 'common' people. In US, whenever a govt. action to promote immorality (abortion, homosexuality, etc.) is put by dint of great private effort to a public referendum, the result is usually defeat for the immorality. Out of Italy's corruption & turmoil, we can expect the rise of a Catholic-Communist coalition under the professed banner of decency & morality. What an irony that would be!

AFGHANISTAN'S RED COUP. One of bloodiest coups in Afghanistan's long & violent history. Some West intelligence sources believe it was engineered in Moscow with intent of turning Afghanistan into a puppet state. Emergence of a pro-Russian regime there alarmed Iran, Pakistan & India—and could tempt Moscow to challenge US in Central Asia as it already has in Africa. The simple truth is that the Soviets are able to get away with anything these days.



Afghanistan's new ruler Taraki is Marxist. He founded the Afghanistan Communist Party in '65. Tho it only has a small membership, it has strong support among army & air-force officers, many of whom are Soviet-trained. Till last week, few Afghans had ever heard of Taraki.

Moscow recognized the new regime before composition of the new govt. had even been made public. Since WWII, Russia has had overwhelming influence in Afghanistan, training & equipping its armed forces, and providing major source of foreign aid. Russian influence there will now be stronger than ever.

This could be the beginning of a squeeze play against Iran. Next step could be attempt to break up what's left of Pakistan by encouraging secession movements among the tribes that straddle Afghanistan's borders with Pakistan & Iran. After that, the Communist camp would hope to overthrow the Shah of Iran & achieve one of Russia's historic objectives: breakthrough to Indian Ocean. (Nwk 5:15)

* * *

As leader of Afghanistan's Communists, Taraki led a campaign against the domination of the long powerful Mohammed Zahir family. Feudalism has kept the Zahirs in power for generations. New regime appeared to have support among Afghanistan's gradually emerging middle class. Its first priority seems to be to root out the Zahir influence wherever it is found. All of the Cabinet officers are members of Taraki's Communist Party. Russia, which has a 1300-mile border with Afghanistan, was clearly pleased. (Tm 5:15)

AGAIN, Russia seems to be in the van of progress & popularity, putting US by implication on the side of feudalism & reaction. Both Pakistan & Iran, 'friends' of US & imperilled by this new Russian advance, are military dictatorships. New Afghan regime is also, of course, a dictatorship, but it comes in the guise, & with the slogans (& perhaps even with the intention) of being a 'liberation' of the masses from a 'reactionary' dictatorship. Happily for Russia, there are dissident tribes overlapping the common borders of Persia, Afghanistan & Pakistan, affording ready-made ground for subversion & further 'liberation.'

SADAT IN TROUBLE. "I will crush anyone who creates doubt." So said Sadat, as he called for a nationwide referendum this week. Sadat is locked in a battle with opponents from both sides of Egyptian politics, who challenge both his diplomacy & his domestic policies.

Opposition activity has grown in direct proportion to the fading of the euphoria generated by his historic mission to Jerusalem. The problems facing overpopulated Egypt—poverty, inflation, corruption, inadequate housing & public transport—are so enormous that no govt. can begin to solve them.

Most outspoken of the opposition parties are the Marxists, led by Khaled Mohieddin, known as the 'Red Major' when he was in Nasser's govt. They charge that much of the \$10 billion given to Egypt by the oil Arabs since '73 has never reached the people—& cite other cases of bribes & corruption.

On the other side is the Wafd Party, reborn only 3 months ago. The Wafd led the struggle for independence from the British after WWII. After Nasser came to power, it was banned, & its leaders imprisoned.

It is not clear how far Sadat is prepared to go in cracking down. He is afraid the present 'campaigns of doubt' could return Egypt to the chaos of the past, & he's disturbed about the Communist coup in Afghanistan & rioting in Iran.

Best solution for Sadat's domestic problems would be a resounding success for his peace initiative; but at the moment he has no further cards to play. (Tm 5:29)

SADAT is clearly walking a tightrope, in an increasingly high wind. Common sense would dictate that he make his own real peace with Israel on the best terms he can get, & pull out of the ruinous & obsessive confrontation stance that stalls all progress on other problems.

AFRICA'S GRIM WARNING TO CARTER. Zambia's Kaunda minces no words: if Blacks aren't given their way, Cuba & Russia will move in. Alternate to peace-shift of power to Blacks, as he sees it, is all-out racial war, with Russia arming Blacks, & Cuban troops backing them.

Thousands of Rhodesian guerrillas operate with Kaunda's permission from camps in Zambia, armed by Russia & trained by Cubans.

Zambia depends on copper exports for over 90% of its foreign exchange earnings. Copper price is lowest since WWII. Mines are kept operating at a loss, to curb unemployment and earn hard cash. Closure of border with Rhodesia & continuing civil war in Angola has cut off Zambia from its 2 major rail lines. Copper now must go by truck or rail to Tanzania's crowded harbor, at greatly inflated costs.

Zambia's trade deficit will be \$300 million this year. There are shortages of virtually every commodity, from food to fuel. US aid to Zambia was \$25 million in 77, may hit \$40 million this year.

Many Zarnbians blame the economic mess on Kaunda's obsession with Rhodesian issue & the large amounts spent on the armed forces. (USN 5:22)

KAUNDA used to be, or professed to be, pro-Western. But naked facts have a way of overriding theories & philosophies. Russia is riding high in Africa, and is clearly demonstrating both unified will & specific purpose. US is fumbling & bumbling, hamstrung by conflict between an indecisive President & a fractious, parochial Congress. The US govt., which was crafted in the spirit of fear of strong men, seems ideally designed at the moment for impotence. The founding fathers never dreamed they'd have to deal some day with swift-moving global events. Russia is offering the Blacks the tempting prospect of completely crushing the last remnants of White power in Black Africa, with lots of shiny new weapons, & helpful Cubans eager for the fray. It seems too good to pass up: so did the spider's invitation to the fly.

THE SHAH CRACKS DOWN. Hundreds of fired-up demonstrators poured out into the heart of Teheran's sprawling bazaar district last week. The rebellious mob's cries of 'Down with the Shah' were met by a wall of tanks & hail of warning shots & tear-gas grenades. The demonstrators were a coalition of Muslim fundamentalists & leftist activists. Over 50 were wounded.

For the time being the Shah had put the lid on the most serious challenge in 15 years to his near-absolute authority. But more confrontations were sure to come. A young worker was killed by police in the north-western city of Tabriz in February, & a vengeful mob went on a rampage of destruction that shut the city down. Death toll in the outbursts of violence to date exceeds 100, & 1000s of protesters have been jailed.

What began as religious defiance soon snowballed into political protests, as leftists joined the rioting right wing. The Tabriz rioters sacked the offices of the Rastakhiz, Iran's only legal political party, along with such symbols of Western materialism as banks, movies, & shops selling Western goods. (Nwk 5:22)

PERSIA today is strictly a one man band. The Shah is autocratic & supreme. Tho he uses trappings & titles of royalty, he is simply an upstart dictator, one generation removed. His father was an army officer who seized power in the early 20's.

There is a strong & increasingly bold Marxist movement in Persia. When the Shah dies or is killed—& this must come sooner or later—chaos & a bitter power struggle seems inevitable, especially in the light of neighbour Russia's increasing might & aggressiveness.

In the past, Britain kept Russia out of Persia. She was there on the spot with the manpower & resources of India behind her. That's all past & gone. Russia has always coveted Persia, & Persia must be with her at the end. The very tenuous thread of the Shah's heartbeat seems to be the only obstacle holding up some very interesting fireworks.

SOUTH AFRICA STRIKES AT SWAPO. Last week, 200 paratroopers landed at the Angolan town of Cassinga, 150 miles north of Angola's border with Namibia. Goal was to deliver a crippling blow to SWAPO, the radical guerrilla organization that has been warring against the present So. African-run govt. of Namibia for 11 years. So. Africa claims to have badly damaged the SWAPO military headquarters, captured or destroyed large ammunition supplies, & wiped out several guerrilla posts near the border, inflicting 'large losses' on the guerrillas.

The raid came 1 day after a SWAPO attack on a hydroelectric station in Namibia. Other terrorist incidents this year have included assassination of the Black leader of a multiracial group that opposes SWAPO, murder of several tribal leaders, planting of land mines & booby traps, & hijacking a bus & 73 passengers.

So. Africa supports the DTA (Democratic Turnhalle Alliance), a coalition of Whites & moderate Blacks. SWAPO on the other hand is backed by most Black African states & by Russia. In terms of popular support, the 2 groups are believed to be almost evenly matched. (Tm 5:15)

ANOTHER African hotspot where a showdown looms, & increased violence seems inevitable. A peaceful solution seems impossible. The past cannot be erased, & it is coming home to roost. For over 100 years, the Whites of Africa oppressed & exploited the Blacks. Now the Blacks have a professed friend & champion, & they see their day of power dawning.

IN THE BEGINNING

From the Eternal sprang forth Life: from Darkness, daylight's flame.
At the Almighty's wondrous touch, great seas and rivers came
The Sun He made to rule by day, the Moon to shine at night;
And the blue vault of heaven above attested to His might.

Then, 'twixt the waters, land appeared, clad in a garb so rare
That nature, smiling, wove o'er all a picture passing fair.
And warbling birds with joyous song next peopled the fair grove:
Then God, in His Own image, made mankind to rule and love.

In Eden's Garden man was placed to rule each living thing:
But there was none to share his life, nor joy nor solace bring;
So Eve, the woman, last was formed, his life's helpmeet to be,
And from deep slumber he awoke a vision fair to see.

Thus hand in hand in sweet converse they passed each verdant glade,
And when the heat of noontime came, they lingered in the shade
Of mighty trees whose leafy roofs scarce hid the skies so blue:
And at their feet were flowerets sweet of every form and hue.

The beauteous world so vast and wide was opened to their sight;
And when the dusk of evening came, and died the waning light—
The twinkling stars of heaven appeared, fair flowers of the sky,
And a soft voice was wafted down which told that God was nigh.

But sin and shame were soon to spoil this Paradise so sweet;
For when the shades of evening fell, and they were called to meet
Their Maker, as had been their wont, they hid in sudden fear—
And trembled when they heard His voice, and knew that He was near.

A punishment so deep, so great, was meted to the twain,
For out of Eden's portals fair into the blinding rain
And storm and stress of daily life, these saddened mortals passed,
That through deep sorrow they might gain Eternity at last.

TO ALL WHO RECEIVE THE BEREAN OVERSEAS

IF we do not show your postal code on your address label, please tell us what it is. The authorities are increasingly desirous of its use. (For US & Canada, we have the Code books).

Finances: We are covered thru October issue. Monthly cost about \$380.

Christadelphian

One Hundred Years Ago

Magazine, July 1878

SIGNS: That which had been hinted at in June was now public. Britain, while loudly proclaiming its noble intentions of going to war to defend Turkey from Russia's rapacity, had been secretly negotiating with Russia over the spoils.

They had reached an agreement amounting to a Russian protectorate of European Turkey, & a British protectorate of Asiatic Turkey. Britain was to place key men in the Turkish army, courts, & political system, & was to all intents & purposes to run the country. Britain then was at the peak of her wealth & power, with a vast, profitable, well-run Empire, & taking over a great, bankrupt country to set in order was well within her stride.

This appeared to be principally a scheme of Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, who was imperial-minded & sought to expand Britain's greatness. He was at his apex of popularity. However, unpopular wars in Africa & Afghanistan, & poor economic conditions at home, led to his defeat in 1880 by Gladstone & the Liberals, & the ambitious Turkish adventure seems to have been dropped, & Turkey tended subsequently more & more toward Germany.

At this time (July 1878) there was great excitement & enthusiasm among both the Brotherhood & the Jews, for each was sure that the apparently imminent British annexation of Turkey would mean the immediate throwing open of Palestine to Jewish development.

If Disraeli had retained his popularity & position, doubtless this would have occurred, but the Divine Plan had a different time-table, & so an anti-imperialistic party came to power in Britain. Disraeli died in 1881, & with him, apparently, died the idea of annexing Turkey to the British Empire, & other imperial adventures.

William Gladstone was subsequently in & out of power until 1894. He was given far less to imperial ambitions than Disraeli. He had already retired in 1874 at age 64, after long public service, but he returned to politics for 20 more strenuous years. He had a career in the Houses of Parliament of over 60 years.

* * *

British-Israelism was much in the public eye, & its great champion was Edward Hine. Eleven pages in this issue are given to letters to, from & about him, & reports of lectures by Hine & bro. Roberts. Bro. Roberts was travelling about, lecturing to the same audiences as Hine & trying to get him to engage in debate. Hine was privately evading debate, while publicly constantly proclaiming his challenge to all. (The debate finally occurred in April 1879).

* * *

There is an interesting item on a vast (& apparently highly successful) British 4-month, 2500 mile expedition that explored the land of Midian (northwest coast of Arabia, on the Red Sea). It was principally with a view to studying the geological formations & the mining & mineral possibilities (on the knowledge that in ancient times it had been a rich source of gold & silver)—& also from an archaeological point of view. The area was politically attached to Egypt at the time, & bro. Roberts was interested in the prospect of increased Egyptian treasure & wealth (Dan. 11:43) as a result of British occupation and initiative. They found many ancient mines, & the ruins of great & prosperous cities.

* * *

Cleopatra's Needle, the huge engraved obelisk from Egypt, a single stone 70 feet high & 8 feet square at the base, had just that year been set up on the Thames Embankment in London, & was a matter of great public notoriety. It was from the city of On (Heliopolis), the capital of Egypt in the land of Goshen, of which Joseph's wife's father was the priest (Gen. 41:45). It is mentioned that the obelisk was almost certainly a familiar sight to Moses, who spent his early life in the palace at On. It was erected by Thutmos III, who appears to have been the Pharaoh from whom Moses fled.

* * *

The death of bro. Alex Packie, at 61, is reported from Baltimore. He was one of bro. Thomas' staunchest & more faithful supporters. He had been quite prosperous, but had fallen on hard times, aggravated by unjust slanders & suspicions in regard to his business affairs, which he suffered in patience. Bro. Roberts speaks of him as "one of a few names mentioned by bro. Thomas as men that could be trusted in America, in the event of bro. Thomas' death."

* * *

The Birmingham ecclesial news has the following interesting item—

"On Whit-Monday the usual open tea meeting was held, when many interested strangers availed themselves of the opportunity of spending a social hour with the brethren on the basis of the things of the Spirit. There was a large gathering, the meeting after tea being profitably occupied with addresses, & singing of hymns & anthems—truly

edifying exercise when the mind, aided by harmonious singing, opens to the ideas embodied in the words sung. Quite a number interested are on the point of yielding obedience to the Truth.

"The meeting was preceded by a country ramble at Sutton on the part of a considerable number of brethren & sisters, who carefully avoided the manners of the jolly children of folly on such occasions, turning the occasion instead to much edification & comfort in rational conversation, reading the Scriptures, & singing a variety of hymns & anthems."

"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places: yea, I have a goodly heritage" (Psalm 16).

1. Jericho
2. Lachish
3. Philistia
4. Bethany
5. Megiddo
6. Shechem
7. Mt. Nebo
8. Arnon R.
9. Bethsaida
10. Mt. Olivet
11. Jerusalem
12. Mt. Tabor
13. Jabbok R.
14. Mt. Gilboa
15. Mt. Carmel
16. Mt. Gerizim
17. Mt. Hermon
18. Samaria (city)
19. Waters of Merom
20. Rabbath-Ammon
21. Ramoth-Gilead
22. Sea of Galilee
23. Laish (Dan)
24. Capernaum
25. Bethlehem
26. Zarephath
27. Beersheba
28. Damascus
29. Jordan R.
30. Phoenicia
31. Kir-Moab
32. Dead Sea
33. Nazareth
34. Caesarea
35. Bethel
36. Lydda
37. Shiloh
38. Moab

IDENTIFY SITES

RECTANGLES are countries,
rivers, or bodies of water

ASTERISKS are mountains

DOTS are cities

39. Mt. Ebal
 40. Ammon
 41. Gergesa
 42. Hebron
 43. Engedi
 44. Hazor
 45. Edom
 46. Joppa
 47. Sidon
 48. Gaza
 49. Tyre
 50. Ai

Bible Questions

78 Berean

\$4.00 per year (only for those who desire to pay—free to others)

Printed in U.S.A.

Australian subscriptions (\$4.00) to R. Hodges, 2 Emily St., Esperance, W. Australia 6450